

**Review: *Demon Possession*, ed. John Montgomery, Bethany House,
Minneapolis, MN, 1976**

Pages: 384

Important Study of the Enemy

An intriguing and fruitful study of the occult and demonic possession to help equip the Christian against modern-day secularisation of this Biblical condition.

One caveat on the so-called ‘Christian’ psychiatrists authors which attempt to syncretise ‘mental illness’ with demon possession, or simply admit ignorance that they can’t differentiate between the two. However, they still assume scepticism (naturalism) rather than supernaturalism as first explanation, which is anti-Biblical for it consciously places the pseudoscience of psychiatry *above* the Bible. This is a particularly grave error since psychiatry is *not* scientific; it has no objective ‘mental illness’ definition or replicable experiments to ‘diagnose’ it. They admit to this problem: “Psychiatry and demon possession are at heart a clash of epistemologies.”

The field experiences of decades ago are evergreen in the sense that possession has common, unchanging characteristics, for the Devil can’t create anything new.

By taking a Biblical approach, the Christian will notice the deception of so-called ‘mental illness’, and begin to discern spiritual oppression and even possession more clearly in people’s lives. By seeing this he can then respond with prayer and/or fasting as appropriate, rather than refer victims to a deceived psychiatrist to be medicated or electrically shocked to their own destruction.

Preface (pp. 9-11)

Introduction (pp. 12-23)

I) Demythologization of the Demonic in the Old Testament [Dennis F. Kinlaw] (pp. 24-35)

Lilith was a Babylonian female night demon; later Jewish literature made her the first disobedient wife of Adam.

II) Response [Gordon R. Lewis] (pp. 36-40)

III) Jesus and the Unclean Spirits [J. Ramsey Michael] (pp. 41-57)

IV) Response [John P. Newport] (pp. 58-61)

V) The Occult Revival in Historical Perspective (pp. 62-90)

The doctrine of the “Process” church was Universalism, that one should love his enemies including Satan.

“Modern witchcraft is a revival of the pagan ... worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.” [p82]

VI) Not Suffering Witches to Live [John Montgomery] (pp. 91-104)

Critics argue, “no sensible person can accept the real existence of witches.”

King James I executed 40 witches during his reign.

Crimen exceptum: a heinous crime.

Magistrates were instructed to not expect direct witchcraft evidence since, “all their works are the works of darkness.”

VII) The Cosmocrats: Diabolism in Modern Literature [D. G. Kehl] (pp. 105-140)

Maximilian Rudwin: “Lucifer looms large in literature, the ‘Morning Star’, hurled from heaven, shines brilliantly in the firmament of fiction.”. [p109]

Felix culpa: “happy fault”.

W. D. Snodgrass: "I'm an atheist, so I guess it would be improper for me to believe in the devil if I don't believe in God." [p114]

The devil is said to work of God's side without knowing it.

Des Hermies: "When materialism is rotten-ripe, magic takes root." [p119]

Dybbuk: a Jewish spirit of the dead.

VIII) Spirit Possession as it Relates to Culture and Religion: A Survey of Anthropological Literature [A. R. Tippett] (pp. 141-174)

"Idle spectators should not be present at an exorcism."

Voodoo is relationship between the *loa* and man; trances span from hours to days.

A shaman is claimed to control spirits while not coming under their control. They always have drumming and hand-clapping to create a rhythm of body movement.

"Mamma and Papa began shaking and writhing ... Her jerking became more violent ... her head rolled violently ... A scream ripped from her throat ... curses ... poured from her lips." [p167]

Carl Jung: "The concept of the unconscious is just an assumption for the sake of convenience."

95% of Haitians practice voodoo.

IX) Possession, Trance State, and Exorcism in Two East African Communities [Donald R. Jacobs] (pp. 175-187)

"As social mistrust increases, one can expect increase in the incidence of healing and exorcism."

Majini: jinn.

Mashetani: satans.

X) Demonism on the Mission Fields [G. W. Peters] (pp. 188-208)

Neo Vedanta: Ultimate Reality is unknowable; Agnosticism is more pious; no religion can claim absolute truth; proselytism violates the right of man.

Demonism creates an oppressive 'atmosphere' and focuses powers in objects.

There are: medicine men; rainmakers; kings; priests; witches; sorcerers; prophets; seers; diviners; mediums; and magicians.

A shaman is one seized upon by the gods. He hides from light, acts hysterically, and climbs trees.

