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Harold Maleske Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_maleskeh@csl.edu

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DEMONIAC POSSESSION

A Thesis presented to the

Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Divinity

by

Harold J. Maleske

Concordia Seminary, April 15, 1940

Approved by

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DEMONIAC POSSESSION

INTRODUCTION

Among the many miracles which the synoptic Gospels record, special prominence is given to the casting out of demons or devils who possessed those unfortunate people commonly known as demoniacs. In order to clarify the Biblical concept of demoniac possession, the following facts concerning the Scriptural doctrine of the devil and his hosts must be considered.

The entire Scriptures are pervaded by the idea that what is holy and what is unholy in mankind do not originate in man himself, but in a higher region of existence, where the influences of good and evil have their beginnings. The holy Bible conceives the good as well as the evil as a connected whole, but with this difference, that the good - - which is the divine itself -- always appears as the absolute; while, on the other hand, the evil is represented as a real interruption of harmony. There is no second principle in Scripture, and the true Church constantly condemns the doctrine of Manicheism as incompatible with the Biblical idea of God. By removing the source of evil out of human nature, redemption is conceived as possible.

At the heads of these two kingdoms are the Trinity of the Godhead, the absolute good, and the devil and the evil angels as the opponents. Concerning the latter the follow-

ing facts pertinent to this discussion are freely taught in The kingdom of evil is called in Scripture the Scripture. * devil and his angels (Scafodos rai affedoc av zov Matthew 25,41 and Rev. 12,9); also, the kingdom of Satan (Babelled tou barava -- Matthew 12,26). The torms devil (Sid/Jokos) and Satan (6dravds) are used only in the singular to designate the central power of evil. He is also called BEEFEBOUL, appur zür Suchoviur Beelzebul, leader or ruler of the demons (Matt. 12,24.27). The subordinate spirits, which correspond conversely to the angels of God, are called, in general, evil angels. The evil angels are the fallen, eternally damned spirits, who are God's and man's enemies, and who seek to destroy the work of God. The demons, which we will consider later at some length, are evil angels.

The following are some of the pertinent facts which Scripture teaches concerning the devil and the evil angels, the kingdom of evil. The devil and his angels are eternally damned spirits; they are incapable of returning to the good; God has not prepared them any salvation, but they are re-

* For a complete discussion of the Scriptural doctrine of the devil see Dr. Theo. Engelder's "Die Wirksamkeit des Teufels unter den Menschen" in the Report of the Michigan District of the Missouri Synod, 1901.

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served in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day (Jude 6); they are condemned and therefore also despairing spirits, who shudder when they hear God's name (James 2,19); they shudder in terror and can only blaspheme and sin: they are sworn enemies of God and man: their leader is called "the enemy" (Matt. 13,28), and "Satan the edversary"; he and his innumerable angels are filled with flaming hatred toward God, the holy ones, and all that God has created; they are spirits and have great power; all human power cannot withstand the power of spirits, and their understanding far exceeds human understanding; they are rulers and powers (Eph. 6.12); their head is a strong armed man (Luke 11,21), a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5,8), a dragon with great power and authority (Rev. 13,2), from whom proceed power and signs and lying wonders (2 Thess. 2,9); he is wily (Eph. 6,11), a master of a thousand arts (2 Cor. 11,5), whose depths no man can know (Rev. 2,24); he is not almighty, but a creature, and cannot escape the government of God.

DEMONS

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they are TIVEUpdecka en spiritual essences of wickedness.

What is a $dst \mu \delta v to v$ or a $dst \mu \omega v$? These words, some hold, are derived from the Greek vorb $dst \omega$, to divide or apportion. Others, more recently, hold that it is a variation of the Greek $dsh \mu \omega v$, one who is well informed. The latter seems to be the more reasonable. However, whatever its derivation, we know that the term demon originated in Greek mythology and was introduced into Christianity through the Septuagint translations of the Hebrev "se'irim" and "shedhim". Returning to its origin in Greek mythology, we find that a demon was not at first an evil spirit, but a "tutelary deity" or a "godling". In Hesiod a demon is the name for the soul of a departed one, and in Eschylus' <u>Persians</u> Atossa applies the term to her deified husbend Darius.

Thus we have this for the origin of the term demon as found in the Now Testament. The $\delta d\mu \omega v$ of the Greek mythologies is one of the many spirits that determine the fate of human beings. At first, as has been exemplified, a demon was the ghost of a dead one; then, the ghost had to be duly propitiated; this led to their deification, so that in Homer they are immortal gods. At the time of Plato and Socrates they became known as guardian spirits. In this sense we read of locrates calling his indwelling genius his $\delta d \mu \omega v \omega v$, and he believed that it spoke to him and restrained him, but never

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impelled him. So much for the usage of the term degreev in Greek mythology and likely.

There are, however, demons to be found much earlier in the ancient domonologies. While in these ancient ethnic systems the same terms, of course, are not used, yet these ancient demons have some similarities to the demons of Scripture and are worthy of consideration.

A brief survey of demonology impresses one with the amazing antiquity and universality of such systems. Throughout the ages and in every known land there is found some belief in evil spirits or demons, together with its inevitable consequence, a recourse to incentations and other magical practices. In very ancient times, as the various monuments reveal, we find a belief in evil spirits and some attempts to propitiate them or secure their help or favor.

Belief in both good and evil spirits is commonly associated with either one or the other of two primitive and widespread forms of worship -- either to the personification of the forces of nature (which many believe to be the key to all mythologies), or else to animism (belief in the great with build in the providence of the dead). This last theory holds that all spirits were believed to be the souls of dead men, and that from this primitive animism all the elaborate systems of angelology, mythology, and demonology gradually developed.

This, however, is more conjecture, But it is a fact Decy Jackin, from first te.

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that among primitive peoples such rude forms of worship were found, but whether these prehistoric worshippers were motivated in the manner ascribed to them by these two theories is, of course, impossible to prove. It is also a fact that these primitive forms of worship have some features in common with the later and more elaborate ethnic systems; and it is also true that these again have some features, although few, which find some counterpart in the pages of Holy Scripture.

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Some idea of the universality and antiquity of demonology can be acquired by a consideration of the chief systems of ancient times. The deciphering of the cuneiform hieroglyphics of Babylon and Assyria have given the world. among other valuable information, a picture of the religious beliefs and practices of these ancient peoples. It has been found that, beside the official and public cult of the twelve great gods and subordinate deities, the Assyrians also had a more sacred and secret religion, one of sorcery and mystery, indicating the presence of an elaborate demonology. These lesser spirits are described and classified in an exact and elaborate hierarchy. That they were important we can see from the fact that King Assurbanipal ordered his scribes to make several copies of a great magical work, which consisted of incantations, conjurations, and imprecations against the evil spirits.

There is also another very important system of demonology of very ancient origin, but which still exists today, the remarkable Iranian demonology. This is presented in the Avesta, the sacred book of the (Mazdean) religion of Zoroaster. In this ancient religion the war between light and darkness, good and evil comes into greater prominence. Over against Ahura Mazda, the good god, with his hierarchy of holy spirits, there is arranged the dark kingdom of demons or daevas under the cruel Evil Spirit, Anro Mainyus, the demon of demons, who is always warring against the good god and his faithful servants such as Zoroaster.

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Although there are very marked differences between the domons of the Avesta and the devil of Scripture and Christian theology (Christianity is free from the dualism of the Mazdean system), still there is in both the great struggle between good and evil. The pictures of the struggles of Zoroaster in temptation by Anro Mainyus and his demons suggest some slight analogy with the temptations of various Christian saints under the assaults of Satan.

From the Avesta we turn to what some have termed Jewish demonology. Here we have no elaborate system as in the previous two. The mention of the evil spirit in the Old Testamont canonical books is very slight. But it is not altogether ignored: the devil tempted Adam and Eve; Satan tempted Job; Satan incited David to murder the prophet; an evil spirit came upon the false prophets; in Zechariah Satan's FRITZLAFF MEMORIAL LIBRARY CONCORDIA SEMINARY ST. LOUIS, MO. office is described; Saul is afflicted or possessed by an evil spirit. Some translate Isaiah 34,14: "And demons and monsters shall meet, and the hairy ones shall cry out one to another, there hath the lamia lain down, and found rest for horself." It is true that the Hebrew word translated hore as demons may mean only wild animals; but the $D^{5}7^{5}NW$, rendered literally here as hairy ones, is translated as demons by the Targum and Peshitta. Kent in the <u>Catholic</u> <u>Encyclopedia</u> believes that the "lamia" here represents the original Lilith, a spirit of the night who is the demon wife of Adam in Hebrew legend. However, most commentators hold that it is the Hebrew adjective meaning nocturnal. A much more elaborate development of Jewish demonology is found in the Book of Tobias, not included in the canon, as well as the Talmud and the Eidrashim.

It must be remembered that the demons mentioned in Scripture are distinctly a separate group and must not be confused with those of these ancient systems. However, these ancient demonologies bring out an important fact, and that is that belief in evil spirits and demons is <u>en integral part of</u> ments nature.

Returning to the origin of the term Jainew and its equivalents, we have brought out that the term found its way into the New Testament very likely through the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, where the words used of the gods of the nations are often translated demons.

