

Andrews University

## Digital Commons @ Andrews University

---

Dissertations

Graduate Research

---

2015

### An Analysis and Response to the Fear of Evil Spiritual Forces Among Kamba Christians in the Light of Biblical and Ellen G. White Teachings

Joseph Mutune Ndisya  
Andrews University, [jndisya@aol.com](mailto:jndisya@aol.com)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [African Languages and Societies Commons](#), and the [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Ndisya, Joseph Mutune, "An Analysis and Response to the Fear of Evil Spiritual Forces Among Kamba Christians in the Light of Biblical and Ellen G. White Teachings" (2015). *Dissertations*. 1587.  
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/1587>  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.32597/dissertations/1587>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).



Seek Knowledge. Affirm Faith. Change the World.

Thank you for your interest in the

**Andrews University Digital Library  
of Dissertations and Theses.**

*Please honor the copyright of this document by  
not duplicating or distributing additional copies  
in any form without the author's express written  
permission. Thanks for your cooperation.*

ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO THE FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL  
FORCES AMONG KAMBA CHRISTIANS IN THE LIGHT OF  
BIBLICAL AND ELLEN G. WHITE TEACHINGS

by

Joseph Mutune Ndisya

Adviser: Bruce L. Bauer

# ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: AN ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO THE FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AMONG KAMBA CHRISTIANS IN THE LIGHT OF BIBLICAL AND ELLEN G. WHITE TEACHINGS

Name of researcher: Joseph Mutune Ndisya

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Bruce L. Bauer, D.Miss.

Date completed: April 2015

This research aimed to discover whether there are any reasons from the Scriptures and writings of Ellen G. White regarding fear of evil spiritual forces. Thus research aims to understand the historical, cultural and religious reasons Kamba Christians frequently live in fear and dual allegiance. Biblical solutions will be suggested to permanently eliminate that fear. Fear is often so great that born-again Christians carry protective devices and practices which they believe will ward off the invading evil spiritual forces.

The Old Testament writings were examined to see how God wanted His people to relate to any evil power. The Old Testament teachings on such powers were examined, as were God's attitudes towards the people who used evil spiritual powers.

Selected New Testament writings were examined to see how Jesus, the disciples, and Paul dealt with evil spiritual powers.

The writings of Ellen G. White were also examined to note how her writings explain the workings of evil spiritual powers.

The Kamba worldview was also examined to note its contribution. It was found that there were no biblical or Ellen G. White writings that justify the fear of evil spiritual powers. According to the Kamba worldview, however, it was found that a Christian must replace his or her worldview with a Bible-based worldview.

One has to glean critically whether there is justification for any Christian to carry in his/her pocket a device from satanic powers to ward off evil spiritual powers sent to the Christian by an evil satanic person and after that make a concluding determination on whether there is any reason to fear evil spiritual powers.

Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

AN ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO THE FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL  
FORCES AMONG KAMBA CHRISTIANS IN THE LIGHT OF  
BIBLICAL AND ELLEN G. WHITE TEACHINGS

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
Joseph Mutune Ndisya

April 2015

©Copyright by Joseph Mutune Ndisya 2015  
All Rights Reserved

AN ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO THE FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL  
FORCES AMONG KAMBA CHRISTIANS IN THE LIGHT OF  
BIBLICAL AND ELLEN G. WHITE TEACHINGS

A dissertation  
presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Joseph Mutune Ndisya

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

---

Faculty Adviser,  
Bruce L. Bauer  
Professor of World Mission

---

Director, PhD in Religion  
Thomas Shepherd

---

Jerry A. Moon  
Professor of Church History

---

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary  
Jiří Moskala

---

Gorden R. Doss  
Professor of World Mission

---

Darius W. Jankiewicz  
Professor of Theology

---

Bruce Moyer  
Retired, Professor of World Mission  
Andrews University

---

Date approved



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of the Problem.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Study.....	7
Justification of the Research.....	7
Research Methodologies.....	10
Scope and Limitations.....	11
II. THE KAMBA WORLDVIEW AND CHRISTIAN MISSION.....	12
Historical Background of the Kamba People.....	12
Kamba Worldview and Culture.....	18
Impact of Christian Missions.....	24
Methods Used to Evangelize the Kamba.....	30
III. FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AMONG THE KAMBA TRIBE.....	35
Traditional Kamba Beliefs in Evil Spiritual Forces.....	35
Evil Spirits and Their Power.....	35
“Good Spirits” and Their Power.....	42
Spirits of Dead People.....	45
Visitation.....	46
Offerings and Sacrifices.....	49
Belief in the Power of Magicians and Traditional Healers.....	50
Power to Heal.....	51
Power to Harm.....	56
Power to Predict.....	56

Belief in Witchcraft. . . . .	58
Belief in Power to Ward Off Witchcraft. . . . .	63
Belief in Protective Devices. . . . .	64
Belief in Protective Ceremonies. . . . .	65
Kamba Christian Beliefs about Evil Spiritual Forces. . . . .	66
Underlying Causes for Fear of Evil Spiritual Forces. . . . .	68
Occasions When Fear Occurs. . . . .	74
Methodologies to Deal with the Fear. . . . .	78
Impact of Dual Allegiance on Kamba Christians. . . . .	85
Critical Contextualization and the Elimination of Fear. . . . .	89

IV. OLD TESTAMENT DEALINGS WITH EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS. . . . . 97

God’s Response to Evil Spiritual Powers. . . . .	99
Separation and Elimination. . . . .	100
Spiritual Dangers of Incomplete Conquest. . . . .	102
Marrying Strange Wives. . . . .	107
Moses and Pharaoh. . . . .	110
Magicians Imitate God’s Power. . . . .	110
God Competes with the Magicians. . . . .	112
The Magicians Drop Out from the Competition. . . . .	116
The Magicians Also Get Sick with Boils. . . . .	118
Israelite Kings. . . . .	120
Saul. . . . .	120
Solomon. . . . .	125
Ahab. . . . .	130
Manasseh. . . . .	131
Daniel, the Chief of the Magicians. . . . .	133
The Wise Men before the King. . . . .	133
Daniel Comes before the King. . . . .	136
Daniel Named the Chief of the Magicians. . . . .	137
The Difference between the God of the Wise Men and the God of Daniel. . . . .	138
Balaam. . . . .	141
A Point of No Return. . . . .	143
Implications for Kamba Christians. . . . .	148

V. NEW TESTAMENT DEALINGS WITH EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS. . . . . 151

Christ’s Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces. . . . .	151
The Demonized Son (Mark 9:14-29). . . . .	151
The Gadarenes Demoniac (Luke 8:26-39). . . . .	157
The Demoniac in the Synagogue (Mark 1:12-28). . . . .	164

Disciples' Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces. . . . .	167
Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24). . . . .	167
The Sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13-20). . . . .	171
Peter's Shadow (Acts 5:1-16). . . . .	177
Paul's Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces and the Kamba Implications. . . . .	180
Elymas the Magician (Acts 13:8-12). . . . .	180
The Damsel, the Soothsayer (Acts 16:16-40). . . . .	187
Handkerchiefs and Aprons (Acts 19:10-12). . . . .	190
Implications for Kamba Christians. . . . .	195
VI. ELLEN G. WHITE'S WRITINGS CONCERNING EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS. . . . .	200
Introduction. . . . .	200
How Satan Attacks Christians and Causes Fear. . . . .	201
Agents. . . . .	201
Double Standards. . . . .	208
Most Responsible People. . . . .	208
Disbelief in a Real Devil. . . . .	209
Occult Physicians. . . . .	210
Satan Specializes in Born-Again Christians. . . . .	211
Evil Angels at Work. . . . .	214
Satan Uses Christians of Great Integrity. . . . .	215
Mediums In the Church. . . . .	217
Traitor. . . . .	220
Arguments and Discuss. . . . .	223
God's Antidote to Fear. . . . .	227
Ellen White's Suggestions on Dealings with Fear. . . . .	230
Implications for Kamba Christians. . . . .	234
VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. . . . .	237
Conclusion. . . . .	237
Recommendations. . . . .	241
For Church Leaders. . . . .	242
For Theological Educators. . . . .	241
For Kamba Christians. . . . .	243
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	245

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the people who have contributed to this research and study. My first appreciation goes to Dr. Bruce Bauer, my adviser, for his guidance and, above all, his patience. Thank you, Dr. Jerry Moon, for helping me shape and narrow down the subject of my research. Dr. Gordon Doss helped in rewording and organizing the research. Special thanks goes to Dr. Jon Dybdahl who was my mentor at the beginning.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. William Musau of Kenya who organized the staff of Nairobi University, Kenya, to send the information that I needed. I appreciated his willingness to post them to me.

I am also indebted to Mabel Bowen for her spiritual attitude. When things looked hard and impossible, she was sympathetic and made things look possible and doable. Also my appreciation goes to Dr. Randall W. Younker. His positive influence and encouragement will not be easily forgotten. Thanks to Dr. Roy E. Gane for his prayers and financial help. Lastly, thanks to Ms. Dorothy Show for helping me with Word Perfect program.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the Problem**

Among the African Christian communities and the Kamba in particular, there is a real fear of witchcraft and evil spiritual forces. This fear affects all classes of people, the rich and the poor, the most educated and the illiterate. This fear causes many Kamba Christians to seek protective devices, which they carry on their bodies to ward off evil spiritual powers.

Such Christians go to church on Sunday or Saturday wearing them. The devices seem to take away their fear. This fear is grounded in their worldview which affirms that when disaster strikes an individual it is because there is a human being behind the disaster. To protect themselves, Christians spend a lot of money consulting diviners and buying protective devices. Charles and Marguerite Kraft state that this is done by “committed, born-again, Bible-believing Christians who have most of the Christian message right but have, because of worldview blindness, missed the spiritual power dimension of biblical Christianity.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Charles H. Kraft and Marguerite G. Kraft, “Communicating and Ministering the Power of the Gospel Cross-Culturally: The Power of God for Christians Who Ride Two Horses,” in *The Kingdom and the Power*, ed. Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 349.

