

Doctrinal Summary of
Satan & Company: Their Ability to Possess the Unbeliever Through Assent and Consent

In Matthew 9:32 Jesus is brought a demon-possessed man to be healed, identifying the reality that humans can be physically possessed by Satan & Company in specific situations.

“As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.”

The word “demon-possessed” is translated from the Koine Greek word δαιμονιζόμενοι (“dai-mo-nodz-o-meh-noi”) which literally means, “participating in being acted upon in a continuous type of action as a matter of principle to be inhabited by and under the physical control of a demon based on one’s own initiation.” It describes a man who has participated in being possessed by the demon by putting himself in the place, both mentally and physically, where the demon could enter into his body and take possession of it for the purpose of control. This is done as a matter of principle, identifying the norms and standards that govern demon possession require that the individual who is demon possessed participate in his own possession through mental assent and physical willingness.

Demon possession identifies, then, the inhabiting of an individual’s body by a demon. The result of the demon inhabiting the individual’s body is that the demon now has the ability to take control over the body’s members and faculties in order to accomplish what he wishes to accomplish within the body. Consequently, the one who is demon possessed loses his self-sovereignty. This, again, is based on his willful participation and personal initiation. The individual’s willful participation is developed through a systematic process which is carried out moving the individual from demonic influence through demonic control, and, if uncorrected, to demonic possession.

The progression usually follows the following systematic process:

1. Distract man from truth by enticing man to falsehood.
2. Convince man that falsehood is truth.
3. Establish a faulty perspective of God.
4. Establish a lack of need for God.
5. Establish a mental attitude of independence.
6. Establish a thought process which ignores God’s existence.
7. Establish a thought process that views God as an enemy to one’s own happiness.
8. Establish a sympathetic perspective with Satan’s condemnation from God.
9. Establish a willingness to follow Satan.
10. Probe the willingness of the individual to agree to host a fallen angel in his body.
11. Take possession of the individual.

Once the individual has been entered and inhabited through his own consent, the demon possesses that individual’s body as if it was his very own possession. It is evident that more than one demon can possess the same body in the New Testament (cf. Luke 8:27), have control over the entire body, including the voice and autonomic nervous system (cf. Matt. 17:14-18; Luke 8:28-29), and can only be removed by the power of God through commissioned agents of His (cf. Matt 10:1). The greatest protection from demon possession is faith in Christ as one’s personal Savior; having been begotten as a child of God’s the believer is protected by God from Satan & Company (cf. 1 Jn. 5:18) and indwelt by the Holy Spirit who is greater in character, authority, and ability than Satan & Company (cf. 1 Jn. 4:4).