

On Demons and Demon Slayers
thoughts during the Allhallowstide and Armistice Day

November 11, 2025

Please.

Demons are real. Demon slayers are real.

For millennia, humankind have clothed unseen abstract spiritual phenomena in metaphor and myth. Spiritual forces are not unlike physical forces we cannot see but we perceive them through their effects – gravitational, electromagnetic, strong nuclear and weak nuclear. I cannot see the wind, but I hear my wind chimes when the wind blows hard enough. I see the leaves on trees moving and falling. Therefore, it is not a large epistemological leap to perceive that there are vivifying forces that we can imagine as spiritual beings that have effects on human beings and on human acts.

I do not dismiss the experiences of people who say they have had encounters, for good or for ill, with supernatural beings, but for me, the way to think about demons is to think about thoughts as spiritual beings. Where do thoughts come from? I say our thoughts have spiritual origins that find their way into our subconscious minds where they germinate in a mental environment made of everything we have experienced. It becomes the context for what will surface into our conscious mind and become the logic for our actions.

Thinking about the etymology of the word “demon”, it did not always signify an evil spirit. The precursor of “demon” is the Greek word “daimon” which means divine power or guiding spirit. Its Proto-Indo-European origins mean divider or provider. (demonfacts.com/etymology-demon/) Around 1200 CE it took on a malevolent character. The idea of a demon being the personification of evil begins in the 17th century in Europe.

I say demons become human when a lie, when deception enters into our subconscious minds through our eyes, ears, nostrils, skin and we believe the deception that our own wellbeing requires division from the Other, that our benefit requires us to harm another.

Demon thoughts that cause us to do violence to the Other eats away our humanity and we become demons, we become monsters. Witness the monsters hiding their human faces dressed in military garb carrying deadly weapons invading American cities to snatch people off the streets with the intent to deport them. These demons attack law-abiding people with tear gas and pepper spray. The list of their abuses is long, but with each demonic act, they lose some of their own humanity, making the next demonic act easier, defensible, as they fall deeper and deeper into an abyss of a lying logic that makes horrors seem like a good idea.

Witness the guards in an Israeli prison who thought it was a good idea to rape a Palestinian prisoner and his fellow guards who though it was reasonable to shield the abuse and the people

who were angry that someone brought the incident to light and thought that truth -telling was a bad idea. Witness the excuses made to justify apartheid and genocide.

One reason that we do not often speak about the demonic or about evil in the public discourse is because these things are not reasonable. One cannot reason with a lie. Alternative facts do not comport with reality, that is why one cannot reason with or about something that does not exist. The best one can do is to point out the deception, to expose the lie.

The demons are liars. When we suspect a lie, when we find the truth and expose the lies we become demon slayers. The Apostle Paul wrote that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against spiritual wickedness in high places. We wrestle against lying logic. Sometimes, it is necessary to speak the truth over and over because lying demons are relentless. The tragedies that humanity perpetrates against itself are the effects of relentless lies. These lies are sometimes told in the name of God.

There is much talk these days of the United States being a Christian nation. This is a deception. The United States was not founded as a Christian nation, and the teachings of Jesus were never intended for just one nation. Jesus commands his followers to go to every nation and teach people to observe his commandments. The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth are intended to be a way of life that people of every nation on earth can live. It is a way of life intended to be the human incarnation of Divine Love: love of God, of neighbor, and of self. It is a discipline. It is a value system. It is transrational. It is beyond religion. In order for the United States to be a Christian nation, people who claim to be followers of the way of Jesus ought to insist upon public policies that reflect the values that Jesus taught: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, welcome the stranger, visit the prisoner, to *in everything do unto others as we would have them do unto us*.

It is nonsense to talk about the United States as a Christian nation and then support mass deportations.

People declare the slogan Christ is King. King of what? Unless we are working with humility to make the teachings of Jesus paramount in our own lives, we are lying to ourselves.

As the days grow shorter in the northern hemisphere, it is the season of harvest and of death. The glorious colors of the autumn trees are the beauty of death. Halloween, All Hallows Eve, is the time when tradition tells us that the invisible line between life and death, between the mystical and the mundane disappears. We wear masks that expose our true selves. We wander into the frightening supernatural spaces for fun. We face our monstrous selves for the thrill of it. The next day, we remember the sainted dead. Those ancestors whose examples inspire us to do better. The day after that we remember all the dead. We remember the good and the bad, the saints and the demons. These days are Allhallowstide. Soon, we will be celebrating the Yuletide, Christmastide.

Tidings are the news that a season brings. What thoughts come down to us from a spiritual fount of blessings and warnings? Demons are real. They are malevolent lying thoughts that cause us to do harms to the Other which in turn cause us to chip away at our own humanity, turning ourselves into monsters and alienating ourselves from ourselves and from Divine Love. Rather than bringing the Kingdom, the Kindom, of Heaven to Earth, we create hell for ourselves and for others.

The good news is, while there are demons, there are also demon slayers. They are truth-tellers. They are peacemakers. They are those who go into war zones to serve as doctors, who drive the supply trucks into the destruction of war or of natural disaster. Demon slayers are those who mediate conflict, who teach peace, who report through the techniques of peace journalism. They write and act in peace plays. They remember those lost in war and those who have fought in them, but they also work with a will to end wars and the deceptions that lead to wars.

So, as we move from the season of Allhallowstide to the Christmastide, let us pause on Armistice Day to rededicate ourselves to peace and look forward to the day when we can all live peacefully under our own vine and fig tree, and study war no more. Please.