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DEMONS HAVE NO PHYSICAL POWERS

In my recent article entitled "How Satan Influences People" I mentioned that Satan and the demons cannot do anything at all in the physical realm, and that they do not have the ability to manifest physically in any way. In response to that article a few people have raised some questions about things they had been told by people who had experienced demon influence.

For example:

Some people claim that they have actually seen demons, sometimes in the form of a man and sometimes in the form of a woman. In other words, they have seen something along the lines of what the witch at Endor saw when King Saul had asked her to bring up Samuel (see 1 Samuel 28:11-13). In visiting people who had contacted God's Church back in the 70's and 80's I myself also visited several people who claimed to have seen spirits or to have had contact with spirits.

In one case I visited a man in hospital, and he told me that Jesus Christ had appeared to him and had stood at the foot of his bed and smiled at him. When I asked him to describe the individual he had seen, he was very general and vague with his description.

In another situation I visited a man who also happened to be in hospital, but he had jumped out of a second floor open window at the university he was attending, and he had broken some bones. I had known the man for about five years at that point in time, and he had attended services. When I asked him why he had jumped out of the window, he explained that whenever he gets into a room with an open window, then he gets an uncontrollable urge to jump out of that open window, a voice in his head telling him that he must jump. All the previous windows he had jumped out of had been on the ground floor. This had been his first second floor jumping experience, and he had broken some bones. [Comment: "Second floor" here refers to one floor above ground floor, not two floors above ground floor.]

That man was influenced by a demon similar to the one in Matthew 17:15, who in that instance pressured a young man to jump into any open fire or into any open body of water whenever that young man was near a fire or near water.

At a couple of other occasions different individuals likewise told me about seeing ghost-like individuals in their rooms. Occasionally these ghosts even supposedly spoke to some of these people. At other times these individuals themselves said that they only heard the voices in their own heads.

I've also heard of others who openly state that they had seen demonic beings with flowing robes or red eyes or dressed in a hooded robe, etc. One individual told me that "Mary" had appeared to him while he was lying awake in his bed. Other people have talked about seeing things float through the air. Some have felt that these spirits literally attacked them or pushed them, causing them specific injuries. The title of this article is in response to this specific claim.

Some people even claim to have seen these beings walk through solid walls, kind of like Casper the Friendly Ghost used to do in the old comic strips. Others have heard or seen doors being mysteriously opened and shut. Others have seen spoons being bent.

In another case, while we were away at a conference, someone (a non-family member) was in our home

and claimed to have seen a demon. The demon was so vivid that the person lay down on the floor of our living room and refused to get up. The person claimed not to be able to get up. Even when the police was called for help the individual still would not get up. Eventually, after about 8 hours of trying to reason with this person, an ambulance forcefully took the person to a mental hospital, where I eventually saw the person several days later, after we had returned from our conference. The person had seen something very vivid, which nobody else had been able to see (there were other people in our home during our absence), and that had forced the person into a prostrate position on the floor for those 8 hours.

You may have heard of similar stories. They always have one major purpose in common. Do you know what that unstated purpose is? Think about that.

WHAT SATAN HOPES TO ACHIEVE

Let's ask ourselves: exactly what is Satan trying to achieve when he gives human beings such trivial experiences? Why does Satan have his demons cause people to experience such petty things? Do these things themselves actually achieve anything?

First of all, we need to recognize that none of those sort of experiences ever have a purpose in themselves. When someone sees a demon which nobody else can see, then that experience has no direct purpose in itself. In other words: the purpose of such a "vision" wasn't to help the individual who saw the demon avoid an accident, or to fix a broken appliance, or to provide some food for starving people, or to help the person complete some task, or to provide some protection, etc. **Such a "vision" didn't in fact have any constructive purpose whatsoever.** Nothing changed after such an experience from the way things had been before.

Such experiences serve no more purpose than going to a movie for two hours. After the movie nothing has changed for the moviegoers from the way things had been before they went to that movie. The only thing that happened is that they were entertained for two hours. And that is the only thing that seeing that movie achieved ...they were briefly entertained.

Seeing a demon or experiencing noises and seeing things float through the air is very much like going to that movie.

Or you might have gone to a magician's show, where the magician performed any number of tricks, usually with "smoke and mirrors" and any number of simultaneous distractions. And very possibly you were quite impressed by that show.

But here is one difference between going to the movies or seeing a magician's show on the one hand, and a demon-produced experience on the other hand.

With movies and shows **the main purpose is** invariably **to entertain** the paying public. When we attend these things, we pay for someone to entertain us. Sometimes movies have additional secondary purposes, such as educating people or even attempting to change people's opinions about something. But primarily these events are intended to entertain us.

