

Dear Sandy,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know when a person is possessed by Satan or by demons if that person's body is really taken over or if it is only the evil influence from Satan and/or the demons that is especially high.

In ancient times people believed that evil spirits (demons) were responsible for many physical and most all mental disorders such as epilepsy, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, split personalities, delirium and the like. Although today we are cognizant of the many inherited or acquired mental illnesses that are in no way related to demonic possession, we, nonetheless, believe that demonic possession exists. We open the door to possession when we delve into the occult, visit mediums, imbibe in mind-altering drugs or even allow our fleshly desires to control our actions. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 6:41) Anytime we relinquish control of our minds, we open the door to demonic possession. "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

When a demon "enters" a person, we believe that the demon begins to control the mind of that person. The person then begins to act in accordance with the will of the demon. One such example is found in Luke 22:3-4. "Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him [Jesus] to them."

Although it may look as if a demon or demons possesses the body of a person as well as the mind, we believe that is not the case. We are told of the demon-possessed man who lived in the tombs (Mark 5:1-20). "No one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones." (verses 3-5) The legion of demons possessed the man's mind to such a degree that they were able to give his body extraordinary power to break chains. The fact that the man cried out and cut himself with stones shows that the demons, who are spirit beings, felt nothing but probably enjoyed watching the man torture himself in an attempt to rid himself of their influence. After Jesus allowed the demons to leave the man and enter the pigs (verse 13), the man returned to his right mind (verse 15).

It is interesting to note that the evil spirits that were torturing the man begged Jesus not to torture them (verse 7). Jesus did not judge them but allowed them to go free since their day of judgment had not yet come. We believe that these evil spirits were the same spirit beings that came to earth, took on bodies of men and married human women, thereby creating a hybrid race, which God destroyed during the great Flood (Genesis 6-7).

We learn in Jude 1:6 that these same spirit beings are being kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains [not allowed to materialize on earth]. They await judgment on the great Day of Judgment, yet future.

Can demons possess the body of a person as well as the mind of a person? No, we believe their power is limited to only mind possession. However, that possession can be very powerful. Therefore, we are admonished to “Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 6:11-12)

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio