

Darkness 1 – A darkness you can feel

****Bumper Video –** Everything is scarier in the dark

Everything is Scarier in the dark.

Darkness

Welcome to Redemption Church...

As a kid do you remember the power of darkness? Simple objects become monsters when they are covered in darkness.

Even as an adult...

No one had to teach us to be afraid of the dark.

Everything is scarier in the dark.

We sense that we are more vulnerable in the dark...

We sense that our enemy operates better in the darkness...

Darkness was here before humans. It is spoken of in the creation account.

Genesis 1:2-4

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.(NIV)

The world was formless and empty...

Darkness - **Choshek** (khoshek)

Darkness, Obscurity, Hidden, Chaos, Confusion, wickedness & death

Nothing good comes from this darkness...

The darkness of Genesis 1:2 is a darkness the likes we have never seen or experienced before.

When Israel was enslaved in Egypt, God sent plagues. One of those plagues was darkness.

Exodus 10:21-23

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt--darkness that can be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.(NIV)

*There is a Darkness... Stronger, more sinister, scarier than any darkness you have felt before. We see a glimpse of that darkness in Exodus 10:21. It was a darkness that could be felt.

I often thought big deal... so it's dark... just light a torch and go about your business. But no! This darkness that overtook Egypt would overtake all light. They literally sat in darkness for three days and couldn't see each other... It wasn't dim... it was full on DARKNESS.

I think that God was offering a small glimpse of the darkness we read about in Genesis 1... and also the darkness that will be present in Hell

Hell is a place of darkness. Jude 1:13 speaks of "the blackness of darkness" to which false teachers will be confined forever.

God is light (1 John 1:5) and the Father of lights (Jas. 1:17). Hell is described as darkness because it is the place farthest removed from God's light.

Darkness isn't just physical. **Darkness is Spiritual**

There is a darkness that does more than impair your vision and causes you to stump your toe.

There is a darkness brought on by the far proximity of God. Hell is such a place, Egypt was such a place, and the earth was such a place before God drew near and spoke... bringing light

Daniel 10:2 At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks.(NIV)

Daniel was fasting & praying for Israel... He did this for 3 weeks when an Angel showed up.

Daniel 10:12-13 ... "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.(NIV)

When were the words and actions of Daniel noticed? "SINCE THE FIRST DAY"

-You are being heard. Don't stop praying, don't stop seeking God. Even in the midst of darkness you are seen and heard by God...

When did the Angel come to Daniel? "SINCE THE FIRST DAY"

If he heard Daniel and came to Daniel on the 1st day of prayer and fasting... then why did it take 3 weeks to reach Daniel? "The Prince of Persia resisted me 21 days"

There is a lot we can learn from this verse... It gives us some insight to the subject of light and darkness.

1st – Angels aren't all powerful. This Angel met his match in the prince of Persia... This Angel of light wasn't able to overcome this darkness that surrounded the city of Babylon.

Angels and demons have rank. It wasn't until Michael – An Arc Angel and called in the scripture a "chief prince – came to the aid of this nameless Angel that he was able to break through and come to Daniel.

2nd- There is a darkness that can detain God's messenger.

This darkness is serious stuff. God had a message for Daniel and sent the Angel to carry the message but the darkness delayed the message.

This darkness is sinister and wants to cut us off from God's message. This darkness wants to confuse us and blind us.

If you find yourself in a hopeless struggle, cut off from hearing God's voice, and feel confused and blind – you might be in darkness.

3rd – Cities can be overcome by darkness.

The city of Babylon was a city overrun with darkness. In these modern times, cities, countries, households can be under the control of darkness.

4th – Our leaders aren't always elected officials.

The angel fought with someone called the "prince of Persia." This was not the earthly son of the King of Babylon, King Cyrus. I think we can all agree with that... Humans are no match for battling an angel...

The prince of Babylon was a Demon.

If you would ask someone to point to the ruler of Babylon they would have pointed towards King Cyrus' palace...

But if you asked this Angel who ruled over Babylon he would have pointed to a demon.

If you asked us who ruled the United States we would point to we would point to the white house and President Obama.

But if we asked an Angel... what would they say...? Would they point to a dark figure of materialism and greed? Pride or lust?

Darkness is Spiritual

Woah Pastor... I don't know if I believe in all this angels and demons stuff.

Darkness is a spiritual force at work in the earth. And if you don't believe what I'm saying then you might not really believe the Bible. Your Bible tries to make us aware of the darkness that is our enemy.

Not only are there angels and demons... they flat out war against each other...