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We have considered the use of the terms Sacpover and Sal بسمر in extra-Biblical usage; we shall now consider their use in the New Testament. While in classical usage the diminutive form of Salper -- Salperior -- is used synonymously and interchangeably with the noun and root form Saumer, the New Testament always uses Saumovcov, Saumer occuring really only once (Matt. 8,31; of Sacuroves) according to the best texts. Hence the chief word to consider is Saluovcov, As before demonstrated, in mythology this word gradually came to denote an inferior divinity or demon. In Acts 17,18 it still has that same meaning; St. Paul is suspected by some of the Epicureans and the Stoics of proclaiming first Saynovia -- strange (outlandish, foreign, un-Greek, and hence barbarian) gods -- to them. Luther must have felt the force of "strange" when he first translated this "seltsame Goetter" instead of his later translation "neue Goetter". Then there is 1 Cor. 10,20-22 to consider. Here Japaver has the Old Testament connotation of false gods or deities (as in Dout. 32,17), Envedr Sacporcous rai ου θε ŵ κ. τ. λ. . Paul here uses strong and terrible words: Karvwvous zwv Sacpovewv Tozaplov Sacpovewv and Eram Efgs Saynoview, the communion of demons, the oup of demons, and the table of demons. St. John in Rev. 9,20 speaks of demon-worship and idolatry as on the same plano: iva mi mpostuvne ouser zà Saquorea trai zà riduda

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τλ χρυβά... άρχυρά... χαλκά... λιάινα... φυλινα.
Scripture consistently characterizes these demons as
evil. The New Testament has no such word as ευδαιμιονείν or its cognates, so prevalent in extra-Biblical and pagan usage, which uses demons of good and evil spirits alike.
The Bible recognizes only one true God; He alone is δ
μακάριος Θεος.

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The Bible also shows us that demons are spirit-beings, for it uses the term synonymously with $z \stackrel{?}{=} \pi v \varepsilon \dot{v} \mu dz d$ (Luke 9,20: $z \stackrel{?}{=} \int de (\mu o v \cdot o v \dots z \stackrel{?}{=} \pi v \varepsilon \dot{v} \mu dz c z \stackrel{?}{=} \frac{1}{2} \int de (\mu o v \cdot dz \dots z \stackrel{?}{=} \frac{1}{2}$ also ten, verses seventeen and twenty: $z \stackrel{?}{=} \int de (\mu o v \cdot d \dots z \stackrel{?}{=} \frac{1}{2}$ $\pi v \varepsilon \dot{v} \mu dz d$), to denote unclean and unholy spirits, theroughly evil.

This brings up a peculiar fact with regard to the use of the adjective drawing as in connection with demons. This word, meaning unclean or impure, is not used in the Gospels except to describe the spirits; in the book of Acts it is used only once in a different connection, and in other places it is practically entirely used only of evil spirits. But why are they called unclean? Du Brau gives us this answer: "This nomenclature no doubt harks back to the impure and unclean spirit of idolatry. To the ennobled and regenerated Christian souls, uncleanness was inseparable from the pagans' worship of their lesser divinities, or demons, both from a physical and psychical point of view. This is ochoed by an emphatic longer and descriptive phrase, occuring only once, and this is in Luke 4,53: Trebud Saturovier and the free v This phrase is all-comprehensive." * Then he goes on to cite an excellent passage from Gibbon:

"It was the universal sentiment, both of the Church and of herotics, that the demons were the authors, the patrons, and the objects of idolatry. Those robellious spirits who had been degraded from the rank of angels and cast down into the infernal pit were still permitted to roam upon earth, to torment the bodies and seduce the minds of sinful men. The demons soon discovered and abused the natural propensities of the human heart toward devotion, and artfully withdrawing the adoration of mankind from their Greator, they usurped the place and honors of the Supreme Deity. By the success of their malicious contrivances they at once gratified their own vanity and revonge and obtained the only comfort of which they were yet susceptible -- the hope of involving the human species in the participation of their guilt and misery." **

Continuing the discussion of the New Testament usage of degreever, we find a number of passages treating the manifestations of demon influence. Demon influence may manifest itsolf in religious asceticism and formalism (1 Tim. 4,1-3), in degeneration to uncleanness (2Pet. 2,10-12), and departing from faith is a sign of it. Although all unbelievers are subject to demon influence (Eph. 2,2), their evil activities are directed especially against spiritually minded

*	Concordia	Theological	Monthly	Vol.	10	No.	4	P. :	276.
**	Gibbon.	Decline and	Fall Vo	1. 1	P.	523.			-

believers (Eph. 6,12; 1 Tim. 4, 1-3), who, therefore, are in need of the protection of God in addition to their prayers and bodily control. At the bottom of idol worship is demon worship (1 Cor. 10,19-22), which reaches its culmination in modern devil worship and Satanism. Demon activity seems to have been at its height -- as might naturally be expected -at the time of Christ and the epostolic age; and Rev. 9,1-11 seems to indicate that there will be a similar outburst immodiately before the day of judgment.

Finally, what are, according to the New Testament, the methods used by the domons? Dr. James Knight lists them in seven groups: *

1. They blind the minds of unbelievers (2 Cor. 4,4), darkening their understanding (Eph. 4,18), alienating them from the life of God because of ignorance (Col. 1,9), blinding them with wrong thoughts about God, prejudices of all kinds, earthly philosophy and false reasonings about spiritual things, or sowing tares, filling men's minds with earthly things, idols (appearances, shams), cares and pleasures.

2. They work in men unconsciously, so that these become children of wrath (Eph. 2,1-2).

3. Like the fowls of the air they snatch away the word of truth (Matt. 15,19).

4. They produce a false peace (Luke 11,21), so that the wicked have no bands in their death (Ps. 73).

5. They incite all manner of opposition to the truth (2 Tim. 2,25.26).

* Victoria Institute Feb. 16, 1931 P. 9f.

6. They counterfeit the true work of God, sowing tares so like wheat that more human skill is unable to discriminate (Matt. 13,25-39). The real test is fruit. "In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil" (1 John 3,10).

7. They seek to obtain possession of men as their instruments.

And with this last we are led from the discussion of demons to the actual burden of this treatise.

DEMONIAC POSSESSION

The most common term used in the New Testament to signify demoniac possession is decrevitered (as in Matt. 4,24). But there are also other terms; among these, "having a spirit of an unclean devil" (as in Luke 4,33: exur Trevina Sachoviou and aprov) and "oppressed by the devil" (as in Acts 10,38: marad Surabrevers uno coi Sico Solov) are the more common.

That the devil and the demons can possess people has been shown quite clearly from Scripture in previous paragraphs. It remains for us now to define possession by demons.

Fodily possession, which this paper is treating, must first be distinguished from spiritual possession, in which Satan takes entire possession of body and soul. Quenstedt says of the latter: "The devil possesses the understanding of the ungodly in the highest degree, so that they neither see nor understand the light of the Gospel, which is necessary for their salvation, 2 Cor. 4,4. He possess, their will, so that they agree with the evil, their desires, so that they desire the sinful and poisonous pleasures with greatest lust. He possesses their heart, so that they do not believe, their ears, so that they do not hear the Word of God, their eyes; so that they do not pondor the works of God, their tongue, so that they do not pray, their voice, so that they do not praise God, their hands, so that they do no good, their feet, so that they do not walk the way of the righteous." * Thus Satan rules over all unbelievers; but when the highest point is reached; then we speak of spiritual possession.

Olshausen marks another distinction:

"What peculiar form of influence of the powers of darkness do the Scriptures denote by the name darpertyopetvot -- demoniacs? For, although they likewise connect moral evil in mankind with the influence of the devil (E.g., John says of Judas Iscariot: Setan entered into him, chap. 15,27), yet the representatives of evil among mankind (false prophets and antichrists) are never called domoniacs. In the case of the latter, on the contrary, we always perceive appearances of sickness, generally convulsions of an epileptic nature, and a derangement or loss of personal consciousness. But still this state of sickness does not appear as the characteristic of demoniacs; for it is evident that the same maladies may, in one case, be of demoniacal origin, in another, not; for instance, one who is dumb in consequence of organic defect, perhaps an injury to the tongue, would never be called a demoniac." **

* Translation from the quotation in the German by Dr. Theo. Engelder which was taken from <u>Baieri Comp.</u>, ed. W., p. 137.

Olshausen Commentary on Matthew.