Now **with any demon-produced experience** (i.e. seeing or hearing things that cannot be explained by physical laws) **entertainment is never the main purpose!** Satan has no intention of really entertaining us. Satan only has a depraved and extremely perverted and twisted sense of humor at best.

So here is the point:

On the surface seeing ghosts or seeing things floating through the air may well look like a form of entertainment to us. From a physical human perspective such experiences are hardly different from seeing some movie, which also presents **make-believe situations**. But that superficial appearance is nothing but a part of Satan's deception. Satan is quite content if human beings view such experiences as "free entertainment".

However, Satan's foremost purpose for giving certain people all these Mickey Mouse experiences is to convince human beings that Satan can do things which he in reality cannot do! Let me repeat that, because this is the crux of all these experiences.

Satan's most important purpose for giving some people visions of supernatural events is to convince all of humanity that Satan has great powers in our physical world, when in fact he doesn't have any powers at all, none whatsoever, in our physical world!

Human magicians are experts at creating illusions by means of distractions and lots of smoke and mirrors. But compared to Satan and his demons, even the "best" human magicians are absolute novices. Satan is the greatest deceiver of all time.

Satan's only power is "**the power of the air**" (Ephesians 2:2), and that is meant **in a non-physical way!** In other words, Satan doesn't have any power to **physically** move the air; Satan cannot cause storms, tornados or hurricanes, unless God explicitly grants Satan such powers for a very limited and specific purpose, as was the case in the Book of Job.

Satan's "power of the air" is limited to **sending his thoughts "through the air"** to human brains. Our own thoughts trigger chemical reactions in our brains. The same process also happens when Satan's thoughts enter our brains ... they will also cause chemical reactions in our brains. That is what Satan's "power of the air" consists of. The instruction that we are to "resist the devil" (James 4:7) means that we are to resist the thoughts Satan attempts to install in our brains, which satanic thoughts would lead to more thoughts and to conduct that is contrary to God.

That is the total extent of Satan's power in relation to us human beings. It is far less power than most of the people who acknowledge the existence of Satan assume Satan actually has. Satan does not want human beings to understand how very limited Satan's power to affect us human beings actually is. Satan cannot do anything physical in our physical world.

So:

One major purpose for all of these petty demonic activities is to try to deceive human beings into believing that demons can manifest physically, and that they are able to exert great power in physical ways!

The purpose of every single one of such "appearances" is to in some way **deceive** human beings. The intent is to get us to believe things that are not true. Satan is not trying to get human beings to believe things that are factual and true. No, **Satan is always trying to pressure people to believe things that are not true!** Satan has always been a deceiver and a liar (John 8:44). In regard to what powers Satan has and what powers Satan does not have, Satan has deceived the whole world. He has convinced the world that he is supposedly far more powerful than is actually the case.

SATAN'S GREAT DECEPTION

Satan never at any time helps any human being to in any way get a better understanding of the truth, of what is real in the physical world, and of what is real in the spirit world. Never does he help us to come to a better understanding of anything. All of his activities in influencing people are aimed at deceiving us regarding his powers.

That is a fundamental principle which we need to always keep in mind.

When knowledge is revealed by God, then it is absolutely true. And **when knowledge is revealed by Satan, then it is absolutely false**, unless it is a pronouncement of a punitive decision that God has already made, and whose implementation is imminent. It is not within Satan's power, and never has been, to reveal true understanding to human beings. That is absolutely basic for understanding anything that demons may reveal to human beings. But Satan doesn't want you to understand this principle, because that would weaken his power over us human beings.

Consider an analogy:

When a **lion-tamer** goes into a circus cage with five lions, and the man has nothing but a chair or a stick and a whip for controlling those lions, then the lion-tamer's safety depends on convincing those five lions that he is more powerful than they are. The truth is that those five lions are far, far more powerful than that one lion-tamer with his little whip. He knows that, but the lions don't know that. And so he has to deceive those lions into believing that he is more powerful than they are, by cracking his whip, etc.

Yes, in some regards we can compare Satan to a roaring lion looking for prey (1 Peter 5:8). However, we should note that in this Scripture **it is not the lion's strength that Peter was referring to**. It is Satan's stealth and deviousness in looking for victims that is being compared to a lion. A lion's strength doesn't enter the picture in 1 Peter 5:8. It is Satan's method of finding victims that is the focus in that comparison in verse 8, as well as the vicious treatment Satan inflicts on those who fall prey to him.