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.(NIV)

Imagine for a moment what you can't see... Imagine a conflict between angel armies. Light and Darkness fighting... Truly, there is a spiritual war being waged around us that we cannot see.

2 Kings 6:15-17 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD

opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.(NIV)

The servant focused on what he could see... Elisha knew even without seeing... He was in a DARK TIME and he knew **Darkness is Spiritual.**

Have you been focusing only on what can be seen? Have you been having wars at work or in your family? Have you been looking only in the physical?

I challenge you to think and see these problems as spiritual issues and not just physical.

Ephesians 6:12 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.(NIV)

Demons of Darkness

We believe in Demons and spirits... It's really not possible to believe in the Bible without believing these spirits exist.

These dark spirits often hide in plain sight. Here are 4 examples from your Bible that appear on the cover to be physical problems, yet Jesus revealed to be a spiritual issue of demonic authority...

1) A demon of dumbness - Matthew 9:32, Luke 11:14

2) A demon of blindness and dumbness - Matthew 12:22

3) A demon possessed son (with epilepsy) - Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:17-25, Luke 39-42

4) A woman with a spirit of infirmity (crippled & bent forward) - Luke 13:11

Not every problem is a physical problem. Some problems are the result of darkness.

You are defenseless if you try to fight a spiritual problem in the physical. You have to fight spirit with Spirit!

There are 9 instances in your Bible where the demon spirit actually supplants the human spirit as the operator of the body. Demonic possession is in your Bible. We believe it can and does happen. (I'll have these listed on our Podcast Blog)[Listed Below]

I want to read through one of these demonic possession stories with you.

Acts 19:13-16 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. [One day] the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.(NIV)

Got a bug problem? There are people you can call on to exterminate them.

Have a tattoo you don't want anymore? You can call someone to remove it with a laser.

Have a stain on fabric? There are people who can handle that if you call on them.

But if you have a problem with Darkness... Who or what can remove darkness?

Only light can remove darkness

These 7 sons of Sceva can show us something

Religion can't remove darkness. These guys were the sons of a chief priest – they had religion. They probably could quote more scripture than us. They understood the law of the old testament and tried to live clean lives.

They had obviously been around Paul and seen some demons cast out before. They correctly identified demons possessed people. They called on the name of Jesus just like Paul had. They had studied WHAT TO DO... but they had no relationship with the one they were calling on.

The darkness in this world won't be defeated by more, bigger churches! Darkness will only be defeated when it is exposed to light.

Although they said and did the right things... The sons of Sceva lacked the Light.

1 John 1:5 God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.(NIV)

There is no substitute for the Light – This Light is God Himself.

It is not enough to make mention of this light! We need to be in the Light! To live in the light. To have that light within us and shining out to a Dark World.

In the Dark everything is scarier – but in the Light of God there is peace, love, joy and everything you need.

I told you that **darkness is spiritual** As I close I want to tell you that... **Light is Spiritual**

Musician

In Genesis 1 this world was Dark. It was filled with a sinister confusing darkness. A darkness that can be felt... But then God's Spirit moved... God's Spirit came near. Only God can remove the darkness of our world.

As big and bad as this darkness is. As scary and hopeless as it is... The mere presence of God dispels the darkness. He speaks and there is light. Only He can separate light from darkness...

There is a darkness that can be felt... it will overtake everything good in your life... but you need to know there is a LIGHT that can be felt! Have you ever felt God's light? Everything is scarier in the dark but everything is better in the light! Can I get a witness!?

Have you been living in darkness? You can step into the light today.

John 3:21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly... (NIV)

Whoever lives by the truth isn't a religious denomination or living a perfect sinless life. This truth is not being able to describe or defend your doctrinal beliefs... This truth isn't a what... This truth is a who...

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.(NIV)

John 3:19-21

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."(NIV)

1) The man* at the tombs - Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:2-16, Luke 8:27-38

2) A demon possessed son (after the transfiguration) - Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:17-25, Luke 39-42

3) A demon possessed man in the synagogue (Capernaum) - Mark 1:23-27, Luke 4:33-36

- 4) Demons cast out of many - Mark 1:34
 - 5) Unclean spirits fall down before Jesus - Mark 3:11
 - 6) Demons came out of many - Luke 4:40-41
 - 7) Many with unclean spirits - Acts 8:7
 - 8) A slave girl with a spirit of divination - Acts 16:16-18
 - 9) The sons of Sceva, Jewish exorcists and a demon possessed man - Acts 19:13-16
- (the case of the Canaanite woman's daughter has been left out since it cannot be clearly identified as to which category it belongs - Matthew 15:22 and Mark 7:25-30.)