These Bible-believing, “committed, born again Christians” utilize “charms/amulets which they wear in the form of finger rings, arm bands, and waist bands. Some are even worn on the wrists and ankles.”<sup>2</sup> Ahirika asserts:

Others are hung on door lintels or buried under the threshold of the entrance to the house or in foundation stones/blocks of a building to protect against invading spirits. Even the entrances to many villages, towns/clans are also protected by charms hung on the arched entrances, prominent trees in market squares or buried beneath the entrances to ensure that any harmful charm brought through or evil spirit that comes through the entrance will be rendered ineffective.<sup>3</sup>

Ahirika also asserts that “no one will spend his hard earned money on something he does not believe has existential implications for his survival in an unfriendly environment.”<sup>4</sup> The Bible states that one “cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of the devils” (1 Cor 10:21) at the same time. Charles and Marguerite Kraft call it people who “ride on two horses.”<sup>5</sup>

Some theologians have blamed the fear on the first missionaries. Heibert claims that many tribal people were not given the answers to such fear by missionaries from Western (European-American) cultures. “When tribal people spoke of fear of evil spirits, they [the missionaries] denied the existence of the spirits rather than claim the power of Christ over them. The result is that Western Christian missions have become one of the

---

<sup>2</sup>Edwin A. Ahirka, “Contextualization of Ephesians 6:12: Liberation of African Christians from the Fear of Principalities,” *Sevartham* 25 (2000): 67.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Kraft and Kraft, “Communicating and Ministering,” 348.

greatest secularizing forces in history.”<sup>6</sup> Kraft and Kraft also suggest that the Western missionaries arrived at a time in history that was not conducive to dealing with supernaturalism found in other cultures. They assert:

The vast majority of these missionaries came from the Western world. And they came at a time in history after the Western world had largely ceased to believe in spiritual beings and powers. Even within the church, then, the intellectualism of Reformation Christianity combined with the anti-supernaturalism of secular society to produce a brand of Christianity that found more power in reason than [in] prayer. Medical advances came to be depended on more than prayer for healing, psychology more than deliverance for emotional problems, what humans do in the visible world more than what God does in the invisible.<sup>7</sup>

One may conclude from the above statement that even though the way the message was presented did not meet the needs of a supernatural culture, the missionaries did the best they knew how, but left an enormous problem behind. The Krafts suggested that “Christianity has been presented as the answer to the quest for eternal life but offers little to provide protection, healing, and guidance for the present.”<sup>8</sup>

John S. Mbiti, a Kamba himself and a professor of theology and religion for many years at Makerere University in Uganda, looks at the cause of the problem from a different angle. Even though, unlike other theologians, he does not provide the answers, he tackles the cause of the fear as it is. He goes to the root of the problem, stating:

When something goes wrong in the welfare of the individual or his family, he immediately wonders who has caused it to happen. . . . In most cases he will suspect that someone has used evil magic, sorcery or witchcraft against him or his household,

---

<sup>6</sup>Paul H. Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 418.

<sup>7</sup>Kraft and Kraft, “Communicating and Ministering,” 350.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 349.

animals or fields. This belief is found in all African societies. Once a person believes that someone has used evil powers against him, he goes on to establish the identity of the suspected offender. In most cases this offender is someone in the family, in the neighborhood, or among relatives and associates of work.<sup>9</sup>

This belief also is rooted in the Kamba (African) worldview. It has been handed down orally from generation to generation. The result is that people need to protect themselves from their bad neighbors. Mbiti claims that the reason the fear has not been challenged is because of the catechism. The Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Anglican catechisms did not challenge this fear; in fact, their teachings on the immortal soul strengthened it.

The central theme that causes the fear (life after death, i.e., ancestors) taught by most catechisms agreed with the Kamba worldview. Thus the catechisms did not teach anything new that could challenge the Kamba worldview. One of the catechisms states: “Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death and I shall help you then more effectively than during life. I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, it was believed that if your enemy died, he might spend his time in heaven destroying your family.

The above statement echoes the worldview assumption concerning the ‘living-dead,’ of the Kamba. To the Kamba, the living dead are those who died recently and the *Aimu* (ghosts) are those who died a long time ago. They are placated by sacrifices. The living dead are considered members of the family and may come to the aid of the family

---

<sup>9</sup>John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Educational Publishers, 1991), 166.

<sup>10</sup>Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, ed., *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New Hope, KY: Urbi et Orbi Communications, 1994), 249.



at any time. Mbiti states:

The *Aimu* live much like the living dead, but they are not regarded as intimate members of human families. They do not frequent their former places of abode in this life. These, together with the whole race of the *Aimu*, feature frequently in Akamba folklore. They are pictured as capable of doing extraordinary things like flying in the air, assuming any shapes they want, walking on one leg, walking or working extremely fast, and even dying several times. They are ubiquitous, although it is believed that they tend to congregate in certain spots like hills, rocks, and large ponds.<sup>11</sup>

These departed family members are believed to be used to do good or bad through human manipulations. The worldview, combined with the teachings of the catechisms, intensified the reasons for Christians to fear. No Bible teaching dealt with this worldview assumption, which has remained as a basis for Christians to look for alternative methods of protection other than the ones provided for in the Bible.

Paul Hiebert sees the cause of the problem as a lack of contextualization. He contends that “a church only grows spiritually if its members learn to apply the teachings of the gospel to their own lives.”<sup>12</sup> He goes on to state that the problem arose because of the “missionaries’ attempt to suppress old cultural ways.”<sup>13</sup> He concludes that these suppressed old cultural ways simply go underground. New converts come to church for worship, but during the week they turn to shamans and magicians for answers to the everyday problems of their lives because the church does not provide the answers.

Hiebert also add that Critical Contextualization could have been used at this time. Critical

---

<sup>11</sup>John S. Mbiti, *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background: A Study of the Encounter Between New Testament Theology and African Traditional Concepts* (London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), 134.

<sup>12</sup>Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” 382.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

Contextualization being a state where “old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without examination.”<sup>14</sup> Churches also imported the customs of the missionaries with the result that Christianity came to be seen as a foreign religion, and the converts became aliens in their own land. This approach not only turns missionaries and church leaders into police, but keeps converts from growing by denying them the right to make their own decisions. This point was emphasized by Kraft and Kraft, who state that people’s “traditional supernaturalistic view of life was condemned and taught against. . . . However, many Christians retained their belief in spirit beings and powers and went underground with at least certain of their traditional practices related to them.”<sup>15</sup> It also seems that fear is caused by worldview assumption and wrong biblical presentations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Christian church members carry protective devices to ward off evil spiritual forces sent against them by their enemies. This is due to their lifelong fear of these evil spiritual forces. They carry these devices somewhere on their bodies: inside their pockets, on their wrists, on their ankles, around their stomachs suspended on a belt and attached to their key holders. Such protective devices are not only carried by ordinary church members but by colporteurs, choir leaders, pastors’ wives and children, deacons and deaconesses, church elders, and even some pastors. The fear of evil spiritual forces has been passed from generation to generation, and the church has not dealt with the problem.

---

<sup>14</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights*, 186.

<sup>15</sup>Kraft and Kraft, “Communicating and Ministering,” 351.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to find whether there is justification in Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White for Kamba Christians to fear evil spiritual forces to an extent of carrying protective devices on their bodies and other practices which ward off evil spiritual forces..

## **Justification of the Research**

Edwin A. Ahirka and A. O. Igenzoza have made the following statements: “Fear of evil spirits, demons, and spiritual forces/evil principalities is inherently endemic in Africans.”<sup>16</sup> Igenzoza acknowledges the fact by stating that “even among university students and lecturers a real fear of witchcraft and evil spirits lies only just below the surface.”<sup>17</sup> One finds it alarming when Christians wear charms and amulets, rings, arm bands, and waist bands, and even more alarming when one discovers that these protective devices “have become indispensable in the life of many Africans including the highly placed Christians.”<sup>18</sup>

The above statements are the key justification for this research. The message of Jesus Christ was received in Africa over a century ago, but the Church in general has not moved from this phenomenon of fear of evil spiritual powers to the next level, prompting many Bible workers to question whether there is something wrong with the message.

---

<sup>16</sup>Ahirika, “Contextualization of Ephesians 6:12,” 59.

<sup>17</sup>A. O. Igenzoza, “African *Wetanshuun* and Exorcism: The Quest for the Contextualization of the *Kerygma*,” *African Theology Journal* 14 (1985): 185.

<sup>18</sup>Ahirika, “Contextualization of Ephesians 6:12,” 66.

And because there is little mention of evil spiritual forces in the Church, many Christians have sought alternatives by either joining a Church that practices a power ministry such as in Pentecostalism or they have founded their own churches which have a lot of African traditions in them.

This dissertation was necessary because very little has been written within Adventism on the subject and church members often fear to talk about the subject. What has compounded the problem even more is the fact that church pastors have been forbidden by church leaders to talk about the subject in the pulpit because it was generally believed that Christians do not believe in witchcraft.

A lack of preaching and talking about witchcraft and evil spiritual powers has encouraged it to be practiced secretly by many Christians who are active in Church.

It is believed that the problem has persisted because of the way the biblical message was presented from a non-African point of view. This is not to be critical of the missionaries who did a wonderful job in bringing the Gospel to Africa, for without them there would be no church in Africa today. This dissertation does not in any way undermine the good work they did, it only wants to review the reasons for the current fear of evil spiritual forces without making it look like I am being critical of their good work.

### **Research Methodologies**

The research begins with a description of the Kamba worldview with a special emphasis on Kamba fear of evil spiritual forces in order to present the background for the widespread use of witchcraft practices both in society and among Christians.

Selected Old Testament passages that dealt with evil spiritual powers and God's

instruction on how His people should respond to them were studied to draw out biblical principles for dealing with witchcraft related issues. Next, I investigated selected passages in the New Testament to better understand how the Early Church handled demonization and attacks by the devil. Lastly I reviewed the writings of Ellen G. White to discover her advice to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on how to deal with evil spiritual powers. Based on the biblical and Ellen White principles for dealing with fear and witchcraft issue I concluded the study by making several recommendations to help the church learn to better deal with evil spiritual forces.

### **Scope and Limitations**

This study dealt with the fear of evil spiritual forces among Kamba Christians. The Christians who carry devices to the church to protect themselves from the powers of evil were the subject of the research. It was therefore important to include how God responds to such Christians by surveying His reactions from both the Old and the New Testaments.

## CHAPTER II

### THE KAMBA WORLDVIEW AND CHRISTIAN MISSION

#### **Historical Background of the Kamba People**

The Kamba tribe is one of the Bantu-speaking people of East Africa. They have a current population of around 3,890,000.<sup>1</sup> They are surrounded on either side by other Bantu tribes who share around 60 percent of their lexical words. These surrounding Bantu groups include the Kikuyu, Embu, Chuka, and Meru. The exception is to the south where they border the Maasai of the Nilotic groups of Kenya's Rift Valley, whose language has no lexical similarities with the Kamba.<sup>2</sup> Around 50 percent of the Kamba tribe is illiterate. The Kamba are mainly agriculturists, growing sorghum, millet, maize, beans, peas, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, sugarcane, bananas, and tobacco. They also keep cattle, sheep, and goats. They are the only tribe in Kenya famous for woodcarving.<sup>3</sup>

Historically, the exact origins of the Kamba tribe are unknown. Book after book has speculated about their origin. Norman Larby, a prolific writer about the tribe, wrote

---

<sup>1</sup>Mutahi Basse, "Census: Kenya has 38.6M People," *Daily Nation*, August 31, 2010, <http://www.Nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/1000340/-/...-/Index.html> (assessed October 20, 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Norman Larby, *The Kamba* (Nairobi, Kenya: W. Boyd and Co., 1944), 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

in 1944 that there were “various opinions about their origin.” He gives one theory suggesting that “they were originally a nomadic tribe from the region of Kilimanjaro whence they were driven by the Maasai into the hills of Machakos, where lack of grazing forced them to become partially agriculturists.”<sup>4</sup> However, those who know the effectiveness of the Kamba-poisoned arrows against the Maasai, who had only javelins, may easily differ with that theory. J. Forbes Munro’s research may sound better. He discovered a record of the coastal Bantu-speaking peoples which tells about “the migration of their ancestors from a settlement area at Shungwaya in the general area of Port Duntford, close to the modern Kenya-Somali border displaced by Galla pressure in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.”<sup>5</sup> Hence, instead of coming from the west, Munro suggests that they came from the east, the coastal region.

