

DEMON EXPERIENCES

in Many Lands

by

Various Contributors

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

EXPERIENCES IN GUATEMALA

We had discussed demon activity frequently with our national pastors here on the field, but were not entirely free of skepticism on the matter of these manifestations till we ourselves experienced the evidence.

We find from these pastors, and other spiritual leaders in this corner of the Lord's vineyard, that there seem to be certain fairly well-established patterns for demon activity all over this area of Guatemala, and in other sections of the country too. In fact, all that we have heard falls into a pattern, just as there is a pattern for people coming to God.

The characteristics of demon possession that seem significant and constant in all that we have heard seem to be these:

1. It involves Christians in a backslidden condition.
2. The backsliding seems to involve a deliberate rebellion in some one thing.
3. The demon activity seems to involve night noises and the throwing of things.
4. The getting right with the Lord of the person brings immediate relief in the situation.

The story that I include illustrates these points, but not better than they could be illustrated from any number of similar experiences we have heard national pastors tell.

Bilil is an Indian village of about twenty-five families on the northwestern frontier of Guatemala. The only Christians there are one woman, her three sons, and their families. Though they had been believers several years, their testimony had never amounted to much because of things that they were not willing to give up from their former way of life.

The thing with which the elders of the church in the area have struggled most with them was the matter of consulting witch doctors and diviners in times of sickness or other hardships. We passed through the village on a trip in 1955 with a national Indian evangelist and a fine Indian Christian couple.

One of the three brothers asked us to hold the evening service in his home and to spend the night there, which we were happy to do. The whole house was about 12x8 feet. When the evening service was over, we put the accordion case and the trumpet case on a small table against the wall on one side, and the brother put his Bible, hymn book and some chorus sheets into a little box used for measuring corn, and placed the box on top of our instrument cases.

Then we sat around the fire to chat a while before going to bed. The brother was very much concerned since he had lost two of his three children through sickness recently, and the village witch doctor had declared that he was out to get the third one too.

The brother told us that at night spirits came and walked around on the silverware (what little they had), and dumped the corn husks out of the bag in which they were kept to serve as wrapping paper later on. Frankly, we decided that this sounded more like the work of rats than spirits, and more or less dismissed the whole matter from serious consideration.

Since the room was so small, the believers fixed some boards on the roof frames for my wife and me to set our sleeping bags on, and the family of three, and the three who were traveling with us, slept downstairs any place they could find room to spread their grass mats.

About 11:00 we were awakened by the brother saying, "There it is!"

Before we could get our flashlights on, something hurled the little box of books across the room. When we got the lights on, we could not see anything that could have caused the trouble, and everyone was still in bed. It was definitely not the work of rats.

After prayer, we went back to sleep, and the next day had special prayer with him and talked to him about the need of being right with the Lord, if he was to be freed from these things. We requested several people to pray especially for this matter, and he had no more trouble of this kind that we heard of till early in 1958. Then he was again having the same sort of trouble, and we found out that he was again going to the witch doctors and diviners.

When they bring us these problems, asking prayer for deliverance, we tell them that the problem is really theirs, and that we will not be able to pray with them for the clearing up of the situations till they set aside their dealings with Satan's agents.

When they do this, the trouble ends.

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