Another distinction must be made between demoniac possession and what is commonly known now as obsession. Obsession, in comparison with possession, is very frequent. It consists in the domination of conduct by some fixed idea; for example, Dr. Johnson of English literature, always level-headed, felt himsolf compelled to touch every post he passed on the street. The forms of obsession are innumerable and, for the most part, harmless. However, they do become a form of real mental torture when almost every one of these fixed ideas becomes a challenging question, such as, What does this mean? or, Why am I doing this? Sometimes these compulsive ideas are of a religious nature, which most frequently take the form of blasphemy. This is often mistaken for possession. Ribet makes this distinction:

"Possession is the invasion by demon of the body of a living man, whose organ he exercises in his own name and at will, as if the body had become his. In possession the spirit acts from within and seems to be substituting in the body for the soul which animates and moves it. Obsession, on the other hand, is an extrinsic compulsion, which, while leaving to the mind the consciousness of its vital and motor action upon the organs, nevertheless, imposes itself with such violence that the man feels within him two beings and two principles in mutual conflict: the one external and despotic, which seeks to invade and dominate, the other internal, that is to say, the soul itself, which suffers and struggles against this foreign domination. When such attack or invasion has not been successfully resisted, or when resistance has been worn out, further dovelopment may take one of two forms. The first is demoniacal somnambulism, in which the original personality disappears altogether, being displaced by the second or invading personality, which was at first merely a compulsive state. This seems to be the rule with young people, in whom their own personality is not yet so strongly developed as in adults. The second form is a gradual fusion of the two consciousnesses, in proportions as the dominating influence is accepted or submitted to; the individual in this case remains conscious of who he is, but his character suffers a complete change for the worse; Mr. Hyde has overcome Dr. Jekyll."*

With these distinctions, demoniac possession stands alone as a poculiar and distinct phenomenon in the New Tostament. The bost and most accurate definition of demoniac possession we have found is that of the Swiss scholar Maximilian Perty in Dr. Graebner's Demoniac Possession: **

"Possession is that awful condition in which man appears to be seized by a foreign and evil being, which during the attacks controls the body of its victim as if it were its own possession, maltreats and tortures this body in every possible manner, causes the features to become distorted into a ferocious mocking, sometimes diabolical distortion, and -- this is characteristic -- causes the victim to express disrespect for religion in a bold, cynical manner. The phenomena of bodily possession are so dreadful and at the same time so strong that but a little acuteness of observation is needed in order that the true relation may be recognized and also the unjust diagnosis of abnormal states, as if they represented possession, might be avoided. Possession may be assumed on three grounds: hatred of religion, the power of divining secret things, and psychic phenomena. Persons thus afflicted know about the sins of those present and in the most reckless manner publish such information. They also recognize the spiritual power of those who resist them (as in the case of Jesus), know their thoughts, hence are able to understand unknown tongues and are able even to utter in such tongues some few words or sentences. At the same time the bodies are propelled by invisible forces, and there are phenomena of light and sound, The native of Gadara who was possessed (Luke 8, 26-39) shows the characteristic marks of possession; 1. By the sight of Jesus he becomes victim of an outburst of rage. He recognizes Jesus as his opponent, but also knows the divine nature and sacred mission

Victoria Institute Feb. 16, 1931 pp. 15 & 16.
 Concordia Theological Monthly 1933 p. 589f.

of Jesus. 2. He has supernatural strength. He breaks his chains and escapes into the desert. 3. The evil spirits, recognizing that the end of their activities is soon at hand, asked permission to pass into the herd of swine. Jesus permitted this, possibly in order to put an end to their activity so far as human souls are concerned."

Thus we are brought to the actual cases of demoniac possession in the New Testament. The stories are well known and need not be repeated in their entirety. In summary, the Now Testament gives us the following information.

According to a general concept of the various passages, domons onter human beings as a second personality (Luke 8, 30); they dwell in man as in a house (Matt. 12,44; Luke 11, 24); they dread to be banished into the abyss (Luke 8,31), or they fear to be driven out from a land they love, pre- ferring-to inhabit the bodies of swine. Demons torture human beings (Matt. 15,22), driving them whither they do not care to go (Luke 8,29). So possessed are demoniace at times that they live in sepulchres and other lonely places, endangering the passers-by (Matt. 3,28); they are unable to be bound by the strongest fetters (Mark 5,3-6); they even speak as though they themselves were demons, using the plural when afflicted with many demons (Matt. 8,29; Mark 1, 24.9; Luke 4,54; 8,28).

The manifestations of demoniac possession in the New Testament are extremely varied. The demoniac son (Mark 9, 14-27) is represented as seized with convulsions, rolling

on the ground and foaming at the mouth. At first he rolled about dumb upon the ground, but later (according to the account in Luke 9,39) the child screamed at every attack. and the evil spirit bruised him. Both Mark and Luke record symptoms of epilepsy; the Matthew account omits all these details, but especially characterizes the disease of the demoniac son as lunacy (17,15). The demoniac at the synagog in Capernaum (Mark 1, 23-28) does not exhibit the foam characteristic of epilepsy, but shows symptoms of epileptic hysteria, especially since Luke (4.35) tells that the fit did not harm him. The demoniacs of Gadara (Mark 5,2-5; Luke 8,27-29; Matt. 8,28f.) manifest superhuman strength, solf injury, dwelling among tombs, threatening gestures, and nakedness as characteristics of bodily possession. Other complaints of a less serious nature are dumbness (Matt. 9,32; Luke 11,14), or blindness and dumbness (Matt. 12,22), although the expulsion of demons is not mentioned in the accounts of the healing of the dumb and blind in Natt. 9, 27-31; Mark 7, 32.37; 8, 22-26; 10, 46-52. In addition to the latter we find that Luke (4,40.41; 6,17.18; 7,21) regards the curing of demoniacs as a special phase of healing, as also in Acts (8,7), where demoniacs are distinguished from the paralytic and the lame. On the other hand, Luke tells us (14.11-16) that the woman bowed with a spirit of infirmity eighteen years was bound by Satan; even the fever of. Poter's mother-in-law seems to have been believed demoniac

(Into 4,52.39). After caroful consideration we find that the healings at Caperneum (Matt. 8,16ff.) were mainly exercises. This formed a large part of the activity both of Jesus (Mark 1, 30) and of the twelve (Mark 3,14,15; 6,7.13; Matt. 10,8).

John the Baptist, because of his seeming gloom and his ascoticism, had among some the reputation of a demoniac (Natt.11,18; Luke 7,35). This charge was even brought against Jesus (Natt. 9,54; 12,24; Mark 3,22; 3,30; Luke 11, 16; John 17,20; 8,48; 10,20). The New Testament states further that it was no easy matter to distinguish between spirits of evil and spirits of God (Natt. 24,11.24; 1 John 4,1-3), so that the ability to discern the spirits was considered a special gift (1 Cor. 12,10; 14,29).

As to the actual exorcism the New Testament Scriptures give us the following facts. In Jesus' exorcism we find that the demoniacs are agitated at his approach (Mark 1,23; 3,6.11; 9,20), and the evil spirits recognize him as the Son of God and implore him not to termont them before their time (Matt. 8,29). Jesus rebukes them (Mark 1,25; 3,12); this rebuke is often enough to exercise (Matt. 8,16; Mark 1,25; 9,25), even at a distance (Mark 7,29.30). The victim is often quiet and calm after the exercism (Mark 5,15; 7, 30), or sometimes there is a loud cry (Mark 1,26) to show that the ovil one is gone.

The historicity of Jesus' successful treatment of

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demoniacs is admitted in principle oven by some of the critical school. Exorcisms were common at that time and were naturally expected from one who claimed to be a Messianic prophet. The chief proof for their historicity is found in the statements of Jesus which tell of the importance of his exorcism for himself and his activity as the Messiah (Matt. 11,5; Luke 7,22). It is clear from such passages as Matt. 12,25-52 and Luke 11,17-23 that Jesus finaly boli h the existence of demons (Cp. also Matt. 12,43-45; Luke 11,24-26), and that, like his contemporaries, also in exorcism (Matt. 12,27; Luke 11,9). The exercism of demons implied the weakening and destruction of the kingdom of Satan (Matt, 12,26; Luke 11,18), and were considered victories over the principle of evil. It seems, from allusions to the "strong man" in Matt. 12, 29 and /Luke 11,21.22 that Jesus deduced his victory over the demons from his previous victory over their lord Satan in the temptation (Luke 10,18/20).

Exorcism continued to be practiced in the Christian Church after Christ's ascension by the apostles (Acts 5, 16; 8,7; 16,16-18; 19,12-16). The gift of exorcism was also included among the charisms (1 Cor. 12,10; 1 John 3,, 8). In post-apostolic times exorcisms were still performed. Ireneus (II: 49,3) says that certain exorcisms

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"mightily and truly expel demons," and Tertullian places the belief in the form of a challenge (<u>Apol.</u> 23). Exorcists are definitely mentioned as special officials as early as Cyprian (<u>Epist.</u> 16).

Demoniac possession and exorcisms are found in many old writings. Josephus (<u>Ant. 7,6.3</u>) pronounces the demons to be the souls of wicked men and also narrates the cure of a demoniac (<u>Ant. 8,2.3</u>). Justin Martyr explains the nature of the demoniacs (<u>Apol. 1, c. 16, p. 14, edit. Braun</u>). Fhilostratus (IV,20,25) records of Appollonius Tyaneus also that he exorcised evil spirits.

The belief in demoniac possession is found also in the teaching of all the great writers of the Church in the earlier and later Middle Ages. Gregory the Great, Isadore of Seville, and John of Damascus have much to say of the evil operations of demons. The great theologians and speculative thinkers of the Church of the Middle Ages discussed the origin, nature, and operations of these powers in almost every aspect. Anselm, Bernard, Feter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas never doubted the Scriptural facts of demoniac possession. The literature of the Middle Ages is saturated with this belief.

Even the reformers, although they revolted from much which they regarded as belonging to medieval superstition *,

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^{*} For a detailed account of this exaggeration of superstition in the Middle Ages see Andrew D. White's <u>History</u> of the Warfare of Science with Theology, Vol. II.

were emphatic in maintaining belief in demoniac possession as described in Scripture. In essentials Luther, Calvin, and the English reformers were practically of one mind upon the subject.

Having stated the Scripture teaching concerning demoniac possession, we proceed now to the various objections to it.

