

EVEN THE DEMONS

DEMONS IN THE GOSPELS

We live in a profoundly spiritual world that undergirds our experiences. This understanding was common during the time that the gospels were written and around the world today. In our broader culture, people are experimenting with spirituality more and more through things like Wicca, witchcraft, fortune-telling, tarot cards, magic, and more.

Throughout the gospel accounts of Jesus' life and ministry, he regularly demonstrates power over demons and the spiritual realm. He even empowers his disciples with this same authority.

This list contains what we've found to be all of Jesus' encounters with demons and the spiritual realm throughout the four gospel accounts.

ENCOUNTER	TEXT(S)
Jesus is tested in the wilderness by the devil.	Matthew 4:1–11 Mark 1:12–13 Luke 4:1–13
Jesus heals many sick and demon-possessed throughout Galilee.	Matthew 4:24
Jesus orders an impure spirit out of a man in the synagogue in Capernaum, a town in Galilee.	Mark 1:23–28 Luke 4:33–37
Jesus heals the sick and drives out demons with a word one evening in Capernaum, silencing them from speaking.	Matthew 8:16 Mark 1:32–34 Luke 4:40–41
Across the lake from Galilee, Jesus drives a group of demons named “Legion” out of a man and into a herd of pigs.	Matthew 8:28–34 Mark 5:1–20 Luke 8:26–39
Jesus heals the sick and cures people from impure spirits among a large crowd from Galilee and beyond.	Mark 3:7–12 Luke 6:17–19
Jesus cures many people of diseases, evil spirits, and blindness.	Luke 7:21
John the Baptist is accused of having a demon because of his strange behavior—not eating or drinking.	Matthew 11:18 Luke 7:33–34

ENCOUNTER	TEXT(S)
Jesus appoints his twelve disciples with the authority to drive out demons and sends them out two by two to do so, as well as cure diseases and proclaim the Kingdom of God.	Matthew 10:5–8 Mark 3:13–19 Mark 6:7–13 Luke 9:1–2
Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples ahead of him, who return sharing about how demons submit to them in Jesus’ name.	Luke 10:17–20
Jesus heals the daughter of a Canaanite or Syrophenician woman of a demon because of her mother’s faith.	Matthew 15:21–28 Mark 7:25–30
Jesus drives out demons causing blindness and muteness and is accused by the Pharisees of doing so by the power of “Beelzebul, the prince of demons.”	Matthew 9:32–34 Matthew 12:22–28 Mark 3:22–30 Luke 11:14–20
In Jesus’ Parable of the Sower, he explains to his disciples how “the enemy” who sowed weeds among the wheat is the devil, and the weeds are his people. Seeds sown along the path have Jesus’ message taken from their hearts by Satan, or the devil, so that they do not believe.	Matthew 13:24–30 Matthew 13:36–43 Mark 4:13–15 Luke 8:11–12
Jesus teaches that “when an impure spirit comes out of a person,” it returns with seven worse spirits to a “house swept clean and put in order.”	Matthew 12:43–45 Luke 11:24–26
Jesus rebukes a demon that his disciples could not drive out that had been causing a boy to have seizures and convulsions since childhood.	Matthew 17:14–20 Mark 9:17–29 Luke 9:37–43
One of Jesus’ disciples is told to not stop someone from driving out demons in Jesus’ name.	Mark 9:38–41 Luke 9:49–50
Jesus frees a woman crippled by a spirit for eighteen years.	Luke 13:10–13
Jesus is questioned and accused by Jewish people about being demon-possessed and “raving mad.”	John 7:20 John 8:48–53 John 10:19–21
Jesus confronts a group of Jews and Pharisees for their unbelief and inability to hear his message, saying that their father is the devil, not Abraham.	John 8:42–47
Jesus tells his disciples multiple times about “the prince of this world,” a spiritual adversary who will be defeated by Jesus’ obedience to the Father.	John 12:31 John 14:27–31 John 16:7–11

ENCOUNTER	TEXT(S)
Jesus tells Peter that “the gates of Hades” will not overcome his church.	Matthew 16:17–19
When Peter tries to stop him from dying, Jesus rebukes him with the phrase, “Get behind me, Satan!”, and also prays against Satan for Peter’s faith.	Mark 8:31–33 Luke 22:31–32
Satan “prompts” or “enters into” Judas Iscariot in his betrayal of Jesus.	Luke 22:3–4 John 6:70–71 John 13:2, 26–27
Jesus sends his disciples “into all the world [to] preach the gospel,” driving out demons, speaking new languages, surviving danger, and healing the sick.	Mark 16:15–18

WORD OCCURRENCES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

How often are words relating to demons, the devil, Satan, and evil spirits used in the New Testament? Below is a list of keywords and references and how often they occur in the gospels and beyond. All word occurrences are found in the New International Version, 2011.

KEYWORD	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN	GOSPELS	ACTS– REVELATION	NEW TESTAMENT
Demon(s), Demonic	12	15	23	3	53	10	63
Demon-Possessed	7	3	2	4	16	1	17
Devil	6	0	6	3	15	20	35
Satan	4	6	5	1	16	20	36
Evil One	4	0	0	1	5	7	12
(Evil) Spirits, Spiritual Forces	3	5	8	0	16	19	35
Named Spirits*	3	3	4	0	10	5	15
TOTAL	39	32	48	12	131	82	213

*Legion, Beelzebul, Artemis