XI) Demonism on the Mission Field: Problems of Communicating a Difficult Phenomenon [W. Stanley Mooneyham] (pp. 209-219)

XII) Hysteria and Demons, Depression and Oppression, Good and Evil [William P. Wilson] (pp. 220-231)

Dr Nevius in *Demon Possession* outlines the characteristics of possession:

1. A new personality claims it's a demon.
2. He/she uses personal pronouns: 1st for the demon, 3rd for the possessed.
3. The demon has titles.
4. The demon manifests physically.
5. Possession gifts the possessed with supernatural intelligence and ability.
6. There is aversion and hatred of God.

Sexual promiscuity, drug use, and Satan worship are all correlated.

XIII) Commentary on Hysteria and Demons, Depression and Oppression, Good and Evil [John Montgomery] (pp. 232-236)

XIV) Psychological Observations on Demonism [Gary R. Collins] (pp. 237-251)

"Philosophers and theologians, a group from which the early psychologists were determined to disassociate." [p237]

"Psychologists tend to be disbelievers." [p240]

Freud suggested God and Satan were mental substitutes for human fathers.

“As recently as fifteen or twenty-five years ago, most educated westerners probably would have agreed that belief in demons had finally been laid to rest—at least in highly civilised parts of the world. It generally was assumed ... demon possession could either be dismissed or explained away scientifically.” [p242-3]

Many prefer ecstasy and ease of experiential religion.

Sudden headache and extreme anxiety and possession symptoms.

“Uncertainty is harder to bear than error.”

XV) Commentary on Psychological Observations on Demonism [John White] (pp. 252-255)

“I can conceive of no demonic state which cannot be ‘explained’ by a non-demonic hypothesis.” [p253]

XVI) Reflections on the Demonic: A Psychiatric Perspective [Basil Jackson] (pp. 256-267)

“There is little that is final and definite as regards etiology in the conditions seen in clinical psychiatry.” [p259]

“The nearest thing that would approach demonization in my work ... has been my experience with drug users.” [p261]

Domonophilic: one fascinated with the occult.

‘Christian’ psychiatrists think the Holy Spirit resides in the ego

XVII) Taste and See [R. Kenneth McAll] (pp. 268-278)

In 1930s China, the only ‘treatment’ for possession was stoning.

XVIII) Problems and Procedures in Exorcism [John White] (pp. 279-299)

Psychiatry and demon possession are at heart a clash of epistemologies.

For ‘possession’, the clinician looks at: history; signs; and epiphenomena

“In the more acute schizophre-ni-form illnesses hallucinatory voices urging suicide or making blasphemous suggestions can ... be banished by brief courses of ECT or .. psychotropic drugs.”

XIX) Victims Become Victors [W. Elwyn Davies] (pp. 300-308)

Victims are amongst the: curious; conformist; dissatisfied; sad; rebellious; psychically insensitive; and dedicated occultist.

XX) Demonology Today [Roger C. Palms] (pp. 309-319)

“Of course you cannot understand it [the occult]! We take a little bit from this religion and a little bit from that religion and put them together.”
[p312]

The occult is ‘custom made’.

XXI) Response [James D. Mallory,Jr.] (pp. 320-324)

“Virtually all mental suffering is demonic.”

XXII) Satan and Demons: A Theological Perspective [John P. Newport] (pp. 325-345)

Exorcism is the negative side of salvation.

There cannot be freedom unless there is the possibility of decision and rebellion.

Evil is always parasitic.

Both Martin Luther and John Wesley only used prayer to cure demonic possession.

Fallen angels play on passions and inject fantasies, feelings, and bodily sensations.

“Psychiatric work is little more than an exercise of description ... If the questions about why a person should love or live are not answered, then the demons can move in and produce a variety of symptoms from schizophrenia to suicidal compulsion ... When people reach this low state ... the person is placed in the hands of the modern shaman, the psychiatrist ... to lead them to self-understanding ... If this does not become clear, shock therapy may follow.” [p341]

XXIII) Criteria for the Discerning of Spirits [Gordon R. Lewis] (pp. 346-363)

Observed phenomena:

1. Personality change including intelligence.
2. Physical change like voice and anaesthesia to pain.
3. Glossolalia.
4. Fear of Christ.

Easterners lack appreciation for coherence: “I live only one life, and I live many lives (i.e., soul transmigration)”.

NDE and OBE experience are almost antithetical to the gospel, or completely bypass it.

Self-hypnosis and meditation engenders passivity which opens up the doorway to evil spirits.

XXIV) Satan and Demonology in Eschatological Perspective [Clarence B. Bass] (pp. 364-371)