OBJECTIONS

Sconer or later the Christian theologian is confronted with the question whether or not such cases of demoniac possession are merely the product of traditional ideas which flourished in a pre-scientific age and cannot be harmonized with a scientific view of the life of man. The progress of modern scientific conceptions generally has tended to undermine all belief in spirits. The scientific descoveries of modern times have favored a purely materialistic and mechanistic theory of the universe. The keenest minds have declared themselves unable to discover any but material causes in the universe. Such theories, if they do not tend entirely to disprove the existence of God, seem to make his interventions in the world-order extremely im-On this view, spirit beings, if such exist, live probable. in a realm apart and have no influence upon the world-order. With such a conception of the universe in vogue various accounts of the intervention of spirit beings are regarded

morely as superstition or imagination.

The evidence seems to show that, outside of the Roman Catholic Church and certain orthodox Protestant bodies, it has been readily assumed that these evil spiritual powers do not exist, and never have been responsible for the spiritual, moral, and physical evil of the world, as Scripture Manual teaches. A vast majority of Protestant churches make only the barest reference to the subject, and many regard Satan as a legendary feature of religion. Some philosophers and theologians have attempted to explain the origin of evil as being a result of the conflict between the lower and higher parts of man's nature, without any reference to the operations of Satan or demons.

All this is the result of the rationalistic approach to religion developed in the nineteenth century. Sommler, an outspoken rationalist of Germany, applied the new rationalistic approach to the theology of Christianity. The Scripture accounts of demoniac possession became subject to rationalistic interpretation at his hands. He was the first to assert that Jesus only accommodated himself to the popular belief in demoniac possession. A long line of rationalistic commentators followed him in this view. Others took different rationalistic views of demoniac possession. Schleiermacher regards the popular idea of

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Satan and his demons as a synthesis of various conceptions which flowed together from different sources, hence there is really no demoniac possession; Martensen teaches that the devil is only an evil principle, thus ruling out actual possession. Dr. Garvie in the <u>Encyclopedia Britannica</u> cites various views of the devil held by the famous Christian teachers of the ninetcenth century, most of whom ignore the Scriptural and traditional view; Garvie himself rogards belief in Satan as an unessential article of Christian faith, and agrees with the accommodationists as far as demoniac possession is concerned.

It is impossible to cite all those who foster the accommodation theory. It is sufficient to quote one of such "Christian" clergymen of today. The Rev. David Smith* says this: "The idea is of course simply a fantastic notion of a dark age unskilled in natural science, and it was nothing strange that the people of the Now Testament should have entertained it." He is speaking of demoniac possession. And, speaking of Jesus' part in it, he continues: "That he should thus share the limitation of his age is at first somewhat of a shock to faith." Then he takes all the shock out of it by showing that Jesus dealt with the demoniacs as a physician would -- he humors the patient. Jesus knew all the while that he was not really possessed at all. * David Smith Days of His Flesh p. 105ff.

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This is none other than the accommodation theory of the old rationalists.

Professor Henry C. Sheldon has another theory of accommodation, doubting the true Scripture teaching of demoniac possession on the basis of the following:

"A complete survey of New Testament facts still suggests the inquiry whether it is necessary to construe the stories of demon possession with strict literalness. Here two considerations in particular come into account. The first of these is found in the peculiarity of the Jewish religious dialect. As in its impassioned phrase God was often named as agent where we should not think of attributing the event to Him, so likewise a freer reference was made to Satanic agency than suits our mode of speaking." *

Then he proceeds to show that a large part of the New Testament makes no real account of demoniac possession. He concludes with this statement:

"A combination of these two considerations ... lends considerable color to the contention that it was beyond the design of Christ to pronounce definitely on the precise facts in the condition of the so-called demoniacs, that He dealt with the cases which He encountered like a practical physician, and accommodated Himself largely to the religious dialect of His age and country." **

Dr. Grachner cites a suitable answer to this theory of accommodation by Professor George Parks Fisher of Yale University (Manual of Christian Evidences);

"The opinion has been adopted by not a few Christian scholars that the language of Christ on this subject was uttered simply by way of accommodation to a prevalent belief and in order to effect the cure of those

* Sheldon System of Christian Doctrine p. 268ff.

ww Ibid.

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who were under the influence of it. In other words, He entered into the idea of the persons thus afflicted with disease -- humored the delusion, as it were -as a means of causing their recovery and of assuring them of it. Their mistaken belief was harmless, from a religious point of view, and Christ was under no obligation to disabuse them of it, anymore than to instruct them on the causes of disease in general and to clear their minds of other medical delusions."

"Christian scholars to whom this solution is not satisfactory are content to accept as real the fact of demoniacal possession at that epoch when the minds of men were oppressed and distracted by the inward conflict with evil. It was an extraordinary crisis in the spiritual life of individuals and of society. Too little is known of the supernatural world to warrant a dognatic denial of the possibility of such an influence exercised by evil spirits." *

If Jesus did know that the demoniacs were not devil possessed, but still acted as if they were, then we have a Savior who could act a lie and the cases of Jesus! exorcism fall under a fatal moral stigma as far as the believer is concerned. But the fact is that Jesus never lowered Himself to any such falsehood, however strongly and widely such a belief might be held. Horst in his Zauber-Bibliothek says fittingly enough: "It is vain to clear away from the Gospel narratives the devil and his demons. Such an exegesis is opposed to the whole faith of the world at that If we are to make these statements now mean just what time. we please, why did not a single man in the ancient world understand them so? Are we become wiser? Then let us congratulate ourselves on our good fortune; but we cannot, on Cp. Concordia Theological Monthly 1933 p. 591

that account, compel these venerable writers to say what in their own time they neither could nor would say."

Closely associated with the accommodation theory is the theory of the limitation of the knowledge of Jesus. The Rev. H. G. Wood says: "Jesus Himself clearly believed in demons and saw a proof of the nearness of the Kingdom in the downfall of their power. He apparently accepted the popular diagnosis of disease as due to demonic influence. But for faith this raises the question of the limitations of the knowledge of Jesus." *

Such have been the attempts also of others to plumb the mind of Jesus. According to them, Jesus is revealed as making Himself ridiculous to the readers of the Gospels by going through the motions of exorcising devils when no devils even existed. Now, Jesus Himself uses His miracles of exorcism as part of His credentials. He says (Luke 11,20): "If I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." Jesus also used a formula in exorcising which expressly recognizes that a demon had possessed a soul. He also gave his disciples this power, the New Testament tells us. Bishop Gore makes an enlightoning assertion:

"People glibly say that Christ shared the delusions of the age as to the existence of evil spirits. Well, He certainly talked of evil spirits. He certainly look-

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ed out upon the evil of the world, and He saw in it a rebel will behind men's will. 'An enemy,' He said, 'hath done this.' But I have yet to learn what is the superior wisdom which can say that that estimate of things is wrong in spite of and in the face of the experience of all the greatest saints of God. I do not think that He was deluded. I see no right that men have to assume the sort of omniscience which should declare Him in this respect deluded. I believe His Word." *

Others have reised objections to accounts of demoniac possession in the New Testament on the grounds that St. John's Gospel has no exemples of it; they hold that John, writing at a later time, could look back more samely upon the whole problem and finally concluded that demoniac possession should be omitted as something untonable. The answer to John's emission of the cures of demoniacs is found in his relation to the synoptists; the latter had included a sufficient number of examples, and John passed over them in silence. In general, in John's Gospel the actions of Jesus served only as a point of connection for the discourses he wishes to communicate. In addition, the view which John held of the devil (op. 8,44; 13,27) was in no respect different than the others.

Still others doubt the New Testement cures of demoniacs on the basis of the fact that no demoniacs are mentioned in the Old Testament. Kendrick gives a substantial reply:

"The doctrine of demoniacs and their influence had but little influence and currency among the people before the captivity; even if, therefore, the kingdom of

* Cp. Concordia Theological Monthly 1933 p. 591.

darkness did produce similar manifestations (as at the present day), yet they were not recognized as such. After the captivity, forms quite analogous to those of the New Testament may have existed; but the prophetic writings of that period contain little historical matter, and hence it is easily explained how we meet with no references to the subject in them. At the time the apocryphal books were written, spiritual life in general was at a low ebb among the Israelitish people; and for that very reason the opposing principles were but little developed." \$

Then there are those who disbelieve the Scripture teaching of demoniacs on the assumption that there are no such cases today. It is still a live question whether or not there are demoniacs today. This will be discussed at some length under the heading of Modern Demoniac Possession.

Now we come to the most recent objections. The perversion of the Biblical conception of demoniac possession begun by the rise of rationalism has extended today even to the realm of modern psychological science. To the latter the New Testament accounts of possession are the most vulnerable of Scripture teachings. Hence, the most popular theory of demon possession today holds that the Gospel demoniacs really suffered from pathological conditions, which in the light of present knowledge are to be regarded as due to "hysteria, dislocations of personality, the multiple psychic states, and the capacity of dissociated psychic states to behave in the most amazingly life-like manner."

* Olshausen Commentary on Matthew p. 365.

The demonic part of them is held to be a firmly rooted current belief or superstition with regard to evil spirits and their power to take possession of men.