Another theory suggests that the Kikuyus, the Embus, and the Kamba, the three close cousin tribes, originated from Abyssinia, Libya, and even Egypt. They moved towards the South because of the persecution by the Pharaohs.<sup>6</sup> Another most recent and frequently reported theory suggests that the “Kamba originated in central Tanzania, where the Kamba and Nyamwezi practice teeth filling or chipping, and the joking relations (*utani*) between the two peoples.”<sup>7</sup> This theory is strengthened by the assertion that a Kamba family established itself as one of the ruling dynasties of Unyanwezi, possibly in

---

<sup>4</sup>Larby, *The Kamba*, 4.

<sup>5</sup>J. Forbes Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kambas: Social Change in the Kenyan Highlands 1889-1939* (London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1975), 7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 9.

the seventeenth century. Of all the theories, this last one sounds fair. This is because there are a lot of Kamba people in this part of Tanzania who even bear similar names to the ones in Kenya.

The Kamba tribe has lived in two districts since the colonial era, namely, the Machakos and the Kitui districts.<sup>8</sup> Due to the increase in population, the districts have increased to thirteen, which were changed into three counties by the current constitution.

The tribe is further sub-divided into “twenty-five patrilineal clans”<sup>9</sup> which are scattered throughout the districts. The clans served administrative purposes, since the Kamba had no known central government before the British colonial era. The clan heads settled matters regarding land and property disputes, and this acted as insurance to the poor in matters of legal suits. Deviant behavior was handled by clan councils. When a member of one clan had a dispute with a member of another clan, the matter was settled by the elders or the councils of the two clans. The fact that the Kamba had good administration did not mean that they lived peacefully with each other. The Kamba of the Kilungu hills were often involved in warfare with the Kamba of the “Mukaa hills to the South-west of Kilungu Massif.”<sup>10</sup> The Kilungu Kamba “raided the other Kambas, whom

---

<sup>8</sup>Michael F. O’Leary, *The Kitui Akamba: Economic and Social Change in Semi-Arid Kenya* (Nairobi, Kenya: Heineman, 1984), 2.

<sup>9</sup>Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, 11.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.



they called *Evaau* (nephews) for cattle and women, and counter-raids took place.”<sup>11</sup> The frequent raids by the Maasai against the Kamba were well understood by everybody, but the reason for Kilungu Kamba raiding their fellow Kamba was hard to understand. Their raids disrupted the unity of the tribe, and hence they became vulnerable to frequent attacks from the Maasai tribe. The most plausible speculation stated that “Kilungu lineage had incorporated through intermarriage of some non-Kamba elements, possibly Kikuyu, but more probably Maasai.”<sup>12</sup> This was the reason why bad blood developed, which triggered a lot of differences that resulted in civil wars.

The Maasai attacked the Kamba frequently for they believed that God had given them all the cattle in the world. Therefore other tribes had no right to own them. The Maasai attacked using spears at night, but the Kamba responded more effectively with poisoned arrows and were not known to have lost any battle to the Maasai. In order to keep peace, the Kamba allowed the western colonialists and missionaries to settle among them. Their neighbors, the Maasai, who were usually the raiders but not the raided, resisted the settlement of missionaries among them. Even the Catholic missionaries, whose mission strategy was to integrate their mission with local tribal traditions, were fiercely resisted.<sup>13</sup> The Maasai resisted the Western settlements partially because the missionaries settled among their enemies first.

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, 16.

<sup>13</sup>Valeer Neckebrouck, *Resistant Peoples: The Case of the Pastoral Maasai of East Africa* (Rome, Italy: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1993), 6, 18.

Famines were and still are very frequent. It is suggested that the land where the Kamba settled is the reason for the frequent famines. The land is dry and the monsoon winds are drawn towards Mt. Kilimanjaro to the south and Mt. Kenya to the northwest. The forests and the surrounding lands of the two mountains receive most of the rainfall, leaving the Kamba land on the leeward side dry. The way the colonialists and missionaries treated the Kamba during severe famines led the tribe to be more friendly towards them. “CMS missionaries assisted the government in organizing famine relief and missions served as distribution centers.”<sup>14</sup> The fact that the mission centers served as distribution centers proved that the missionaries were interested in the people’s temporal as well as spiritual welfare. This established a close affinity between the two parties. This also meant that in places where the missionaries had no presence, the Kamba did not receive quick temporal relief. Mission strategy looked to supply felt needs so the mission’s presence might be appreciated. They circulated a story of Mr. Matiba who was “against his daughter’s attendance at [the] mission because he feared that it might upset his chances of a good bride price.”<sup>15</sup> He had punished her severely when he had learned that she had been baptized and that her name had been changed from Waigwe to Tabitha. Yet it was through her that Matiba’s attitude to the mission changed. During the famine, Waigwe, who had been employed by the mission as a teacher, took home sufficient flour to meet the needs of Matiba’s immediate family. This impressed her father so much that

---

<sup>14</sup>John K. Karanja, *Founding of an African Faith: Kikuyu African Christianity 1900-1945* (Nairobi, Kenya: Uzima Press, 1999), 89.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

he permitted Wairimu and all his other children to go to the [mission] school. These famines therefore acted as vehicles of unity. Munro believes that “concern for self-preservation overshadowed quarrels with the colonial power.”<sup>16</sup> For many years famine acted as the right hand of the missionaries to bring the Kamba together to their meetings. This was because once the meeting was over, they were sure to receive temporal relief in the form of food.

The Kamba groups that refused the biblical message began to act unfairly toward the good-hearted missionaries. In 1896, the Kamba who had not accepted Christianity organized themselves and began to steal “from mission stations, from government safaris, from the camps of Indian coolies on the railway, from parties returning from Kikuyuland, and from their neighbors.”<sup>17</sup> Colonial powers, especially the police, had to be called in to maintain peace. Therefore, famines and the need to keep peace acted as beacons to welcome missionaries.

Another severe problem which the Kamba could not solve on their own was disease. The “smallpox and influenza epidemics in 1897, and rinderpest in 1897-8”<sup>18</sup> had reduced the Kamba population. This was the time when the Kamba worldview on the powers of their own medicine men and women was challenged by the colonial and the missionary medical treatment. The local medicine men and women were losing their patients in large numbers while the Western medicine was leading to recovery and health.

---

<sup>16</sup>Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, 47.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

Another factor that helped the missionaries to settle in Ukambani without any resistance was the divination by the most respected and influential diviners. These seers had divined between 1840 and 1880 that “a peculiar breed of strangers who would possess almost luminous or extremely white skin colouration”<sup>19</sup> would be coming to Kambaland. This prediction was closely linked to a more powerful one, which stated that “a new language would be introduced by the strangers, it would flourish, and would be absorbed by the young, separating the older generation of Kamba from their offspring.”<sup>20</sup> Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed observed that “there were similar prophets among the Gusii, the Nandi, the Embu, and the Maasai. Oginga Odinga has recounted such personalities among the Luo.”<sup>21</sup> He makes a good inference when he indicates that “these traditions indicate an atmosphere of religious expectation which provided a sounding board for a new message.”<sup>22</sup> Thus before the missionaries came, an atmosphere had already been prepared for their acceptance. The missionaries, however, had different worldviews in matters of religion, and the Kamba’s whole life was centered around religion.

### **Kamba Worldview and Culture**

Religion formed and continues to form the framework of Kamba life. Every

---

<sup>19</sup>B. A. Ogot, ed., *Kenya before 1900* (Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Publishing House, 1976), 236.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>21</sup>Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 558.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

aspect of life is wholly intertwined in their religious beliefs. Even today, Mbiti states that “religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”<sup>23</sup> He says the reason for this is because the “Africans are notoriously religious” and they see everything through the eyes of religion.<sup>24</sup>

There is one major area that was neglected by the missionaries and that was the center of the Kambas’ religion. The neglected area is grounded and hidden in the Kamba worldview concerning spiritual forces. This is how Mbiti puts it:

In African villages, many things are constantly going wrong. The enemies of society are always at work. The people ask themselves what or who caused these things to go wrong in the form of sickness, misfortune, barrenness, accidents, death and so on. They believe that even if there are physical explanations of how an accident has taken place, which dog bit whom, and so on, there is also a major question of who made these things happen. . . .The answer to who makes things go wrong, is almost in every case a human agent and sometimes a spirit agent. This is where the matter of bad magic, sorcery and witchcraft comes in.<sup>25</sup>

The above question is what causes fear of evil spiritual forces. Every Kamba is scared that somebody is going to harm them and for that reason they need to protect themselves. Even as late as 1959 after Christianity had been in Ukambani for over 100 years, Nottingham noted: “In Ukambani, sorcery would seem on our evidence to be the very marrow of the structure of the society.”<sup>26</sup> Professor Mbula, herself a Kamba, wrote the following observation: “Witchcraft, ‘Uchawi’, in Kamba–*uoi*–is a field in which the

---

<sup>23</sup>John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Educational Publishers, 1969), 1.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 105-6.

<sup>26</sup>J. C. Nottingham, “Sorcery Among the Akamba of Kenya,” in *Journal of African Administration* 11 (1 January 1959): 7.

Kamba are reputed by the other tribes to have high accomplishments. The Kamba did, and still do fear witchcraft greatly: and their chief concern with it” is to protect themselves against it.<sup>27</sup> This is the particular worldview assumption that the missionaries did not deal with and which the subsequent African evangelists and pastors are scared of handling. They themselves are afraid that somebody is going to harm them.

The basic worldview assumption behind the seeking for protection is that “every social evil in the Akamba society is explained in terms of witchcraft.”<sup>28</sup> There is nothing secret about the fact that traditional Kamba wear protective devices on their bodies openly for all to see. The secret is that Kamba Christians have so much fear in this area that they protect themselves secretly, so it is not easy to know who is protected and who is not. Africans have a general fear of witches, but traditional Africans do not have as much fear because they are protected. Therefore, the general worldview is that, it is Christians who are in danger because it is suspected that they are not protected. Because the Christian depends on intangible and unseen protection, therefore he has no devices to counteract the forces of witchcraft. Christians, therefore, are even afraid of evangelizing the witches; “people fear to associate with them, to eat at their homes, or even to quarrel with them in case they may ‘bewitch’ them.”<sup>29</sup> When a witch becomes a Christian, there is even more fear by other Christians and particularly so when nobody witnessed the burning of the witchcraft items. Mbula makes this emphasis when she avers that “the

---

<sup>27</sup>Judith Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity into the Akamba Traditional Family” (MA thesis, Nairobi University, 1974), 207.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 167.

greatest threat to the Kamba family and society as a whole, was witchcraft.”<sup>30</sup> The Kamba live in extended families and for that reason women know the neighboring families very well. Since the “Akamba witchcraft passes from the mother to the daughter,”<sup>31</sup> the Kamba families have been in danger for many years. Men normally play the role of medicine-men, but women inherit witchcraft and transmit it “from one generation to the next.”<sup>32</sup> Close friends suspect each other, neighbors suspect each other, and Christians suspect each other. Lindblom, while staying among the Kamba, observed: “How afraid they are coming close to *woi* . . . [is shown] by the fact that when guests are entertained, the host first tastes what is offered so as to show that it does not contain poison or any magic power.”<sup>33</sup>

Lindblom was interested in learning more about this worldview and as a result he noted that “even in the simplest accident which may happen to him the native may suspect that the enemy or a rival, is trying to injure him by means of *uoi*.”<sup>34</sup> Even being hit by excrement from a flying hawk or crow is attributed to an enemy. Krapf, a missionary sent by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) in 1849 to establish a missionary station in Kamba land, also noted the power of the worldview when he saw the Kamba “put a *muthea* in the camp-fires to make themselves invisible to their

---

<sup>30</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 206.

