

DEMONS

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” Ephesians 6:11

If we take Scripture seriously, we must recognize that evil is not merely a human or social problem. There is real evil in the world, and Scripture also teaches that there is a real devil and demonic opposition to God’s purposes. We should not become fascinated with the devil, but neither should we pretend he does not exist.

Ephesians 6 describes these evil spiritual beings as “rulers,” “authorities,” “cosmic powers over this present darkness,” and “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). These terms remind us that the darkness in the world is not accidental. Behind lies, rebellion, idolatry, cruelty, and opposition to the gospel, spiritual evil is at work.

Demons are not merely symbols of evil, bad habits, or ancient explanations for suffering. Scripture presents them as personal spiritual beings opposed to God and hostile to human beings. In the Gospels and Acts, demons sometimes afflict or possess people, but Scripture emphasizes Christ’s authority over them rather than curiosity about them (Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39; Acts 16:16–18; 19:11–20).

Some describe demons as “fallen angels.” While that phrase is not the usual biblical wording, Scripture does speak of angels who sinned (2 Peter 2:4), angels who did not stay within their proper position (Jude 6), and the devil and his angels standing in rebellion against God (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:7–9). So the phrase may be used as a theological summary, but it should be explained carefully: demons are wicked spiritual beings aligned with the devil, morally corrupt, opposed to God, and under God’s final judgment.

The devil’s main weapons are deception and accusation. Revelation 12 describes him as “the deceiver of the whole world” and “the accuser of our brothers” (Revelation 12:9–10). He lies about God, sin, truth, and identity. He tempts people away from the light, then accuses them when they fall.

For everyday faith, Scripture emphasizes not fear or speculation, but resistance. Ephesians 6 does not tell Christians to obsess over demons, name them, or map spiritual hierarchies. It tells us to “stand.” Christ has already won the decisive victory. Our task is to put on the armor of God, resist the devil, hold fast to truth, and stand firm in faith.

How do we stand against the devil’s schemes?