T. J. Hudson expresses a view which is typical of many present day psychologists: "The exercist is now replaced by the family doctor, who is generally scientific to the last degree, and accordingly endeavors to get rid of the spirit by physic or clysters. Recently, however, such cases have been treated successfully by means of hypnotism, which is the obvious remedy, in case the hypnotist realizes the power of suggestion." *

A complete fusion of the objections theological and scientific is made by Carl J. Schindler in his treatmont of the demoniacs of the Gospels. ** He holds that nothing of faith is taken away if actual possession by demons is denied. According to him they all suffer from some natural diseases and the fact that Jesus healed these diseases was as much an evidence of the power of the Heavenly Father over sin and weakness as the healings of the lame and paralytic. He maintains further that the disciples had no occasion to trouble themselves concerning a new conception and a new terminology for demoniac possession. He explains the healing of the dumb man in Matt. 9,32ff as a cure of hysteria; he holds the same belief concerning the healings in Matt. 12,22ff and Mark 7,32ff. Of the seven devils which

* Hudson The Law of Psychic Phenomena p. 264. ** Lutheran Church Quarterly 1928 p. 402ff.

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possessed Mary Magdalene he says that it is best to think of them as a number traditionally fixed or as showing seven different symptoms in the description of the disease. Schindler describes the demoniacs who recognize Jesus as the Son of God as afflicted by a neurosis common with sensitive people. Of the case of the daughter of the Canaanite woman. he believes that she was either mentally deranged or suffered from some other bodily disease. In the accounts of demoniacs in Matt. 17,14; Mark 9,17; Luke 9,37 he believes he has found the type of the disease in epilepsy. The fact that Luke mentions lunacy, he holds, is due to the fact that apparently an especially powerful influence upon epileptics was attributed to the moon. Yet he admits: "In healing the boy, the Savior performed a real miracle." For him, the demoniacs of Gadara, too, have a solution in modern psychiatry: "The description of the malady seems to indicate a case of demontia praccox, often called schizophrenia or juvenile dementia." Yet he later admits the following: "The American psychiatrists, E. Strecker and F. Ebaugh, speak of this disease as the mystery of psychiatry. Its cause and pathology are unknown, its outlook hopeless." Thus he goes on and on trying to change the Scriptural facts of demoniacs according to scientific discoveries. There are many more similar objections, but it is not necessary to mention them, since they all attribute demoniac

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possession to simple disease.

The Scriptures, however, never confound possession with disease. Jesus Himself (Luke 15,32) expressly distinguishes between the two as he says: "Behold I cast out demons (Ex / Salle Salperes) and do cures (rai idbeis ETOZEXio)." Scripture distinguishes the two by using different terms also in other places: "He cast out spirits with his word; and all'that were sick he healed (Matt. S.16)." "They brought to him all that were ill (Tavzas zous harws ELOVE AS), and that were possessed with demons (Kai tous Saunov (gonevous), and he healed many that were troubled with divers diseases and he cast out many demons (Merk 1. 32-34)." "They presented to him all sick people that were takon with divers diseases (Trock chais vobocs) and torments (Basavous), and such as were possessed by demons (Supercover) and lunatics (62274240 perous), and those who have the palsy (Tofdaveckovs), and he cured them (Matt. 4,24)."

It is readily admitted that certain nervous diseases, as hysteria, epilepsy, idiocy, and mania, have symptoms similar to possession. But there are also very marked differences. James Wnight shows them most clearly: *

* Victoria Institute Feb. 16, 1931 p. 22.

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"First, there is the automatic presentation and the persistent and consistent acting out of a new personality. This is shown by the categorical assertions of the person speaking declaring that he is a demon, and often giving his name and dwelling place; secondly, by the discriminating use of the pronouns, the demon always speaking of himself in the first person, of the spectators in the second, and of the subject in the third, regarding him as in the meantime unconscious and practically out of court. A similar discrimination applies to titles and epithets, and as already mentioned the new personality manifests itself in sentiments, declarations, facial expressions and physical manifestations, all harmonizing with the above assumption . Another and very important differentiation mark of demon possession is the evidence which it gives of knowledge and intellectual power not possessed by the subject, nor explicable on any pathological hypothesis. Finally, with the change of personality there is a com-plex change of moral character, debased and malicious, having an extreme aversion and hatred to God, and especially to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian religion.

Those arguments will be considered at greater length in the second large section which immediately follows. This brings us to the end of the objections to the Scriptural teaching on demoniacs. We have reaffirmed the true Scripture doctrine, and we conclude this section with the words of William Mountford:

"In the Gospels, if there be any one thing which would seem plainer than another, because of the many times when it is mentioned, and the various ways in which it is presented, and the solemn manner also in which it is complicated with the highest claims of Jesus as the Christ, -- that one thing would seem to be the reality and certainty that there have been demoniacs." *

* Wm. Mountford Miracles Past and Present, p. 117.

MODERN DEMONIAC POSSESSION

Among the many objections to the Scriptural teaching of demoniac possession there is one which is based on the assumption that there are no cases of demoniac possession to be found outside Scripture. Is this true? What are we to think when we read of headlines like these: "Capuchin Monk Recalls Victory Over Beelzebub" (Omaha World Herald, May 18,1929), "White-haired Monk Drives Devils From Iowa Woman" (Des Moines Register, Feb. 16,1936)? What should be our opinion when we hear of such cases as Gwynneth Morley, the London girl, and the "Poltergeist" (<u>New Orleans Times-</u> <u>Picayuno</u>, Nov. 1, 1925) ? We shall try to find the answers to such questions in the following considerations.

Professor Oesterreich in his latest book <u>Possession</u>, <u>Demoniacal and Other</u> gives instance after instance of cases for proof that there is still evidence of demoniacs today; his instances range from the second century down to the nineteenth. We shall take the latest cases reported and held to be authentic by those who wrote of them and consider them in the light of what we know of the demoniacs of Scripture.

One case of demoniac possession in the nineteenth century is reported by Dr. Justinus Kerner of Swabia. The patient was a woman of 34 years; up to this time her life had been irreproachable. Without any definite cause, it seemed, in August of 1830 she was seized with convulsions during which

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a strange voice uttered diabolic discourses through her mouth. As soon as this voice began to speak (it professed to be the voice of an unhappy dead man) her individuality disappeared and gave place to another. Her own individuality reappeared in all its integrity and reason when she retired to rest.

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When the demon possessed her he shouted, swore, and raged in a most terrible fashion, especially cursing God and everything sacred. Bodily measures and medicine produced no change, nor did a pregnancy and the suckling which followed it. The only thing which frustrated the demon for a time was continual prayer, to which she applied herself with greatest perseverance.

For five months all the resources of medicine were tried in vain. In fact, two demons began to speak in her; they played, as it were, the raging multitude within her, barked like dogs, and mewed like cats. When she began to pray the demons flung her into the air, swore, and made horrible noises through her mouth. When the demons left her in peace, she came to herself, and burst into sobbing and lamentation when she was told of her actions and when she saw the injuries inflicted upon her by blows and falls.

Before she was brought to Dr. Kerner, he was told that one of the demons had been expelled by hypnotic treatment, but now the remaining demon made all the more turmoil. Prayer was also disagreeable to the remaining one; when the woman wished to kneel down to pray the demon tried to prevent her with all his might, and if she persisted he forced her jaws apart and made her utter a diabolical laugh or whistle. She could eat only a soup of black bread and water; as soon as she ate anything better, the demon rose up within her and cried: "Carrion should eat nothing good!" and took away her plate. She often fasted for two or three days; on these days the demon kept quiet. *

Dr. James Knight reports the case of a boy of four, a son of respectable parents, well brought up. Occasionally this boy was attacked by fits of a peculiar nature: his countenance changed and became satanic, his voice changed into a devilish voice uttering horrible talk, profane, filthy, obscone, and blasphemous. His vocabulary was like that of a very depraved adult man. His otherwise gentle nature changed for the worse; there followed attacks on his pet dog with any instrument at hand. When he awoke again he knew nothing of his abnormal state. Dr. Knight commonts:

"Now Jekyll-Hyde theories of alternating personality will not fit here. Jekyll and Hyde, to speak in the plural, were both adults with a long trail of personal experience behind them. But where did a boy of four get even such a vocabulary? We know both the

Kerner Nachricht um dem Vorkommen des Besessenseins p. 27

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extent and content of the vocabulary of such a boy, and it is neither profane nor filthy, much less blasphemous. How account for the change of features, of voice, of behavior? A Hindu or Theosophist may mutter something about Karma and reincarnation, but if we understand that doctrine it is supposed to make for reformation and upward progress, whereas in this and similar cases the change of personality is for the worse, downward with a vengeance, and invariably and invetorately opposed to God and all goodness. Theories of split consciousness, of dissociated personality, are to be found in most books on hypnotism and psycho-therapeutics, but they raise more difficulties than they profess to solve, and Sir Isaac Newton long ago laid down the useful principle that when two explanations are possible of the same phenomena, we should always take the simpler, the one which involves the assumption of less machinery. In all these cases that simp-ler solution seems to be the invasion of one person's will by enother and a dominating will, almost always an ovil one." *

The theories mentioned in the latter part of this quotation will be taken up later in connection with the objections to modern demoniac possession.

The classic instance of modern demon possession is that of the case of Gottliebin Dittus, a girl of twenty-five who became a parishioner of Pfarrer J. C. Blumhardt in 1842 at Noettlingen, Wuerttemberg, Germany. The accounts which Blumhardt makes of his experiences in this case all the way up to its final cure are blood-curdling. Dr. Theo. Graebner says of this case: "From every standpoint it is probably the most horrible case in the history of demonology. After reading his account, one is left with a feeling of astonishment, not that the girl finally was liberated of the demons

* Victoria Institute p. 14.

that ensconced themselves in her poor body, but that Blumhardt and his elders did not go stark raving mad when they witnessed the closing scenes of the possession. Concerning the truthfulness of the account there cannot be the slightest doubt." * For a full account of this amazing case, see any biography of Blumhardt.