<sup>31</sup>Mbula, *Introduction to African Religion*, 208.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Gerhard Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa: An Ethnological Monograph* (New York: Negro University Press, 1920), 279.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 278.

enemies.”<sup>35</sup>

Kambas believe that the “strength of this *uoi* depends on the strength of the magical medicine. If a sorcerer failed to knock down his enemy or someone was bewitched by his enemy even though he had been protected by magical medicine, it happens due to the witch doctor’s weakness.”<sup>36</sup> Ueda stresses that the person then will look for a stronger witch doctor to carry extra protective power. He concluded that the Kamba “fear this *uoi* very much.”<sup>37</sup>

Chinua Achebe describes the conflict that exists in Christian families where the family members are both active Christian church members while still holding firmly to the traditional worldview. Isaac Okonkwo, a clergy, cannot allow his son to marry a daughter from such a family. The worldview is deeply ingrained in the father’s mind.

Achebe states:

‘You cannot marry the girl,’ he said quite simply.  
‘Eh?’  
‘I said you cannot marry the girl!’  
‘But why, Father?’ ‘Did you find out or try to find out anything about this girl!’  
‘Yes!’  
‘What did you find out?’  
‘That they are *Osu!*’  
‘You mean to tell me that you knew, and you ask me why?’  
‘I don’t think it matters. We are Christians!’  
‘We are Christians,’ he said. ‘But that is no reason to marry an *Osu.*’  
‘The Bible says that in Christ there are no bond or free!’  
‘My son,’ said Okonwo, ‘I understand what you say. But this thing is deeper than you

---

<sup>35</sup>Lindblom, *The Kamba in the British East Africa*, 278.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 287.

<sup>37</sup>Hitoshi Ueda, *Witchcraft and Sorcery in Kitui of Kamba Tribe* (University of Nairobi, Kenya: Institute of African Studies, 1971), 3.



think!<sup>38</sup>

The conversation between the Christian son and his father who is a clergy shows that there is still a deep fear of spirits that remains embedded in the Christian worldview.

The father concludes, not wanting to go further into the discussion:

*Osu* is like leprosy in the minds of our people. I beg of you, my son, not to bring the mask of shame and leprosy into your family. If you do, your children and your children's children unto the third and fourth generations will curse your memory. Who will marry your daughters? Whose daughters will your sons marry? Think of that, my son. We are Christians, but we cannot marry our own daughters.<sup>39</sup>

Obi had yet to hear from his mother. Such a wedding would only take place over her dead body. She had raised her nine children by reading the Bible together at family worship and having each one read their assigned portion, but that closeness to God was no reason to challenge the traditional worldview in the area of evil powers. When Obi visited her in her room because she was sick, after greeting her son she went straight into the subject:

In the afternoon your father came in with a letter from Joseph to tell us that you were going to marry an *Osu*. I saw the meaning of my death in the dream. Then I told your father about it. I have nothing to tell you in this matter except one thing. If you marry this girl, you must wait until I am no more. If God hears my prayers, you will not wait long. But if you do the thing while I am alive, you will have my blood on your head, because I shall kill myself.<sup>40</sup>

Marrying somebody from a suspected family creates a deep mental anguish in the minds of the Christian family. Being a Christian, or even a clergy, for that matter, does

---

<sup>38</sup>Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease* (Nairobi, Kenya: Heinemann, 1960), 120.

<sup>39</sup>Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*; 121.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 123.

not wipe out the fear.

The relationship between the living and the dead Kamba is and has been a practical factor. It is claimed that outsiders cannot possibly understand this part, but

to those who wish to obtain full insight into the sociology of these people, it is of utmost importance to have a clear understanding of the natives' point of view, and to bear in mind that the ancestors spirits are a very real and vital thing to him and have a very deep influence upon his life. Thus the relationship between the living and the dead continues for many generations until that person's name is forgotten, but if the person is forgotten too quickly, and the soul should find nothing to eat and drink, then it was driven by force of hunger to come back to earth to demand his due.<sup>41</sup>

If a young man died before he was married, the father was sure to get a wife for him who would bear children to be called by the deceased's name. If the father failed to do this, the spirit would return and say "I am so and so speaking, and I want a wife."

Mbula asserts "the Akamba continue their life after death, and they actually become more active in the spirit world."<sup>42</sup> This part of the African worldview is another aspect that the Church has neglected for a long time. Because the Church has neglected to deal with this worldview issue, the Kamba Christian has continued to be affected by it.

### **Impact of Christian Missions**

Mbula emphasizes that "the Mukamba is a religious person, and therefore, his religious beliefs flow from him, touching the world outside him."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, one may conclude that Christianity needed to be presented to the Mukamba so as to touch all parts of his life. Any part that was left unchallenged by biblical truth would naturally continue

---

<sup>41</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83.

<sup>42</sup>Mbula, "Penetration," 105.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 132.

being a part of the Mukamba traditional beliefs. Mbula also states that the “presentation of the biblical message by some denominations did not differ with the Kamba traditional beliefs.”<sup>44</sup> Instead of challenging and confronting the Kamba traditional beliefs, the presenter made sure the Kamba traditions and Christian beliefs were moving in the same direction. Thus, one could keep one’s beliefs and still remain a Christian. One major illustration is quoted from the Catholic Catechism: “Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death and I shall help you then more effectively than during my life,”<sup>45</sup> and “I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth.”<sup>46</sup> In Kamba traditional beliefs, as in other parts of Africa, the dead are not completely dead. They call them “the living dead.”<sup>47</sup> Mbiti states:

The living dead are therefore the best group of intermediaries between men and God; they know the needs of men, they have ‘recently’ been here with men, and at the same time they have full access to the channels of communicating with God directly or according to some societies, indirectly through their own forefathers. Therefore men approach them more often for minor needs of life than they approach God. Even if the living dead may not do miracles or extraordinary things to remedy the need, men experience a sense of psychological relief when they pour out their hearts’ troubles before their seniors who have a foot in both worlds.<sup>48</sup>

The teaching of the main denominations was that the Christians on earth could communicate with the dead Christians in heaven. The Catechism concluded, “We believe in this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always [attentive] to our

---

<sup>44</sup>Mbula, “Penetration,” 238.

<sup>45</sup>Ratzinger, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 249.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions*, 83.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 83-84.

prayers.”<sup>49</sup> The point that the Catechism made was that Christians could communicate with the dead. The dead listened and responded. The question was, since this is what the Kamba were practicing before the coming of the biblical truth, what was the new biblical message on this particular belief? In many ways the fear of the evil spiritual world was strengthened and not impacted by Christianity. In her research on the “Penetration of Christianity into the Akamba Traditional Family,” Mbula found that Christianity was not firmly rooted among the Kamba. Instead, Christianity further divided the tribe into four groups: the “traditionalists, the *Asomi*, [the] reintegrates and [the] Christians.”<sup>50</sup> The traditionalists refused the Christian message; for that reason she takes the last three groups and shows how much they have been influenced by Christianity. The *Asomi* are simply those who can read for themselves or the learned people. The reintegrates are those with one leg in Christianity while the other is still in the traditional religion. The word reintegrate (*mwi-tikili*) is a literal translation of the Kamba vernacular meaning a “misfit,” one who tries to fit himself into a group but as a matter of fact he does not fit. On the other hand, changing the syntax a bit, the word *Mwitikili* means a converted person to Christianity. Both words bear the same spelling.

Lastly, Mbula shows how Christianity has been mingled with the existing Kamba “religious beliefs and values, rites and symbols, marriage and procreation, and lastly witchcraft.”<sup>51</sup> Her conclusion was that the biblical message was not presented in the right

---

<sup>49</sup>Ratzinger, *Catechism of Catholic Church*, 250.

<sup>50</sup>Mbula, “Penetration,” 231.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 232.

way. She made this conclusion after evaluating the degree to which each category has “given up the Akamba beliefs and practices which are contrary to Christianity and how far each given category has embraced the new teachings.”<sup>52</sup> It is clear from her analysis that Kamba Christians were not given pure biblical truth but an amalgamation of the traditional ways and Christianity.

Mbula claims that Christians make up only 20 percent of the total population. This is the percentage that continues to have “a loyalty to Christianity to handle certain needs paralleled by a continuing loyalty to traditional religious practitioners to handle their power needs.”<sup>53</sup> When Paul saw this among the Galatian Christians he asked them, “Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal 3:3).

The missionaries also presented a Western secularized Christianity. When Africans observed “Western doctors, agriculturists, and teachers who were not Christians, they discovered that there seemed to be little difference in the results of what was done by Christians and what was done by non-Christians beyond the fact that Christians often applied the same techniques more lovingly.”<sup>54</sup> Science and reason were what the missionary was using. Hiebert asserts that “Western Christian missions have been one of the greatest secularizing forces in history.”<sup>55</sup> He gives the reasons for these secularizing

---

<sup>52</sup>Mbula, “Penetration,” 232.

<sup>53</sup>Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1984), 4.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>55</sup>Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” 418.

forces when he states that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries “there was a growing acceptance of a platonic holism and of a science based on materialistic naturalism. . . . The result was the secularization of science and the mystification of religion.”<sup>56</sup> He concludes by saying, “Science was based on the certitudes of sense experience, experimentation and proof. Religion was left with faith in visions, dreams and inner feelings. Science sought order in natural laws. Religion was brought in to deal with miracles and exceptions to the natural order, but these decreased as scientific knowledge expanded.”<sup>57</sup>

This was happening during the years of Western mission. When the tribal Christians asked questions about the spiritual world, the ancestral spirits and ghosts, about fear of evil spirits, the missionaries often denied the existence of these things rather than claiming the power of Christ over them. They had no answers for this from their scientific Christian worldview. Since the people were not getting answers, the fear of evil spiritual forces continued and Christians began to look for answers elsewhere. There was therefore a danger of returning to a Christian animism in reaction to the secularism of the modern worldview in the church. This reaction is in the process of producing African indigenous churches, which are independent of the Western denominations. The end result from these churches is syncretism, because the traditional beliefs are incorporated depending on the location of the breakaway church.

Another problem that the method presented was that Christianity brought a lot of

---

<sup>56</sup>Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” 418.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

division in families and broke up Kamba unity. Kabwegyere and Mbula correctly state that “the family was central to this unity and it was the family that cradled this unity. Thus instead of the family, the church became the center of worship for the convert. Instead of the elder’s wisdom the Bible became the source of quotation for the convert.”<sup>58</sup> Even the mission educational system tore down what was important in Kamba life. “Education that was presented to the Mukamba was alien to the family, the basic socializing agency in Akamba society. The young converts were kept in missionary boarding schools in order not to be contaminated by the old ways. On returning home they were alien to their family context and domain.”<sup>59</sup> Christianity was presented as a Western religion that was viewed more and more as the White man’s religion.

The emphasis on Western ways undermined the values of Kamba society and created friction in the village, clan, and family. Instead of addressing issues through the right channels, the head of the family, the elderly, and the significant people and mentors in the society, the missionaries used what was comfortable to them. Kabwegyere and Mbula state, “The mission used the drum to call congregations together. The drum sounded the war alarm in African society. The missionary drum sounded a war against African values. Missionaries taught skills to the converts to enable them to fit into the newly established economic order. This did not leave the Akamba authority structure intact.”<sup>60</sup> There were other key values that Christianity inadvertently undermined.