However:

When we are looking for something to illustrate **Satan's actual powers** in relation to human beings, then the correct picture is that in the physical sphere human beings are like the lions, and Satan is like the lion-tamer trying to pressure us and intimidate us with his puny little whip and some dinky little stick. He must somehow convince us that he is far more powerful than we are. **He must use deception**. And all these supernatural appearances are nothing more than the lion-tamer cracking his whip to impress us.

In any discussion where Satan is compared to having **the power** of a lion compared to the physical power of a man, then that comparison is a lot of baloney! Satan simply does not have "a lion's power" in his contact with human beings. Satan's way of seeking out victims can be compared to a lion seeking out victims, yes. The lion's roar is intended to intimidate prospective victims, but **the lion's roar never kills the victim**. It is nothing more than an empty threat. Lions never roar when they are really trying to catch a victim.

In his reference the Apostle Peter made clear that Satan's power has definite limitations. After telling us that Satan walks about like a roaring lion, Peter then made clear that it is certainly possible to resist Satan's attacks (see 1 Peter 5:8-9). The fact that we actually can firmly resist Satan (verse 9) proves that Satan has no power at all if human beings set their minds to resist the thoughts he seeks to install within our brains.

In that situation Satan most certainly does not have "the power of a lion", or we would not be capable of

resisting him. Satan's only power over human beings depends on Satan being able to install his thoughts in human minds, thereby taking control of those minds. This requires stealth and devious, well-disguised deception.

IN THE GARDEN IN EDEN

Consider Satan in the garden with Adam and Eve back in Genesis 3. How much power did Satan actually have in that situation? Yes, for that specific purpose God had given Satan the power to possess a serpent and to speak through that serpent. After that occasion God took away from Satan the power to possess an animal. And Satan himself has never again had that power to possess an animal or to speak through an animal.

The demons in the New Testament that entered into a herd of pigs could only do so with very explicit permission from Jesus Christ. If Christ had not given them that explicit permission, then it would have been impossible for the demons to enter into the pigs or into any other animals.

Have you ever thought about **why** in Genesis God gave Satan the power to possess a snake? What was God revealing with that incident?

For a start, God was showing that Satan cannot manifest in any way that would enable physical human beings to see him or to be aware of his presence. The only way for physical human beings to be able to interact with Satan at all in some way, is for Satan to have access to some physical "medium", where Satan can take control of the functioning of that "medium's" brain, and then Satan can make contact with human beings through that "medium".

Now if Satan really had the power to manifest in some physical way, then God would assuredly not have given Satan the power to confront Adam and Eve in the form of a snake. God allowed Satan to confront Eve through a snake, because **there was no way** for Satan to actually talk to Eve other than through one of the animals that God had created.

That was the only option available to bring about a direct confrontation between Satan and the two human beings God had just created.

God wasn't about to give Satan the power to manifest himself in a physical way, the way God has empowered His holy angels to manifest in a physical form when conveying a message from God to certain human beings. Satan and the demons are simply not on the same level as the holy angels of God. When the demons sinned, then God stripped them of certain powers they had previously possessed.

So without the power to manifest in a physical world, it was absolutely vital that Satan would have access to some "medium", whose brain functions Satan could take over and control. God obviously was not going to allow Satan to take control of one of the only two human beings in existence at that time. Therefore giving Satan access to the brain of an animal was really the most likely option. Can you understand this?

Next, the incident in the garden also shows us that Satan himself cannot make any audible sounds! He needed a physical medium so that he could vocalize thoughts for human beings to be able to hear. So understand this: without access to the brain of a physical being (i.e. a human being or an animal) it is impossible for Satan to speak or to make any sounds at all. Now apart from two very specific incidents (with the serpent in the garden, and with the herd of pigs in the New Testament), God has not given

Satan and the demons the power to enter into any animals.

Therefore the highest form of Satan's ability to interact with us human beings depends on Satan's ability to take control of the thought processes in some person's mind. Then Satan is able to speak through that person. That is the ultimate way for Satan to make himself heard. This is what I refer to as "level three" in the article "How Satan Influences People".

However, it is also enough for Satan to put a thought into a man's mind (i.e. "level one" of Satan's influence), without the person actually being demon-possessed, not even briefly, for that person to then voice Satan's thought for other people to hear. In this situation Satan has not actually achieved any control over that person's mind. The person has done nothing more than to accept one specific thought from Satan and then voiced that thought. This is invariably a case of the person having been deceived by Satan into accepting that thought.