There are many more instances of such reports of demon possession today, but it is not necessary to describe them all. ** So far we have considered those cases which have occurred in Christian lands only.

* Concordia Theological Monthly 1935 p. 598f.

** For other cases see <u>Concordia Theological Monthly</u> 1933 (pp. 599-603). Here an Episcopal clergyman writing in the <u>Living Church</u> of March 28, 1921 describes a case of a woman of fifty-five whom the clergyman considered without a doubt a true demoniac.

Also are recorded some notable cases in the personal experiences of Dr. Carl A. Wickland of Chicago, who has experimented with hypnotic treatment in such cases.

Andrew Lang in his The Making of Religion has found certain characteristic marks of modern demoniac possession.

The Rev. C. H. Hilmer of Kinmswick, Missouri has a detailed account of a demoniac whom he encountered in 1907 during his missionary travels in Oklahoma.

Dr. Theo. Graebner cites a personal experience with a demoniac boy in Minnesota.

For still other instances see Dr. Theo. Engelder's essay in the report of the Michigan District of the Missouri Synod, 1901.

Synod, 1901. The latter contains also an evaluation of the cases of modern demoniac possession.

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During the last century there has arisen a large amount of literature written especially by foreign missionaries concerning demoniac possession in pagan lands. The evidences seem to point to the assumption that demoniac possession is found much more frequently in pagan countries than in Christianized provinces, as one might naturally expect. These accounts by missionaries are most convincing, as the following paragraphs will demonstrate.

Missionary Joseph Wolff reports a case of real possession in Falestine. Ellis in his <u>Polynesian Researches</u> describes how the pagen priests on the Sandwich Islands falls into a paroxysm and prophesies under influence of the demons. Missionary J. Leighton testifies that demon possession is a common thing in Africa. Dr. Theo. Graebner points out the opinions and experiences of various missionaries, all of whom have a firm belief in modern demoniac possession. *

The best account of modern demoniac possession in foreign lands is that of Dr. Nevius, missionary in China for forty years. During these years he had occasion to witness demon possession in all its forms. Through a questionnaire addressed to his fellow missionaries in China he supplemented his own experiences with those of others. No second-hand

* Cp. Concordia Theological Monthly 1933 p. 593-596.

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evidence was admitted. The facts thus collected are sum-

marized as follows: *

"1. Certain abnormal physical and mental phenomena such as have been witnessed in all ages and among all nations, and attributed to possession by demons, are of frequent occurrence in China and other nations at this day, and have been generally referred to the same cause.

2. The supposed demoniac at the time of possession passes into an abnormal state, the character of which varies indefinitely, being marked by depression and melancholy, or vacancy and stupidity, amounting sometimes almost to idiocy; or it may be that he becomes ecstatic or ferocious and malignant.

3. During transition from the normal to the abnormal state the subject is often thrown into paroxysms more or less violent, during which he sometimes falls on the ground senseless or foams at the mouth, presenting symptoms similar to those of epilepsy or hysteria.

4. The intervals between these attacks vary indefinitely from hours to months, and during those intervals the physical and mental condition of the subject may.'se in every respect healthy and normal. The duration of the abnormal states varies from a few minutes to several days. The attacks are sometimes mild and sometimes violent. If frequent and violent the physical health suffers.

5. During the transition period the subject often retains more or less of his normal consciousness. The violence of the paroxysms is increased if the subject struggles against and endeavors to repress the abnormal symptoms. When he yields himself to them the violence of the paroxysms abates, or ceases altogether.

6. When normal consciousness is restored after one of these attacks the subject is entirely ignorant of everything which has passed during that state.

* Nevius Demon-Possession and Allied Themes.

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7. The most striking characteristic of these cases is that the subject evidences another personality, and the normal personality for the time being is partially or wholly dormant.

8. The new personality presents traits of character utterly different from those which really belong to the subject in his normal state, and this change of character is, with rare exceptions, in the direction of moral obliquity and impurity.

9. Many persons while demon-possessed give evidence of knowledge which cannot be accounted for in ordinary ways. They often appear to know of the Lord Jesus Christ as a divine person, and show an aversion to and fear of Him. They sometimes converse in foreign languages of which, in their normal state, they are entirely ignorant. 10. There are often heard in connection with de-

10. There are often heard in connection with demon-possessions, rappings and noises in places where no physical cause for them can be found, and tables, chairs, crockery, and the like are moved about without, so far as can be discovered, any application of physical force, exactly as we are told is the case among spiritualists. Such phenomena are now generally called "poltergeister" (Ger. -- tricky spirits), and in their un-coordinated and senselesr destruction they closely resemble a students' "rag" or the antics of the undisciplined and irresponsible schoolboys of the invisible world.

11. Many cases of demon-possession have been cured by prayer to Christ or in His name, some very readily, some with difficulty. So far as we have been able to discover this method of cure has not failed in any case, however stubborn and long-continued, in which it has been tried. And in no instance, so far as appoars, has the malady returned, if the subject has become a Christian and continued to lead a Christian life."

We could cite many more instances of modern demoniac possession as reported by missionaries. From the abundant accounts of such possession in pagan countries it would seem safe to hold that demoniacs are found today predominantly among the un-Christianized. As to the integrity of these accounts of modern possession we can only say that most of the cases reported are accompanied by the attestations of

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competent and reliable witnesses; then, also, the preponderance in number of reported cases should carry much weight in the consideration of the authenticity of such cases of modern demoniac possession. The impartial reader of such accounts will have difficulty in denying the sincerity of their authors.

However, as in the case of the New Testament accounts, there are many today who refuse to consider the supernatural nature of these modern accounts.

OBJECTIONS

There are many who object to these cases of modern demoniac possession on the ground that all these phenomena are due to delusion or imposture, and that these so-called demoniacs are either deceivers or self-deceived. Dr. James Knight answers such objections: *

"It is undoubtedly the case that there is no subject so much envrapped in trickery and deceit as psychical research. Man, who has been defined as the cookinganimal or the tool-using animal, might with greater force be described as the only animal who not only cheats his own species, but takes a positive pleasure in doing it. Even high-class mediums like Eusapia Palladino have not been above 'helping' a psychic manifestation, just as teachers of chemistry have been known to 'assist' an experiment which for some reason or other was not working properly. But after nine-tenths of such scenes have been written off in this way, there still remains an irreducible tenth, conducted under strict test conditions and supported by the very soundest of evidence on the part of highly skilled and specially trained observers. It is too late, at this time of day, to advance any such objection."

* Victoria Institute, Feb. 16, 1931, p. 20.

The chief objections against the reality of demoniac possession today are based on modern science. In the nineteenth century science tended toward crude mechanical materialism. Of that epoch Professor James says: *

"Medical materialism finishes up St. Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic. It snuffs out St. Teresa as an hysteric, St. Francis of Assissi as an hereditary degenerate. George Fox's discontent with the shams of his age, and his pining for spiritual veracity, it treats as a symptom of a disordered colon. Carlyle's organ-tones of misery it accounts for by a gastro-duodenal catarrh. All such mental-overtensions, it says, are, when you come to the bottom of the matter, mere affairs of diathesis (auto-intoxications most probably), due to perverted action of various glands which physiology will yet discover."

This accounts for such theories as the accommodation, the pathological, and the like which are mentioned in connection with New Testament demoniacs, as well as modern demoniacs.

But today, modern science has moved away from such a position, and, for the most part, looks upon metaphysical phenomena (including religious phenomena) as genuine phenomena, and therefore they regard them as legitimate subjects of scientific inquiry. With Huxley the new science has said: "There is nothing impossible except a contradiction in terms." Accordingly, new scientists have reached some startling conclusions with regard to the genuineness of these phenomena.

* James Varieties of Religious Experience 1929 p.15.

The new science has classified metaphysical phenomena in many different ways. For example, Boirac has made the following classification; he has placed metaphysical phonomena under three heads. The first is the hypnoidal (the psychopathic and cryptopsychic) which consists of and can be explained by forces already known, operating according to laws not yet fully known. The second is the magnetoid (the psycho-dynamic, the telepsychical, and the hyloscopic) which are produced by forces still unknown and unclassified. but belong normally to our world, and are similar to natural radio-active forces. The third class of phenomena are the spiritoid; these are phenomena which seem to imply the intervention of extra-natural forces which do not necessarily belong to our world, but which somehow make abrupt interventions into nature from some plane of foreign existence as unknown but intelligent agents or forces.

Now, this third division, the spiritoid, seems to be the very ground we are exploring. The demons in modern demoniac possession could easily be classified as foreign and intelligent agents; and the phenomena connected with such possession could be classed under the same group.

Thus, while the old science formerly attempted to take a materialistic view toward the phenomena of modern demoniac possession, the new science, with a real scientific basis and outlook, has rather confirmed the accounts of the New of the New

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Testament demoniacs, as well as the authentic cases of modern times. Professor Henry Sidgwick long ago struck the keynote of the new attitude of modern science toward metaphysical phenomena when he addressed the Society for Psychical Research in 1882 as follows: *

"We are all agreed that the present state of things is a scandal to the enlightened age in which we live. That the dispute as to the reality of these marvelous phenomena -- of which it is quite impossible to exaggerate the scientific importance if only a tenth part of what has been alleged by generally credible witnesses could be shown to be true -- I say it is a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on, that so many competent witnesses have declared their belief in them, that so many others should be profoundly interested in having the question determined, and yet that the educated world, as a body, should still be simply in the attitude of incredulity."