---

<sup>58</sup>T. Kabwegyere and J. Mbula, *A Case for the Akamba of Eastern Kenya* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1979), 27.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 27-28.

Marriage and wedding institutions were disrupted. “Marriage intimately involved the families of the boy and the girl and their respective corporate communities. The uncles and aunts, on both sides were involved. The sub-clans in which each family was embedded were involved. Christian marriage focused on the two persons who came to the altar.”<sup>61</sup> Hence Christianity was viewed as damaging to society. The two people coming to the altar might have met at school and may have loved each other, but this new way reduced the parents to observers and not active participants in the marriage of their children. When Kamba parents participated, there was a thorough check on the suitability of the families and the support from the families made divorce a very rare occurrence. Christianity, however, reduced the cohesive society and promoted individualism.

### **Methods Used to Evangelize the Kamba**

One may ask what happens to old customs when a tribal group like the Kamba becomes Christian. “Drums, songs, dances, body decorations, certain types of dress and food, marriage customs, and funeral rites were frequently condemned because they were thought to be directly or indirectly related to traditional religions, hence unacceptable for Christians.”<sup>62</sup> This almost total condemnation of the Kamba culture had an adverse effect on the new Christians themselves. They practiced an outward righteousness according to the Western Christian culture and when nobody was looking, they practiced Kamba traditional ways. This dual way of life comes when contextualization, “the process of

---

<sup>61</sup>Kabwegyere and Mbula, *A Case of the Akamba of Eastern Kenya*, 28.

<sup>62</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 184.



learning to express genuine Christianity in socio-culturally appropriate ways,”<sup>63</sup> is not used. Kamba Christians “conduct a formal Christian wedding in the church and then go to the village for the traditional celebrations.”<sup>64</sup> This dual way of doing things could have been avoided if critical contextualization had been used as a method of dealing with the old cultural symbols and meanings.

Critical contextualization was a term coined by Paul G. Hiebert. It is a process that evaluates old traditional beliefs in light of biblical principles. Instead of disregarding all the old traditional beliefs, they can be evaluated to see which ones agree with the Bible and which ones do not. Those that do not agree can be replaced by new biblically shaped beliefs. Another advantage of this approach is that critical contextualization does not produce a cultural vacuum by destroying so much of a culture. Instead it takes those old cultural structures and symbols which are not contradictory to the biblical principles and incorporates them into the new Christian way of life. Critical contextualization is therefore a method “whereby old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without examination.”<sup>65</sup> Critical contextualization is best done when the new converts are involved in the process since they can tell whether a practice is in agreement with the Bible. Where converts are given this right to accept or reject a cultural item in the light of the gospel, they grow spiritually.

Hiebert states that a “church only grows spiritually if its members learn to apply

---

<sup>63</sup>Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 376.

<sup>64</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights*, 184.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 186.

the teachings of the gospel to their own lives.”<sup>66</sup> Where members are not allowed to participate in such a process, but are instructed to reject the old cultural ways, “a cultural vacuum [is created] that needs to be filled, and this is often done by importing the customs of the missionary.”<sup>67</sup> Hiebert states that

drums, cymbals, and other traditional instruments are replaced by organs and pianos. Instead of creating new lyrics that fit native music, Western hymns and melodies are introduced. Pews replace mats on floors, and western-style churches are built, although they appear incongruous alongside mud huts and thatch gathering halls. It is no surprise, then, that Christianity is often seen as a foreign religion and Christian converts as aliens in their own land.<sup>68</sup>

Hiebert makes a good observation when he states that where converts are denied the right to be involved in deciding what was acceptable, missionaries and church leaders turn into police.<sup>69</sup> Christians were looking for spiritual answers which they were not finding in their new faith. They, therefore, found themselves in a dilemma. According to Hiebert, critical contextualization is what was missing. Many Christians therefore continued to live with two allegiances: one being pure Christianity and the other one being syncretistic christo-paganism.

Mbiti does not think that any other method should have been used other than what the converts needed. The converts needed security, security from attacks by evil spiritual forces. Once they had given up their traditional beliefs, which gave them security, were they going to find the same in Christianity? Mbiti stresses, “Because it provides for them

---

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

answers and direction in life, people are not willing to abandon it quickly, otherwise they would feel insecure afterwards unless something else gave them an additional or greater sense of security.”<sup>70</sup> Were they going to be getting answers from the Christian religion, particularly questions on evil spirits? Hiebert says, no, they were not getting answers because “often [the] missionary evangelist or doctor has no answer. These do not really exist, they say.”<sup>71</sup> People for whom spirit possession, cures, witchcraft and black magic were a reality felt dissatisfied with Christian answers. Hiebert concludes, “Therefore, many of them return to the magician for cures”<sup>72</sup> and for answers. The Kamba needed a religion that gave them the security and protection that they had in their previous beliefs.

Kabwegyere and Mbula state that the missionary approached the Kamba convert out of context. Even if individual converts found security in their new faith, what about the security of the whole family? The missionaries did not know that they could not deal with individuals but had to deal with the whole family. The Kamba believed in a communal religion, not an individual one. Their religious unity was their “corner-stone as it was a foundation of society.”<sup>73</sup> “The family was central to this unity and it was the family that cradled this unity. The individual was nothing without his family base. Yet Christianity was interested primarily in the individual.”<sup>74</sup> This part of Kamba culture was

---

<sup>70</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 15.

<sup>71</sup>Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” 416.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup>Kabwegyere and Mbula, “A Case of the Akamba of East Africa,” 27.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*

totally ignored when presenting the gospel message. The missionaries could not see that “African religion functions more on a communal than an individual basis.”<sup>75</sup> To separate an individual from society and make him a convert on an individual basis was the wrong method. As far as the Kamba were concerned, “no individual member of the society concerned can stand apart and reject the whole of his people’s religion,” therefore “conversion to another religion did not mean abandoning his African culture altogether.”<sup>76</sup>

Successful evangelization would have been better if the focus had been on the heads of the clans and families. Instead of selecting individuals, missionaries would have done better if they had dealt with individual groups. This neglected phenomenon has driven its effects and influence on individual beliefs. Group-think can support itself and eliminate most of the problems that the church now has, particularly the fear of evil spiritual forces.

The next chapter deals with the cause of fear of evil spiritual forces and shows how church members and pastors could have used critical contextualization to eliminate this fear.

---

<sup>75</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 15.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### FEAR OF EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES IN THE KAMBA TRIBE

#### **Traditional Kamba Beliefs in Evil Spiritual Forces**

The Kamba believe very strongly in the existence of both evil and “good spirits.” When evil spirits appear, they believe that a punitive action is about to take place, so they will do anything to avert that action. This belief is also found among born-again Kamba Christians.

The Kamba believe that evil spirits are sent to them by their enemies or by their neighbors out of jealousy. They believe that these spirits, whether seen or unseen, are the cause of whatever misfortune that might be happening to them and that problems or pain are caused by a third party. The “good spirits” may also be seen or unseen. People seek good spirits for their power because they believe that they are able to solve their problems.

#### Evil Spirits and Their Power

Mbiti has talked in detail about the spirits that the traditional and Christian Kamba fear. Mbiti states that these spirits “defy the scientist’s test tubes in the laboratory.”<sup>1</sup> They defy empirical human knowledge. They are above the human status in the hierarchy of

---

<sup>1</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 78.

creation. There are some who believe that evil spirits are what remain “of human beings when they die physically.”<sup>2</sup> Others believe that animals also have spirits which continue to live in the spirit world after they die. Most people, however, believe that the evil spirits which give power to humans and animals are the source of all evil, and especially witchcraft, which is feared by all African tribes. Witchcraft, which is carried out by evil spirits through human agencies, is received through inheritance and/or through the buying of power.

Thus, through witchcraft evil spirits are willingly contacted by human beings, but they can also force themselves on human beings when they possess them. It is also believed that a neighbor could be responsible for sending spirits to possess the victim. Haar states that, “in case of witchcraft, a person is supposed to take control of the evil powers. A case of possession by evil spirits works the other way around: the human subject is believed to be no longer in control, but to have been taken over by evil spirits.”<sup>3</sup> Haar claims that where evil spirits take control of somebody, the person needs help, but in cases where a person controls the spirits, that person does not need help.<sup>4</sup> Once the person makes a decision to control evil spirits, he or she becomes a witch, a “person who is possessed by a spirit of witchcraft.”<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Timmons states that it “is an actual evil

---

<sup>2</sup>Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 79.

<sup>3</sup>Gerrie Ter Haar, *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary African* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2007), 104.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Jonathan Philip Timmons, *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom* (Austin, TX: CCI Publishing, 1991), 130.

spirit that possesses the person and drives them to do evil” and that “it is the most feared of all the wicked spirits in the Dark Kingdom.”<sup>6</sup> One of the ways evil spirits give power to a witch is for a witch to play magical designs by placing objects in the body of the victim, something that doctors may not see with naked eyes. This is the type of evil power that scares Christians to the point where they seek protection from a more powerful witch while at the same time claiming redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

The question has been asked, Can these evil spiritual powers inhabit somebody without their knowing it? Can witches practice witchcraft without knowing that they are doing it? Ade David Ariyo answers both questions affirmatively. He says, “Frankly speaking there are some people who belong to witchcraft but did not know somebody either his/her grandmother, mother, father, grandfather, mother-in-law or father-in-law initiated or dazed them [with] this witch spirit.”<sup>7</sup> He suggests that many families have been broken up through marrying somebody whose origin is not well known. A woman Ariyo helped deliver through the power of the Holy Spirit wondered how she had become a witch. Her husband had lost his job and they had lost their first son. Only after the husband had “been to many places,” did he learn that his wife had been a witch all these years. Ariyo asked the woman to fast for three days. “On the third day, during . . . prayer, the spirit of witchcraft in that woman confessed.” “I recorded the confession and play[ed] it for her [on] the third day, [but] she almost killed herself when she knew that the notorious witch spirit that causes all family misfortune is living in her.”<sup>8</sup> The

---

<sup>6</sup>Timmons, *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom*, 130.

<sup>7</sup>Ade David Ariyo, *Triumph Over Witchcraft* (Lagos, Nigeria: The Trumpeter), 18.

<sup>8</sup>Ariyo, *Triumph Over Witchcraft*, 18.

husband, who was in deep debt at the time, accepted his wife back after she was delivered.