The Apostle Peter's statement "Lord, this shall not be unto You" (Matthew 16:22) is probably the best example of this. And it illustrates again that Satan always needs a human brain and a human mind in order to be able to communicate with human beings.

If it was possible for every single human being on earth to resist accepting even a single thought from Satan, then even Satan's vicarious powers in the physical realm would be absolutely zero!

This would be so even while Satan is walking about like a roaring lion, seeking victims to destroy. Satan can only exert some power in our physical world if he has a human being to control or to manipulate.

The real picture regarding Satan's total lack of any real power is revealed by God in Isaiah 14. Verse 16 is speaking about Satan. Notice what will happen in the future:

They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying, **Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?*** (Isaiah 14:16)

For a start, we need to recognize that this is an expression of disdain and contempt for Satan. When it is all over, people are going to say: is this little creep the one who caused all those monumental problems at the end of the age? Why, he looks like you could knock him over with a feather duster. It will seem almost incomprehensible that such a weak and powerless individual could be responsible for having caused so much havoc and destruction.

The reason people will make this statement in Isaiah 14:16 is because at that point in time **Satan's total lack of any real power** is going to be openly exposed for all to see. It will be a teaching moment.

So never forget:

All these demonic activities are specifically aimed at trying to impress us and to convince us that Satan and the demons have a certain amount of real power in our physical world. Experiences like seeing things floating through the air or seeing metallic objects being bent are supposed to tell us: see, **we do have powers** on the physical level. But it is all based on deception!

IT IS NOTHING MORE THAN DECEPTION

Satan has always been the arch-deceiver. He is the expert in creating optical illusions. He has deceived the whole world about his real status and about the very limited powers at his disposal. Casting himself

as a powerful bright shining light-giving angel named "Lucifer" lies at the heart and core of that deception. With this one deception Satan has "transformed (himself) into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

You can get an idea of the magnitude of Satan's deception when you see how energetically and how fiercely some people, even in the Church of God, will defend Satan's claim to the name "Lucifer", which name the Apostle Peter irrefutably ascribed to Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 1:19. Such people will actually fight for Satan's claim to a name that belongs to Jesus Christ. Talk about deception!

[COMMENT: I have exposed and explained the gross mistranslation found in 2 Peter 1:19 in a few of my other articles. The evidence for the mistranslation of that verse is simply irrefutable.]

Modern research in the field of neurology has revealed that thoughts trigger chemical reactions in our brains. When we answer a question truthfully the chemical reactions in the brain are different from when we knowingly answer that same question with a lie. Our speech and our actions are responses to electro-chemical reactions that were initiated in the brain by our thoughts.

As I have pointed out in my previous article, **thoughts are the link between the physical world and the spirit world**. Thoughts are expressions of spirit. It is **the human brain** that then **converts** that **spirit** essence (i.e. the thoughts) **into matter**. In our brains our thoughts are converted into microscopic electro-chemical reactions, i.e. they are converted into matter.

It is possible for spirit beings to take control of a human brain. When that happens, then the electro-chemical reactions in that brain are due to thoughts that originated with the spirit being and not with the human "owner of the brain".

For example, in the Old Testament there are 413 instances where we read "thus saith the Lord" (KJV). I believe that in all of those instances it was **the thoughts of Jesus Christ Himself** that were verbalized in the statements that followed the "thus saith the LORD" expression. There was no possibility of the prophet somehow halfway through such a message forgetting what he was supposed to say. There was no possibility of a prophet using the wrong words in presenting a "thus saith the LORD" message. And neither did the prophet beforehand spend hours memorizing the "thus saith the LORD" message he was supposed to deliver.

In every "thus saith the LORD" message it was in fact "the LORD" doing the speaking, by having the prophet's brain respond to thoughts that Jesus Christ provided to the prophet's brain, so that the words that came out of the prophet's mouth, which words made up the "thus saith the LORD" message, were the result of electro-chemical reactions in the prophet's brain that were triggered by the thoughts of Jesus Christ Himself.

We need to understand that God doesn't make empty hollow statements! When in Old Testament times God had a man use the words "thus saith the LORD", then it really was "the LORD" doing the speaking, even though the words came out of the mouth of a human being.

Can you understand what I am trying to explain here?

If you can understand this, then you should also be able to understand the error in the artificial argument that goes like this:

Was it God (i.e. Jesus Christ) speaking in Old Testament times, or was it an angel speaking? Did God say it (various statements) or did an angel say it?

The answer is: it doesn't matter. In the same way that God can install a thought in a human mind, which thought that human being then expresses in words; in the same way God can transfer a thought into the mind of an angel. And even though the angel may then be the one to appear to a servant of God and then deliver God's message, **it is still God's thought** that is being expressed by the angel's statement.