In spite of a samer outlook among the great modern scientists, there are still many today who persist in exploring the phenomena of modern demoniac possession in a naturalistic and rationalistic manner. Dr. James Enight calls such objectives as prevalent only among the inveterate foes of all innovations, the half-educated classes, whose training has taken the form of instruction rather than of education. These "half-educated" scientists have attacked the New Testament demoniacs as merely suffering from some natural disease; likewise they have explained modern demoniacs as simple pathological cases.

* Knight, Victoria Institute Feb. 16, 1931 p. 2.

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However, noted men of medicine have disproved such theories. All text books on medicine give full details of the diagnoses of epilepsy, hysteria, and similar disorders; most of them are complete, including the aura and warnings of such disorders, the actual fits, the tonic stages, the clonic stages, and the coma. Wheeler and Jack have made such a diagnosis, and have made a classification of the full details. * A study of these details shows that the symptoms of such disorders are singularly lacking the distinctive marks of Scriptural and modern possession.

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There are also among modern scientists some who advocate the psychological theory concerning modern demoniacs. They hold, as many of them have held with regard to the New Testament demoniacs, that modern demoniacs suffer merely from split consciousness, obsession, multiple personality, or other psychological disorders (Cp. Koll and Forel). This is based on the discovery of the tremendous influence of the mind over the body. Modern physiology has demonstrated the enormous influence of endocrines upon the automatic or subconscious activities of the body, which in turn are affected by purely mental conditions. Quacks and imposters have seized upon this truth, from Mesmer all the way down to Mary Baker Eddy. Thus also this discovery has been applied to

* Wheeler and Jack Handbook of Medicine 5 ed., p. 518.

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modern demoniacs; psychiatrists advocate the power of suggestion or hypnotism as the obvious cures.

On the other hand, many psychologists admit complete ignorance as to the causes of the phenomena connected with modern demoniacs. Ribot says: "The psychologist is then like the physician who has to deal with a disease in which he can make out only the symptoms."* The tendency of all recont psychical research has been to strengthen the ageold hypothesis of the existence of spiritual intelligences which are capable of producing effects upon the material objects, including man. The British alienist, the late Dr. Forbes Winslow, well-known in the field of medical psychology, was convinced "that a large proportion of the patients in our asylums are cases of possession, and not of madness."**

"I have asserted that the explanation in this case is spirit or demoniac possession, as it was called in the New Testament. Before accepting such a doctrine I have fought against it for ten years after I was convinced that survival after death was proved. But several cases forced upon me the consideration of the question. Experiments with a psychic appeared to show that this was a case of spirit obsession, with the identity of the parties affecting the subject proved. The chief interest in such cases is their revolutionary effect in the field of medicine. It is probable that thousands of cases diagnosed as paranoia would yield

* Ribot <u>Victoria Institute</u> Feb. 16, 1931. p. 24. ** Idem p. 22. *** Hyslop <u>Life After Death</u> p. 305-306.

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to this sort of investigation and treatment. It is high time for the medical world to wake up and learn something."

Many more such opinions could be quoted and may be found in most of the latest books on the subject. We agree that it is difficult at times to distinguish between possession and diseases of the mind and body; yet we can safely affirm that there are and have been demoniacs since those of the New Testament. We base this assertion on the following facts.

First of all, the Scriptures have nowhere stated that possession by demons would cease with the departure of Christ and the apostles from earth. Secondly, Scripture does warn all believers of the abiding presence of such powers of darkness, as, for example, in Eph. 6,11.12: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Thirdly, cases of modern demoniac possession are similar to those of the New Testamont demoniacs. Dr. Newius presents the following analogies from his experiences: *

1. The persons affected are of both sexes and of all ages.

2. In many cases the attacks are intermittent, and commence by some physical disturbance or bodily convulsion. (Cf. Luke 9,39, etc.)

* Nevius Demon-Possession and Allied Themes

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3. In many cases the demon declares that he will never ceases to torment his victims unless he submits to his will. The subject himself in his normal state, bemoans his deplorable and hopeless condition, and sympathizing friends intercede for him. Frequently he pines away and dies.

4. Cases have occurred in which the subject has received bodily injuries or scars, as if from an unseen hand.

5. Some cases are easily cast out, while others present great difficulty.

6. While each invading demon has his own special features, more or less wicked, more or less violent, more or less daring, and so on, the cases yet all bear a general resemblance.

7. Some of the cases show shameless exposure of the person, gross indecency, and utter want of prop-. riety in speach and conduct.

8. The greatest surprise of all to the missionary observers has been the fact that many of these spirits have a knowledge of God and of Christ, and they acknowledge our Lord's authority and power over them.

9. Sometimes there is a sort of double consciousness, of actions and impulses directly contrary. So the demoniac of Mark 5,6-7, "when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him," whereas the indwelling demon equally showed hatred and dread.

10. There have been cases of multiple possession. Cf. Luke 8,2; Mark 5,9.

11. One of the most common characteristics of the Chinese cases is the instinct or longing of the . spirit to possess a body, even an animal's body.

12. The expelled spirit tries his best to return. Cf. Matt. 12,44.

13. We have exact correspondence in the assertion of a new personality, and the instinctive recognition of this new personality by all present. Long conversations are often carried on between them and the domon, the human subject or patient being entirely ignored, as a thing absolutely passive.

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14. In no case has there been any failure to cast out demons in the name of Christ.

15. Demons are cast out or exorcised by others as well as Christians, although by different and generally painful methods. In this connection we recall Christ's query: "By whom do your sons cast them out?" (Matt. 12,27)

16. Cases have occurred of demons exorcised by those who have afterwards been guilty of gross immorality and been expelled from the Church. (Matt. 7.22-23)

17. The first effort of casting out demons in China as in India has been to arrest public attention, particularly having regard to the new and simple methods employed, and to give evidence readily appreciated and understood by the masses of the supernatural origin and truth of Christianity.

18. In one case reported by a missionary of the English Methodist Mission in Tien-tsin there was specfic testimony to the character of the missionary similar to that given to the Philippian girl to St. Paul. (Acts. 16,17)

19. Alike in China and in the Scripture localities the cases are recognizable by the people who speak of them as though there could be no reasonable doubt concerning them.

20. The evil spirits of Scripture are represented as belonging to the kingdom of Satan and in direct and acknowledged opposition to the kingdom of Christ. In China, as a rule, our cases are directly or indirectly connected with heathen temples and idolatrous worship.

21. The spirits are represented as free, and for the present roaming about at will, although still under certain limitations and control.

22. In one case in the south-eastern part of the district of En-chiu, a demoniac slave-girl brought considerable gain to her master by fortune-telling as in the Fhilippian case of Acts 12,

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25. The cases are very rare in large cities, occurring principally in rural and mountainous districts. No Scriptural case occurred in Jerusalem, and only one in Capernaum in the very beginning of our Lord's ministry. (Mark 1,21-28).

24. As in the Scriptures the testimony as to the reality of these things is of the same quality as that which vouches for the Chinese cases; the testimony of intelligent, unbiased, common people, who were eyewitnesses of the events, and have no axe to grind. "Experts" are never quoted in Scripture, and it is as well, for on the authority of the great, perhaps the greatest, authority on the Law of Evidence, we are told that "There is no class of evidence to be received with greater suspicion than that of the so-called expert."

Fourthly, it has always been the teaching of the Church that demoniacs can be found even today. We have cited many of the greatest teachers of the Church on this subject in connection with our consideration of New Testament demoniac possession; they hold the same opinion concerning modern demoniacs. Baier does not doubt their existence; he speaks of them in a matter-of-fact way: *

"Zu den Wirkungen Satans gehoert auch die leibliche Besessenheit, vermoege welcher Satan nach seinem Wesen in den Leibern der Menschen, nicht nur gottloser, sondern zuweilen auch frommer, wohnt und in denselben wirkt aus goettlicher Zulassung. Wenn nemlich Gott, entweder unmittelbar oder mittelbar (nemlich durch Menschon, entweder durch gute, z. B. Kirchendiener, wenn sie grobe Suender durch den groszen Bann ausschlieszen, 1Kor. 5,5. 1 Tim. 1,20., oder durch boese, welche andren zu schaden trachten, z. B. vermittelst Bezauberungen und Verfluchungen) zulaeszt, dasz Kenschen dem Satan unterworfen werden. Obgleich aber der Zweck dieser Besessenheit von Seiten Satans Schaden und Verderben theils der Besessenen selbst, theils anderer Menschen ist, so ist doch von Seiten Gottes, welcher dieselbe zulaeszt und dadurch entweder schwerere Suenden

* Cp. Walther Pastorale p. 293

(Verachtung des Wortes, fleischliche Sicherheit, Laesterungen, Conspiration mit dem Teufel u.) mit seinem ernstem Gerichte heimsucht, oder Fromme durch leibliche Zuechtigung straft und prueft, der Zweck Offenbarung seiner Macht, Gerechtigkeit und Guete, und der anderen Menschen, wenn nicht der besessenen selbst, wenigstens enderer, nemlich der Augen- und Chrenzeugen, Busze, Glaube und Seligkeit."