In many tribes in Africa the evil power of bewitching is carried out by women with the power often handed down from mother to daughter. Fortunately, the women who possess these evil spiritual powers are usually known. Mbula writes that “the Akamba believe that witchcraft is in the blood of the witches, and just like the genetical inheritance, Akamba witchcraft passes from the mother to the daughter.”<sup>9</sup> It is unfortunate to be born a female in such a setting because one does not have a say in the matter. Mbula states that the transmission of these evil spiritual powers begins right after birth and continues until the daughter is old enough to marry, but still the daughter has no say in the matter. Acceptance is mandatory and if there is no compliance, then punitive consequences will follow from the evil spirits. Mbula describes how a mother transmits the power to daughter:

The mother, who is to give the *uoi* makes sure that the daughter understands what is going to happen. *Uoi* . . . is a mystical power, and is not fully explained. The mother therefore, does not go into details explaining to her daughter what to expect; the daughter knows about it without being told the whole story. . . . After the initiation rites, when the mother and the daughter are at home together, the mother calls the daughter and asks her to accompany her to the woods. They both leave the home very quietly. This is a solemn moment, and the daughter and the mother have no communication. They go to a quiet place where no body can spot them. At times, however, the mother can do it at home if she is sure no body is around to see what is happening to them. When the daughter and the mother are alone, they both strip themselves naked, and the mother, without talking to her daughter, starts with some forward and backward movements. These movements are repeated seven times. The mother then claps her hands several times, then makes the same gesticulations seven times again. These movements are to arouse her to perform the ritual well. She then proceeds on to her daughter and with a sharp object she makes small incisions on the daughter’s tongue, each breast, each buttock, the navel and the genital organs. She

---

<sup>9</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 208.



does the same to herself on the same seven places, then draws some blood from the cuts which she gives to her daughter. The daughter takes the blood and rubs it into her seven cuts then draws blood from her own cuts and gives it to her own mother. The mother takes her daughter's blood and rubs it into her cuts. This exchange of blood makes the mother and daughter one. The two then, face opposite directions. The mother puts her buttock against the daughter's buttock, they rub the buttocks together so that the blood from the cuts can mingle. After this act, the mother turns to her daughter and the latter faces her mother. The two can communicate on an equal basis and the daughter can carry on the work which the mother has been doing.<sup>10</sup>

Once the daughter has been initiated, she does not know how much power she has until she has practiced. She uses the paraphernalia contained in a basket called *Kyondo*, which is given to her by her mother; after that she is feared by everybody in the village. In the village where she lives, child mortality rates often go up unless families have protective devices. Mbula makes an observation which has surprised many Christians and which drives many Christians to carry protective devices. During handing over of the witchcraft she observed:

They do it at home, and one condition of giving witchcraft to these people is that the daughter must be menstruating when she is given the witchcraft objects. This is what makes witchcraft so closely related to the reproductive organs. This is why, when a witch tries to harm somebody who is treated against witchcraft, her uterus sticks out as a sign that the witch was trying to threaten life. This uterus cannot be replaced until the witch confesses the name of the person who she was to bewitch. The witch therefore has to be careful with her reproductive organs.<sup>11</sup>

These women can lead out in churches, and even read the Bible from the pulpit. They know that if they do not practice their profession they will die. Mbula says, "One important aspect of witchcraft is that witches do not value human life, and can easily kill their own children. If a witch, however, does not use her power to kill, she

---

<sup>10</sup>Mbula, "Penetration of Christianity", 210-212.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 214-215.

herself wastes away and dies, as the power turns upon her and destroys her.”<sup>12</sup>

Ariyo suggests that most diseases, epidemics, and sicknesses are caused by witches that “cannot be cured by any doctor at hospital, likewise the herbalist, the diviners, magicians, false prophet[s] who receive power from [the] devil and [are also] subject to witchcraft cannot cure the sickness.”<sup>13</sup> The power of witches is what causes fear. They say something and it happens, even when they have left the scene. They can act from a long distance, then their wishes are carried out by their power. Rebecca Brown writes, we “began to understand just what the strange power was that Elaine had used in addition to demons for so many years. Satan never teaches his people what they are using, just how to use the power within them.”<sup>14</sup> Elaine says the power was the demons which had entered her during birth and immediately thereafter. Demons enter witches immediately after they are born because of the contract the mother signs with her own blood. Elaine learned how to astral project and how to send demons ahead of time to do her bidding. She wrote:

I astral-projected into his apartment and wrote all over his walls very impolite messages with a black marking pen, then signed my name to it. I threw dishes at him when he was home and several times unplugged his refrigerator so that all the food in it spoiled. Every time he tried to bring anyone to see the messages on the walls one of my demons would tell me ahead of time and I would have the demon completely clean the wall before any one else could see the writing. He quickly learned that he couldn't say anything to any one else about what was going on because they all

---

<sup>12</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 215.

<sup>13</sup>Ariyo, *Triumph over Witchcraft*, 14.

<sup>14</sup>Rebecca Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1986), 118.

thought he was going crazy.”<sup>15</sup>

Another fearful aspect of witchcraft is that the spiritual diseases cannot be seen by the naked eye and cannot be detected through laboratory tests, so the disease is not treatable because it is not traceable. Evil spirits in the body of a human being cause many sicknesses. Kaniaki and Mukendi state that

to relieve pain in his clients, he may remove the evil spirits from the client’s body and put it back later but in a different part of the body, so that the client will have a false impression he is being healed from the first sickness. But soon he starts experiencing a worse problem than before. This would again drive him back to the same witch doctor because he will say: ‘If he healed my chest, then he must be able to heal my arthritis too.’ From these, the witch doctor again moves the problem to another position.<sup>16</sup>

This is not healing but a way of keeping people in a vicious cycle until they die in bondage to evil powers. Olukoya suggests that the spiritual forces work differently from community to community but with the same results. There is a “diversity of the manifestations of witchcraft and demonic power in the African continent. . . . Demons and witches change their characteristics from one community to another.”<sup>17</sup> Olukoya also observed that evil spiritual powers are more prevalent in some locations and “the level of bondage from some French West African countries was higher.”<sup>18</sup>

In Africa, witchcraft has always been closely associated with women. Haar notes that camps have been established in some countries where women accused of witchcraft

---

<sup>15</sup>Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, 87.

<sup>16</sup>D. D. Kaniaki et al., *Snatched from Satan’s Claws*, 84.

<sup>17</sup>D. K. Olukoya, *Overpowering Witchcraft* (Lagos, Nigeria: Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, 1999), 43.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 44.

could escape as refugees.<sup>19</sup> Among the Kamba, women do not hand over witchcraft to their sons, but only to their daughters.

It is women whose association with mystical powers is usually considered negative, in contrast to the positive associations made when it concerns men. [Among] Africans . . . the worst types of witchcraft are associated with women. A gender bias can also be observed in the belief that women are generally held responsible for passing on witchcraft powers from one generation to another, while men are more likely to be seen as acquiring witchcraft powers by purchasing them, for example from traditional healers.<sup>20</sup>

### **“Good Spirits” and Their Power**

There is a debate by born-again Christians, which has gone on for years, on whether buying herbs for treatment from African traditional healers is wrong or not. Most educated Christians suggest that there is nothing wrong in acquiring herbal medicine from herbalists. But, the common understanding among the wise is “that the *ngan* can heal only because he is a witch himself.”<sup>21</sup>

Others argue that since their names such as traditional doctors, or *wagaga*, herbalists, or *miti shamba*, are tied to traditions which Christianity rejected they should be condemned. Mbiti, a well-respected religion professor, contradicts himself by calling them good and friendly,<sup>22</sup> a place Christians can visit with good conscience, while at the same time he paradoxically states,

---

<sup>19</sup>Gerrie Ter Haar, *Imagining Evil*, 17.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995), 64.

<sup>22</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 171.

First and foremost, medicine-men are concerned with sickness, disease and misfortune. In African societies these are generally believed to be caused by the ill-will or ill-action of one person against another, normally through the agency of witchcraft and magic. The medicine-man has therefore to discover the cause of the sickness, find out who the criminal is, diagnose the nature of the disease, apply the right treatment and supply a means of preventing the misfortune from occurring again.<sup>23</sup>

If a herbalist has given a patient some device to ward off future misfortune, that places him in the position of somebody with powers beyond what is in the herbs. Mbiti seems to suggest that such powers are good. Mbiti looks at it from the African worldview of sickness, a worldview that may take centuries to change, if it ever will. Even if somebody is suffering from malaria from a mosquito bite, most Africans believe an enemy must have sent that mosquito to bite them.

Modern hospitals, which deal with the physical aspect of sickness and disease, usually do not deal with this spiritual aspect. Therefore, patients “resort to both hospitals and medicine men, without a feeling of contradiction, although if they are Christian or ‘educated’ they might go only secretly to the medicine-man or follow his treatment.”<sup>24</sup> In such settings spirit mediums and diviners are considered vital in the society. They do not harm the society, they benefit it. The reason being that “the restoration of the soul or the psyche is an absolute requirement for treatment in the Akamba medical practices.”<sup>25</sup> However, Ndeti emphasizes that “the treatment of the psyche does not replace the

---

<sup>23</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 169.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>25</sup>Kivuto Ndeti, “Elements of Akamba Life” (PhD dissertation, Syracuse University, 1967), 274.

biophysico-chemical treatment.”<sup>26</sup> Ndeti’s dissertation lists nearly all the plants the Kamba use for curative purposes. Unfortunately, due to modern academic university education, this knowledge is not being passed on to the new generations the way it was done in the past. The curative notion, which has been replaced by university-educated doctors, will not replace the medicine-man’s psyche curative dependence. As long as there is disease, the medicine-man will never be replaced by hospital medical doctors or by the prayer of faith unless the African worldview of sickness is replaced by a biblically shaped worldview. Mbiti realized this when he said:

The medicine-man is one of the specialists whose profession is likely to continue in Africa for several generations, especially since people’s needs continue to increase through modern change, and he is moving his practice into the urban centers where these needs are most concentrated. Leading politicians in a number of African countries are known to consult medicine-men, just as do university students which no doubt gives the medicine-men quite a high status and ensures the continuity of their profession. A number of university graduates are known to have become, or work with, medicine-men; and I have heard that in at least two countries there are medicine-men working side-by-side with doctors or in hospitals.<sup>27</sup>

These medicine-men, or in Kiswahili *Wagaga*, have a lot of power to influence society to the extent that whoever has a problem pays them for a consultation. They help the society to increase productivity, they help men to win love from their wives, and they also give power to students to pass examinations. “It is also the duty of the medicine-men to purge witches, detect sorcery, remove curses and control the spirits of the living dead. They have access to the forces of nature and other forms of knowledge unknown or little known by the public. Therefore the public entrusts them with the duty of removing what

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 172.

may harm the community.”<sup>28</sup> The medicine-men are guided by spirits, they control spirits, and are in communion with the spirits of the dead people. They go into trances and consult higher authorities in their trances. Emmanuel Eni “met a native doctor in the spirit where he was consulting with the spirits.”<sup>29</sup> This creates a paradox: Some call any helpful endeavors from useful spirits “good” because they help solve problems. Since they are perceived not to harm but help many, Christians seek these powers because they are helpful. However, the fact remains, even if they have helped produce a solution to a terrible situation, they are still tied to evil powers.

### **Spirits of Dead People**

The Kamba believe strongly in the continued existence of their dead relatives in the form of spirits. It has been documented many times that relatives visit with their next of kin immediately after they die. To make the encounter more convincing, the dead relatives talk only of the most familiar issues when they appear. Mbiti calls them the living dead because they are still involved in the day-to-day issues of the living relatives. Because they are still considered to be alive, people still feed them and offer them drinks and even sacrifices. Mbiti states, “The departed of up to five generations are in a different category. . . . They are in the state of personal immortality and their process of dying is not yet complete. We have called them the living-dead.”<sup>30</sup> They are not to be offended in any way. When they appear to their relatives, their advice is to be seriously

---

<sup>28</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 170.

<sup>29</sup>Emmanuel Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 20.

