

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

Paul Casts Out a Demon



And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her master much gain by soothsaying:

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the ser-

vants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

—Acts 16:16-18.

The possession of individuals by discarnate Spirits frequently mentioned in the Bible is just as actual today as it was in biblical times, and accounts for many of the crimes committed in present day society. To understand how this is possible, it is necessary to know that man possesses other bodies than his dense physical one, and that they may be separated from the indwelling Spirit.

Occult philosophy teaches that humanity may be divided into two classes: "those in whom the connection between the vital body and the dense body is very close, and another class where the connection is more loose. The former class is the ordinary person who is engaged in material pursuits and is altogether out of touch with the Spiritual Worlds. The latter class is the so-called sensitives, and is again divided into two classes. One class is actuated by the will from within and is *positive*. From this class comes the trained clairvoyant and the Invisible Helper. The other class is negative and is *amenable to the will of others*. From this class mediums are recruited.

"When the connection between the

vital body and the dense body of a man is somewhat lax, he will be sensitive to spiritual vibrations, and if positive, he will *by his own will* develop his spiritual faculties, live a spiritual life, and in time receive the teaching necessary to become a trained clairvoyant and a master of his faculty at any and all times. He may become an Invisible Helper, capable of taking the two higher ethers away from his dense body *at will* and using them as a vehicle for sense perception and memory.

"If a person has this laxity between the vital and dense bodies, and is of a negative temperament, he is liable to become the prey of discarnate Spirits, as a medium. The Spirits which are earthbound and seek to manifest here may withdraw his vital body by way of the spleen and temporarily use the ether of which it is composed to materialize Spirit forms, returning the ether to the medium after the seance is over."

Max Heindel also points out that "Spirit controls stand outside their victim's body and behind him, manipulating the organ of speech or the whole body, as the case may be, from and through the cerebellum and medulla oblongata. . . ."

Whether or not a person is actually obsessed may be determined by observing the eye. The pupil of the eye of a person who is obsessed will neither contract nor expand—it responds to neither light nor distance. However, "no one who maintains a positive attitude of mind can ever become obsessed."

St. Paul was an initiate of high degree, and was therefore able to dispel the "spirit of divination." The need for service of this kind today is an urgent invitation to spiritual aspirants to press forward on the Path with the untiring zeal exemplified by St. Paul.