An angel is a messenger who delivers some of God's thoughts to certain human beings; the angel carries those thoughts from God to man. Whose spiritual "vocal chords" (i.e. God's or the angel's) are used to express God's thoughts in a way that human beings can hear them is of secondary importance. When God had (in Old Testament times) an angel deliver a message from God to a prophet, that message was not any less important than if Jesus Christ had delivered that message in person.

What is important is **the source** of a message, a thought, **not the means of delivery**.

The same applies to Satan and the demons.

Even as God can install His thoughts in a human brain, for that person to then deliver a "thus saith the LORD" message, even so can Satan install his thoughts in a human brain. However, for Satan to be able to do so depends on that person not making any attempt to resist Satan taking control of his thought processes. If the person decides to resolutely resist Satan's attempts to install his thoughts in the person's brain, then it is simply not possible for Satan to take control of that brain. Satan's ability to take control of a human brain is only possible if the person makes no attempt to resist Satan.

When we dream our brains cause us to see things and to hear things, even though no information came to the brain through the eyes or through the ears. The same thing happens when a person sees a vision ... their brains respond to input that did not come through the eyes or through the ears. The input that results in the person seeing a vision consists of thoughts that were installed directly in the person's brain, where they produced the visual and auditory phenomena that make up the vision.

So God in Old Testament times gave some of His servants visions, where other people in the same environment didn't observe anything at all.

And likewise, Satan is able to cause people to see things that nobody else can see. Satan can cause such "visions" by installing his thoughts in a person's brain and taking control of that brain.

The point is this:

When demon-influenced people see things or hear things which other people around them don't see or hear, then there wasn't really anything there to see or to hear. The whole experience was restricted to something that took place in the affected person's brain, even if it was very vivid.

Satan is a master at deceiving people. Satan can convince people that they have seen things that are physically impossible.

Now if we were to attend a magician's show, we would see many seemingly impossible tricks being performed. On the surface all of them would represent impossible feats. For some of those tricks we might be able to figure out just how the magician tried to fool us, the audience. But for some other tricks we might walk away baffled, wondering how on earth the magician did that trick. We simply could not figure out how he did that.

However:

Even though we don't know how the magician did that particular trick, **we do know that it is nothing**

more than a trick. We just don't know how he did it. We do know that the magician doesn't really have magical powers. We do know that his tricks depend on deception. We do know that the purpose of the trick is to make us believe that the magician has certain powers that he doesn't really have.

The same is true for Satan and the demons.

With some of the Mickey Mouse "miracles" that demons cause some people to experience, modern brain research is revealing how that can be done; i.e. by a demon taking control of a possessed person's brain and having that person see and hear things that are not real. And for other things experienced by such demon-influenced people we don't know how the demons did it.

But we do know that the demons do not have any magical powers. We just don't know exactly how they deceive people for certain supernatural tricks. We do know that the tricks are **stupid efforts to convince us that demons have powers that they really don't have.** Those tricks are supposed to impress us, and to cause us to fear the powers the demons supposedly have, when in reality they don't have any more supernatural powers than some human magician on a big stage. It is all nothing more than deception.

Satan's power in the human sphere is utterly dependent on Satan imposing on human beings a spirit of fear, fear of death and fear of pain and suffering. That spirit of fear enslaves people (see Hebrews 2:15). But Satan has no power at all over those people who do not have that spirit of fear (see 2 Timothy 1:7). And all of the demonic "visions" are a major tool for Satan instilling a spirit of fear in people.

So do I have an explanation for every possible "supernatural incident" that demons have caused? No, I don't. But that doesn't change the fact that those "supernatural incidents" are nothing more than **some form of deception.**

Even though I may not be able to explain how some entertainer-magician performed some of his tricks, I still know very clearly that there is nothing supernatural about that magician, and that he has no special powers of any kind that the rest of us human beings don't also have. I know that I have simply not been able to figure out exactly how the magician managed to deceive us. But I do know that it was nothing more than some clever trick.

The same holds true for Satan and the demons.

ALWAYS GUARD YOUR MIND

God created us so that we would always control our own thoughts. It is extremely important that we always "bring all our thoughts into captivity" to do those things that are right (see 2 Corinthians 10:5). If we ourselves are not in control of our thoughts, then someone else is in control of our thoughts.

Our minds can never run on auto-pilot; that just doesn't work. For human minds auto-pilot control is synonymous with demon-control. Guarding our minds must be one of our highest priorities.

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