<sup>30</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83.

carried out, otherwise a disaster may follow. If they are offended or given an improper burial or if “people neglect to give food and libation where this is otherwise the normal practice, or if they fail to observe instructions that the living dead may have given before dying, then misfortunes and sufferings would be interpreted as resulting from the anger of the living dead.”<sup>31</sup> David Parkin has observed that “ancestors experience envy, anger and greed, but can also reciprocate human generosity and, sometimes on impulse, can bless their descendants, though usually only after special supplications.”<sup>32</sup>

### **Visitation**

Gerhard Lindblom calls the living dead *Aimu*, which is the Kamba word for ghost. He writes, “The *aimu* always show a great interest in the living race, and are thought to keep themselves informed of everything that happens among them. The native feels a close bond between himself and his dead relatives and the latter often come at night to visit their old village. They can be talked with, though they are not usually visible.”<sup>33</sup> Mbiti writes that “the spirits of the living dead look as they did when they were human beings.”<sup>34</sup> They come wearing the same clothes, beard, hair, and shoes. The voice is exactly the same. When they visit, the person who communicates with them is likely to spend days feeling ill. Mbiti also mentions that the living dead are sometimes grouped

---

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 82.

<sup>32</sup>David Parkin, “Entitling Evil: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Coastal Kenya,” in *The Anthropology of Evil* (Southampton, UK: Camelot Press, 1985), 232.

<sup>33</sup>Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, 211.

<sup>34</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 79.



with and blamed for any calamity that occurs.

When people face sickness and misfortune in the family, the cause may be attributed to the living dead, unless magic or sorcery and witchcraft are held responsible. In this case, these spirits serve as an explanation of what has caused things to go wrong. In order to put them right the spirits have to be satisfied by the performance of rituals, by following their requests, or by correcting any breaches of the proper conduct towards them. Generally the diviner or medicine man is consulted in order to find out exactly what the alleged spirits may wish. But on the whole the spirits of those who died recently are benevolent towards their families as long as they are remembered and properly treated.<sup>35</sup>

Mbiti illustrates his point by sharing a story of one family who refused to follow the instructions of the dead husband. Then the living dead returned with a vengeance that was felt even by the neighbors. Everybody involved was forced to acknowledge the existence of the living dead. He writes:

The living dead are deeply concerned with family affairs. The following story which I have heard from different persons who witnessed the incident or knew the family where it occurred will illustrate this point further. About 1962 a man died and left instructions that his wife was not to sell the piece of ground which belonged to the family. She decided, however, that she wanted to sell the ground, and in spite of warnings from brothers of the diseased man she went ahead and sold it. The man who bought it was warned that misfortunes would fall on his family if he built and settled on that ground. The man did not outwardly pay attention to this; he went ahead and built a new home. Shortly afterwards mysterious things began to happen in the house. For example, while boiling water the pot would overturn and spill the water over the fire, putting it out; and while sitting in the house, people would get struck by invisible agents or stones from the outside. The family called the local pastor to come and pray, and when he got into the house he got struck so severely by clubs from the house that he ran away. The family called the police, and two men came. These also were hit by stones and struck with clubs, from invisible agents, and had to run away. It became intolerable to live there, and the man who had bought the piece of ground had to give it up and quit the spot. The woman returned there and peace also returned. People who witnessed these happenings took them to mean that the living dead who had forbidden the sale of the compound, was disturbing the family which had bought the land.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 78-79.

<sup>36</sup>Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 87.

The living dead are also called spirits, ancestral spirits, or ancestors. Those who died a long time ago are called ancestors or ancestral spirits since the new generation never saw them, they only hear of them. These are the ones that the new generation is not very much concerned with. Those who died recently are the ones the Kamba are concerned with such as the great-grandfather, the grandfather, and the father. The same is true for the female gender, although the Kamba have a paternal lineage. Ncube says that

the ancestors are very frightening and benevolent at the same time. They are offended if ignored, especially when people do not perform regular ceremonies and rituals. They are vindictive to those who do wrong and kind to those who recognize their authority. . . . They operate through a lineage structure . . . [and] . . . are a very powerful means of projecting and extending the social system beyond the realm of the living.<sup>37</sup>

He goes on to say that Christians, and in this case he specifies Adventists, are visited by the deceased. They have “testified that their deceased relatives visit them when they sleep at night. The deceased are said to communicate messages to their living descendants.”<sup>38</sup> Among the Kamba, once the visit is over the consequence is sickness that cannot be diagnosed in hospitals and where the services of a medicine-man are required. “They look for a diviner and perform a prescribed ritual; usually this is done privately without the knowledge of the rest of the church members.”<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup>Zebon Masukume Ncube, “Ancestral Beliefs and Practices: A Program for Developing Christian Faith among Adventists in Zimbabwe” (DMin. dissertation, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 1988), 64.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

## Offerings and Sacrifices

Christianity has caused the offerings and sacrifices to the ancestral spirits to go underground. It is considered uncivilized to be involved in this practice. Nevertheless, the spirits still demand to be honored in this respect. Mbiti makes a marked distinction between offerings and sacrifices. He writes, “Sacrifices involve the shedding of the blood of human beings, animals or birds; offerings do not involve blood but concern the giving of all other things, such as foodstuffs, water, milk, honey or money.”<sup>40</sup> Sacrifices were made in the time of drought, epidemics, war, raids, calamity, insect pests, and destructive floods. “The life of one person or animal or a few of either, is destroyed in the belief that this will save the life of many people.”<sup>41</sup>

Writing particularly of the Akamba tribe, Gerhard Lindblom says that in every Kamba family offerings are made regularly at every meal. They consist of a little food and drink placed on the floor of the hut.<sup>42</sup> Public offerings are given for the same purposes to the spirits of the prominent persons in specific places. Where there is an epidemic, “offerings are then made to a deceased medicine-man or some other prominent person, who, during his life-time played a part outside his immediate family circle.”<sup>43</sup> Where Christianity has taken root, such sacrifices are done secretly. This mainly occurs when Christians are wanting the spirits to solve a difficult problem like a chronic illness. Kaniaki warns against this type of offering to the spirits. “This is a useful lesson

---

<sup>40</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 63.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, 219.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

for those who continue to worship and sacrifice to ancestral spirits at the same time. The Bible warns us that between us and the dead, there is no connection.”<sup>44</sup> Satan is not thankful, so any good thing sacrificed to him has serious negative repercussions. “Any live animal they bring . . . symbolizes a human being that belongs or would have been born in their respective families. And the cassava flour, palm oil, and money represents their families’ material prosperity which I have blocked and snatched now and in the future generations. By bringing us these things it means that they are giving us permission to control the lives and property of these families.”<sup>45</sup> Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of Kenya, stated that even if people continued to sacrifice food and drink offerings “these are not acts of prayer or worship towards the living-dead in the way that God is worshiped.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, Kenyatta is warning Christians to first consider what they are doing before they continue. He was alluding to the idea of worshiping the dead without saying so. People with Bible-shaped worldviews do not want to say their ideas openly because they do not want to offend their own people.

#### Belief in the Power of Magicians and Traditional Healers

In Ukambani, a medicine man is called *mundu mue* who is recognized as holding the key both to the past and the future. Whatever is done secretly where no one knows who did it, *mundu mue* is the one who can reveal it. The root word for *mundu mue* is

---

<sup>44</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from Satan’s Claws*, 18.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*, 89.

*mundu mui*, which means a wise man.<sup>47</sup> The *mundu mue* doubles also as a medicine-man and in most cases it is claimed that he was born with the talent. Lindblom wrote correctly when he said that one is born a medicine-man and this gift is usually recognized early in life. He states, “It is not everyone that can be a medicine-man, as a rule only those who have shown themselves predestined to this position from birth are eligible. The proof of this is that the child should be born with what one might call appendages, which constitute an indication from the ancestral spirits that he is to be a medicine-man.”<sup>48</sup> Most people who want to succeed academically, economically, politically, or health wise or who want a promotion in the workplace will usually visit the *mundu mue*.

### **Power to Heal**

The medicine-man follows a procedure in his treatment of disease. He has to “discover the cause of the sickness, apply the right treatment, and supply a means of preventing the misfortune from occurring again.”<sup>49</sup> He tells the patient the name of the disease and who in the village caused it, then gives the right herbs for treatment, and after all that, supplies the right power to ward off any future sickness in case another person tries to bewitch the patient. At times the medicine-man may not be able to tell the cause; in such a case it is his business to consult a more powerful magician in order to supply the right answer. “In African societies these [problems] are generally believed to be caused by the ill-will or ill-action of one person against another, normally through the agency of

---

<sup>47</sup>Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, 254.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 254.

<sup>49</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 169.

witchcraft and magic.”<sup>50</sup> Herbalists who are trained only to deal with herbs find themselves in a very difficult situation that will often force a born-again Christian out of the herb business. Hugo Hinfelaar notes that “sixty percent of the herbalists were prepared to exceed the limits of their professional competence, due to pressure of their clients who not only require them to diagnose and heal, but also to indicate through divination who had caused a particular disease, ailment or misfortune. This led to constant witch-hunting.”<sup>51</sup> Lindblom concludes that the works of the *mundu mue* are “to cure illnesses and to tell fortunes.”<sup>52</sup> In older times, the medicine-man occupied the position of the principal leader of the society. He instructed the old men and women as to when sacrifices were to be performed in their cult worship, when to sacrifice to the spirits, and how to carry out the rites.<sup>53</sup> His role has evolved to only two major responsibilities because of the European type of government and Christianity, which has driven his activities underground, as will be seen later.

Idowu writes that “European medicine without augmentation with the traditional remedy appears to Africans by and large as inadequate. It is common knowledge that relatives of patients who are admitted to hospitals ‘smuggle’ in for them medicine

---

<sup>50</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 169.

<sup>51</sup>Hugo F. Hinfelaar, “Witch-hunting in Zambia and International Illegal Trade,” in *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2007), 233.

<sup>52</sup>Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, 256.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 257.

obtained from traditional doctors.”<sup>54</sup> It is also common among traditional healers to make invocations to the medical divinities and ancestors who initiated them to the practice in the first place because their training came from those ancestors. Therefore, allegiance is required. “Traditional doctors in Africa often claim that they are taught medicine by divinities or, more generally in dreams or in trances, or during visits with spirits in the forests.”<sup>55</sup>

Whenever people feel they have been bewitched, the only place to go is to the medicine-man. Going to the hospital will only make the sickness worse and prolong the time of the illness. In a Kiamba village, for instance, there was a married couple that had a baby which later went blind.

This couple went to various hospitals where they were told that no medical remedy existed for the problem. Subsequently, the couple decided to visit a diviner to examine the child and be advised on what to do. The diviner told them that the cause of the problem was with one of their grandparents, named Kagere, who fostered a complaint. During the divination process Kagere’s spirit explained that the baby should be named after him. The ancestral spirit lamented that the couple had forgotten their grandfather. Under the guidance of the diviner the couple changed the name of the baby, which regained its eyesight. Since that time the baby grew into a mature man who has never lost his eyesight again.<sup>56</sup>

C. B. Hobley talks about the preventive medicines he saw being administered to a boy of sixteen to protect from snakebites. As he observed he stated that “although these observations are classified under the heading of magic, it is not at all clear whether the

---

<sup>54</sup>E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1973), 201.

<sup>55</sup>Idowu, *African Traditional Religion*, 200.