Quenstedt views the marks by which bodily possession may be recognized by pastors. * Lather, of course, does not doubt the possibility and reality of bodily possession. He gives a description of the correct treatment of demoniacs.* He says that pastors should not attempt to drive out demons by means of certain ceremonies and words as the prophets, Christ, and the apostles had done; but he advocates prayer in the neme of Jesus Christ. Without prayer, he contends, it is not possible to expel them. He continues with the assertion that the prayers of the whole congregation cen drive out the devil, as well as the prayer of an individual Christian, provided that it is done very fervently and with the greatest of Christian faith and courage. **

Many pastors believe that medicine is the only cure for bodily possession. Long ago Dannhauer prescribed three means of cure, which together should be used by pastors in cases of bodily possession: 1. Medicine; 2. Prayer; 3. Exorcism.

* See Walther <u>Pastorale</u> pp. 293-294. ** Cp. St. L. Ausg. XXII, 1104.ff. and XXI, 1343.ff. He adds: "But here a heroic faith is necessary." *

Dr. C.F.W. Walther does not doubt the possibility or reality of bodily possession today. He says: "Ein Prediger hat die Pflicht, auch diejenigen Glieder seiner Gemeinde zu besuchen, welche zwar nicht leiblich krank, aber sonst mit schwerem Unglueck heimgesucht sind ... in Melancholie, Raserei gefallen, leiblich vom Satan besessen sind u. dgl." **

In addition, the Roman Catholic Church still maintains a minor order of exorcists, although it can only exercise its power by episcopal permission. William J. McGarry, speaking from the Catholic point of view, says: ***

"The first degree of possession is called obsession, the second possession, properly. The difference is one of degree; for both mean that the devil enters within a person, perturbing the senses and the nervous system; this perturbation may reach, too, to the imagination; it may be so invasive as almost to prevent any free choice. Possession may be accompanied by violence done to the person exteriorly. More generally, sinners have been the objects of possession, but occasionally holy persons. Apparently, there were more possessed in Palestine in Christ's time than now; if so, we can see obvious reasons why God permitted this in manifestation of the power of the Prince of Peace against the power of Satan."

In view of this testimony of Scripture, corroborated by pastors, missionaries, theologians, scientists it would be difficult for anyone to deny the possibility and the reality of modern demoniac possession.

*	Cp. Wa	lther Pastorale p. 295.			
**	Idem	p. 292.			
***	Cp.	Concordia Theological Monthly	1940.	p. 143.	

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RELATED PHENOMENA

A treatment of demoniac possession would not be complete without reference to certain phenomena which have several features similar to those found in demoniac possession. We refer to the phenomena of sorcery, witchcraft, magic, hypnotism, spiritism, and the like.

The genuine phenomena connected with the aforementioned are described in Scripture as the results of certain supernatural acts produced by the help of the devil. Scripture calls sorcery one of the most grievous sins (1 Sam. 15,23; Dout. 18,10-12). Scripture teaches further that in sorcery a greater than human power is at work (Ex. 7,8; 1 Sam. 28; Ezk. 21,21; Deut. 13,1.2; Matt. 24,24; 2 Thess. 2; Josh. 24, 10). Scripture specifically names Satan as the originator of such supernatural acts (Acts 16,16; Deut. 18,11; 2 Thess. 2,9).

The incidents and phenomena of sorcery and witchcraft are generally well known. Many believe the whole of it to be pure fiction. In many cases it probably is mere fiction and deception. Yet, as Scripture teaches, and as has been authentically reported, much of it is true fact; these phenomena then which are genuine are produced by Satan.

If it is granted that the Holy Spirit can dwell in man (Rom. 8,9), why should it not be possible that an unholy

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spirit should do the same? Certain reports of sorcery and witchcraft seem very genuine and authentic, and the attitude of the twentieth century is one of credence. John Buchan in his recent book <u>Witch Wood</u> describes certain incidents in witchcraft in lowland Scotland; Mr. Buchan made a special study of these phenomena and is a recognized historian; his reports, therefore, are considered genuine. * Pagan lands are rich fields for such incidents; so overwhelming are the number of reports of genuine phenomena that it is almost impossible to deny the supernatural character of many of them.

Martin Luther firmly believed the Scriptural delineation of sorcery and considered such sorcery prevalent in his day. He comments: ** "Siehe, was Wunder tut er bei und durch seine (des Teufels) Zauberer, wie seltsam er ihnen huelft, unbogreifliche Dinge zu tun.... Kann er nun Wetter machen, Blattern schaffen, in Lueften fuehren, und also mit den Heiligen spielen, dazu mit Christo selbst: was sollte er nicht vermoegen mit seinen gottlosen und unchristen?"

George Malcom Thomson has a very fine statement on the phenomena of witchcraft; he says: ***

* (Cp.	also	Hugh Be	nson <u>T</u>	he Necrom	ancors.		
**	st.	L.	Ausg., X	x, 2184	•			
***	G.	N.	Totanson	A Shor	t Mistory	of Scotland	1930.	p. 150
			44		des ration of the			

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"The most extraordinary of all manifestations of this time was one which recent scholarship is beginning to estimate at its real importance -- witchcraft. It is no longer possible to regard the witch as a harmless, wretched, half-witted creature whom ignorance, superstition, and cruelty condemned to torture and a horrible death. A closer study of the immense amount of twidence bearing upon witchcraft has compelled a greater respect for the contemporary alarm which it excited. The easy scepticism of the nineteenth century is no longer tenable. Christianity had won -- especially in remote and sparsely populated districts -- only a superficial victory over paganism. The old nature cults of fertility, the earth, the Great Mother, lived on in debased and subterranean forms. ... Plants that had lived in the dark for long ages sprouted suddenly, and offended the sunlight with noxious blooms."

The advice of St. John to tost the spirits is still very necessary (1 John 4,1-3), and the same tests still hold good today.

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Closely associated with witchcraft is hypnotism. Hypnotism itself has been proved to be nothing supernatural. However, when hypnotism is used to perform supernatural things, then it is nothing but a small part of witchcraft; and if certain supernatural results are obtained, it is only through Satanic agoncy.

Questions concerning death and the dead seem to be the axis about which many of such phenomena revolve (Gp. Saul and the witch at Endor in 1 Sam, 28; cp. also 1 Chron. 11, 15.14). Many seek to communicate with the dead, and in connection with such attempts we often hear of the accounts of spooks and ghosts and the so-called "Poltergeist." They indicate their presence with weird noises, tapping and knocking, footsteps, loud ories, rattlings, sighs, whisperings, etc., together with the actual appearance of ghosts and spooks and spectres at times. Many of these accounts are genuine (Cp. the historical account of such happenings in the home of the Wesleys). Similar phenomena occur: also in cases of modern demoniac possession; both are of Satanic origin. The Smalcald Articles state: "Die boesen Geister haben viele Bueberei angerichtet, da sie als Menschenseelen erschienen sind, Messen, Vigilien, Wallfahrten und andere Almoson geheischet mit unsaeglichen Luegen und Schalkheiten (Mueller, p. 303)." And Luther adds: *

"Nach der Zukunft und Geburt Christi aber hat der Teufel die Welt greulich betrogen;, da er zum oofternmale Gespenster, Poltergeister und boese Engel gesandt hat. ... Und ist solches unsere eigene Bahuld, weil wir den Herrn nicht haben hoeren wollen, sondern haben begehrt, die Engel zu hoeren, haben sonderliche Offenbarungen und Erscheinungen zu haben wollen. Darum haben wir auch mit ganzem Haufen gefunden, was wir gesucht haben, zu unserem groszen Schaden."

Finally, other phenomena related to demoniac possession are the phenomena of Spiritism, A great amount of spiritistic phenomena is admittedly based on elaborate schemes of trickery and deception. However, it is also recognized that some of its phenomena are genuine; and, while some attribute it to communion with departed souls, Scripture assigns it to the activity of evil spirits. Dr. L.S. Forbes Winslow in his <u>Spiritual Madness</u> writes concerning Spiritism:

* St. L. Ausg., I. 1525, 1528.

"The mediums often manifest signs of an abnormal condition of their mental facultics, and among certain of them are found unequivocal indications of a true demoniacal possession."

Spiritualism has taken the form of a religion with many people; but it is an anti-Christian religion. * Thus it would not seem at all logical if God would give them power to perform miracles, thus confirming their false doctrine.

To conclude this section we cite again a warning by Dr. Winslow: "Ten thousand unfortunate people are at the present time confined in lunatic asylums on account of having tampered with the supernatural." **

* For a complete discussion of Spiritism see J.G. Raupert's <u>Modern Spiritism</u>, <u>Concordia Theological Monthly</u> 1953 (pp. 596-598), <u>Victoria Institute</u> Feb. 16,1931.

** Winslow Spiritual Madness

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CONCLUSION

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From the evidences of Scripture, corroborated by modern examples from all corners of the world, as well as by the researches of prominent theologians, scientists, and other investigators, we are clearly entitled to take the New Testament accounts of demoniac possession as genuine without a doubt. On the other hand, the increase in tampering in the supernatural, the increasing ungodliness of the world . lead us ever more to the conclusion that the organized forces of evil working against God and man are achieving more and more success -- a sign that the Last Day is not far off. We repeat again (Eph. 6,11,12): "Put on the whole armor of God. that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

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Harold J. Maleske April 9, 1940

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