<sup>56</sup>Stephen Nyoka Nyaga, “The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices on the Socio-Economic Development of the Abakwaya in Musoma-Rural District, Tanzania,” in *Imagining Evil*, 255.

procedure adopted is based on the knowledge of prophylactic or antiseptic drugs. The subject is worthy of professional investigation by a trained pathologist.”<sup>57</sup> This type of reasoning has led many Christians to approach magicians and traditional healers for treatment since they know what herbs to use. There is nothing magic in herbs. The other question that is raised by some Christians is whether an ordinary doctor in the hospital can inoculate in advance to prevent against future snakebites. Kivuto Ndeti listed all the herbs that he knew which are used to treat illnesses, and while the list is not exhaustive, he describes what each herb can treat.<sup>58</sup> Some conclude therefore that there is no magic used. And that even born-again Christians can go to herbalists for treatment. However, people who have been converted from Satanism tell a different story. Idowu states that herbal medicine is first consecrated through a ritual to the spirits and ancestors before administration.<sup>59</sup> The issue of snakebites is also quite fascinating. Once one has been treated against snakebites he or she can never be harmed by any snake. This is more of a miracle than a treatment against snakebites.

The author saw in Kitui a man who professed to have no fear of snake bites. This man one day walked into Kitui Station carrying a big puff adder (*Bitis arietans*) in his hand; he was not holding it by the neck, but was gripping it about eighteen inches below its head. He had heard that snakes were wanted for a collection, and had come to sell it. After the puff adder had been safely disposed of, he pointed out two deep scratches, not punctures, bleeding freely, at the base of his thumb and produced a black powder, some of which he rubbed on the wounds and some of which he placed on his tongue and swallowed. The wounds were inflicted by the adder. This man

---

<sup>57</sup>C. B. Hobley, *Bantu Beliefs and Magic: With Particular Reference to the Kikuyu and Kamba Tribes of Kenya Colony Together with Some Reflections on East Africa after the War* (London, UK: Frank Cass and Company, 1922), 198.

<sup>58</sup>Ndeti, “Elements of Akamba Life,” 275-279.

<sup>59</sup>Idowu, *African Traditional Medicine*, 200.



accompanied the writer for a ten days' journey, and during that time caught various live snakes. His general procedure was to lie down and put his arm into the recesses of a white ant nest which is a very favorite shelter for snakes during the heat of the day; he would feel about and sometimes extract a snake.<sup>60</sup>

Hobley was surprised at the powers these natives had when he saw the results of the treatment against snakes. "The result of the treatment is that a person can seize hold of any snake and, by making a circle round its head three times with the first finger of the right hand, render it innocuous. . . . If a person who is immune spits and strikes a snake with the spittle, the snake becomes sick and dies at once."<sup>61</sup> The medicine-men, whom one may also call magicians because of their performances, treat people against any type of disease and snakebites. It is believed that if a witch bewitches a treated person, the power of the witchcraft returns to the witch and inflicts the same ailments that the witch intended for the treated person. The herbal powders used for such protection are what some Christians claim are free of magic. If they are free of magic, why do church members sneak to these medicine-men's homes at night for treatment against snakebites and protection from witchcraft?

These practices of dual allegiance at times cause more problems than they solve. A survey carried out in 1999 showed that "over eighty percent of patients . . . visit diviners and medicine men before seeking treatment in government and private health facilities. This has led to the death of many victims of deadly diseases, such as meningitis and cerebral malaria, cancer, diabetes, AIDS, and strokes among other known

---

<sup>60</sup>Hobley, *Bantu Beliefs and Magic*, 203.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 202.

cases.”<sup>62</sup> So not only is this practice harming people spiritually, but physically as well.

### **Power to Harm**

The profession of medicine-men is not to harm but to heal, but they also have power to render other harmful powers useless, so that the person involved in harming others can never use his or her powers again. Emmanuel Eni talks of a native doctor who could not only heal the sick but had power to send lightning to look for culprits and kill them. The native doctor could also perform seances and trances and could engage in spirit travel. He writes, “As a result of the mysterious circumstances of their death the elders in the village went to inquire from another powerful native doctor who normally sent lightning to investigate the killer. Unfortunately for these men, I met the native doctor in the spirit where he was consulting with the spirits and warned him not to say anything if he loved his life.”<sup>63</sup> From the above it is clear that medicine-men play more than one role. They are not just herbalists, so born-again Christians need to note this point. Where there is doubt, one would need to avoid association.

### **Power to Predict**

Medicine-men, mediums, and diviners are three professions that can be combined in one person. When predictions are made or when a ‘prophecy’ is given, people in these professions are under the control of another personality. This should solve the question of whether such practitioners use evil spiritual powers or not and should cause Christians

---

<sup>62</sup>Nyaga, “The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices on the Socio-Economic Development of the Abakwaya,” 262.

<sup>63</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 20.

to be careful.

The medium-to-be sat quietly on the floor without even turning his head. The singing and rattling went on for about thirteen minutes when suddenly the young man's hands began to tremble. Three or four minutes later he started talking in an entirely different voice. The singing stopped and the diviner could then talk with the medium for about fifteen minutes, in the middle of which the medium (or spirit in him) requested another song to be sung. At the end, the medium jumped about like a frog, banged his head hard on the floor and with his fist hit his own chest very hard twice or thrice. Then he was normal once more. When I 'cross examined' him afterwards, he assured us that he was not aware of what he said or did during the time he was acting as a medium.<sup>64</sup>

These mediums tend to be trusted even by Christians who go to them when they are in distress. Mbiti says that they are normal people who cannot predict anything unless they are possessed by a spirit. Through the spirit "a person may be directed to find a lost article or to know who stole his goods."<sup>65</sup> One area in which they are reputed to have special abilities is finding who it is in the village that is bewitching people. "Some may give more detailed information by describing the appearance or the specific identity of a sorcerer."<sup>66</sup>

Seers are not usually trained but are ordinary people who use their intuition to predict something that will come to pass. They often predict something that is about to happen simply because it is happening somewhere else. In many African communities "people tell about famous seers who predicted certain events like the coming of Europeans, the building of the railways, the flying of aeroplanes, and so on."<sup>67</sup> Seers also

---

<sup>64</sup>Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 172.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Nyaga, "The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices," 258.

<sup>67</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 159.

seem to be clever people who are good at manipulating others. It is also true that in addition to manipulation those who predict accurately can only do so when they are under the control of other powers. Mbiti says that “the medium tells where to find lost things, who may have bewitched the sick person, what types of ritual and medicine are necessary for the cure of peoples’ troubles, whether an intended journey will be a success or not, which of the living dead may have a request to make and of what kind, and many other things.”<sup>68</sup>

Mediums, magicians, witches, medicine-men, and witch doctors are all people who, in a Christian environment, will cause nearly every Christian to consult them for one reason or another. They hold the power in the society. Some of these trained people speak in languages they never learned and that they cannot speak unless they are under the spirits’ control. “The diviner, medicine man, or priest who is in charge of the medium, is then able to interpret what she [the medium] is saying.”<sup>69</sup>

### Belief in Witchcraft

Witchcraft may be defined as power acquired with an intent to harm others or their property. Stewart and Strathern give an expanded explanation when they say:

Witchcraft is seen as a power belonging to persons through their bodies or spirits, giving them an ability to fly out of the body or to transform themselves into other creatures and to kill, harm, or inflict sickness on those whom they intend to weaken. Characteristically, the witch is seen as a kind of cannibal, eating the victim’s life-force as a way of self-augmentation. Sorcerers also are seen as destroying a victim’s life-force, not by directly consuming it but by inflicting sickness through magical

---

<sup>68</sup>Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religions*, 159.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 158.

means.<sup>70</sup>

Jonathan Timmons states that it is very difficult to understand witchcraft and its power in the United States of America. One has to be born and raised in a culture where witchcraft is practiced in order to fully understand it. He writes:

Because we do not see many people using charms here in the United States we do not understand what they are and how they work or function. We are spiritually dense and thus ask the wrong questions. How can a charm, for example, attract people to my place of business? How can a charm cause me to become wealthy? How does one cause death for my enemies? We fail to understand because we focus on the physical aspects of the charm and fail to see the underlying spiritual forces behind the operation of that charm. This is where the power is and not in the charm itself.<sup>71</sup>

This is the basis of witchcraft. People see material things and others wonder why one would fear something like that. There is no power in a waistband, or a ring, or a doll of clay. There is nothing wrong with an owl coming to perch on one's roof top. Timmons makes it clear when he says, "The truth of the matter is it is not the ring, but rather the demon forces operating through that ring that causes these things to happen. How else could an inanimate object such as clay move."<sup>72</sup> Cletus Namooobe says that witchcraft is a "field in which the Kamba are reputed by other tribes in Kenya to have high accomplishments," and "in Kambaland, belief in witchcraft and magic is very prevalent."<sup>73</sup> Animate things do things that surprise those who witness them. It is

---

<sup>70</sup>Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern, *Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Gossip* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>71</sup>Jonathan Philip Timmons, *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom: The Battle for Planet Earth* (Austin, TX: CCI Publishing, 1991), 188-189.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>73</sup>Cletus Namooobe, "Witchcraft Among the Kamba," in *African Cultures and Religion* (Nairobi, Kenya: Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, 1999), 50.

believed that an owl landing on the roof of one's house is a fatal taboo to the occupants of the house. It is believed that once this happens, somebody is going to die in that house. Kaniaki and Mukendi wrote how "suddenly an owl flew and landed on a nearby tree which held my life. My father knew immediately that it was someone after my life. He quickly glanced at the bird with one eye, and the bird fell at once from the tree, completely dead. At the same time, someone at the funeral suddenly collapsed and died. I believe the person had something to do with the owl."<sup>74</sup>

A bush buck entered somebody's compound. According to the worldview of the family members, the bush buck had been sent there by an enemy to cause havoc, and with that worldview if it was not killed immediately, if it was allowed to escape with its life, somebody would die in that family. However, if it is killed, somebody else in another family, the family of the person responsible for sending it, will die. When the family failed to kill the bush buck because it was too fast for them, problems started immediately in the family. Mbambo narrates what happened next:

Three days later the problem began. My son, Haingura, complained about pain in his chest and said that he wanted to vomit. . . . All of a sudden he stopped breathing. . . . Just as the boy had stopped breathing, my mother arrived from the *mahangu* fields. When she saw the boy, she became weak and collapsed. Her last words were: 'I have no power in my body, otherwise I could have helped you to take the child to the hospital.' After these words my mother slept. I tried to wake her up but she did not wake up again. Meanwhile my grandfather and grandmother also came to our compound. They took my mother to Kandjara clinic, but the nurse referred her to the hospital. On the way to the hospital she died. From there, many other members of the family died within a very short time. I therefore believe that this was Shitera [revenge].<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from Satan's Claws*, 31.

<sup>75</sup>Samuel Kaveto Mbambo, "The Mbambi Brought the Message: Shitera, Witchcraft of Revenge," in *Imagining Evil*, 189.

This is the kind of environment in which Kamba Christians live. Incidences like these cause many Christians to fear, and fear leads them to be prepared in case such things happen to them. To escape witchcraft in Africa is not an easy thing, for any village is a place “where everybody knows everybody.”<sup>76</sup> Anything “that harms a person is attributed to some form of magic, and another person is nearly always blamed for it.”<sup>77</sup>

Witchcraft is usually practiced only among people who know each other such as among relatives in the villages. It can wipe out the most intelligent and academically successful youth. Since it is practiced among family members, nobody discusses it in public because of its serious repercussions. While doing field research on the subject, Ntloedibe-Kuswani encountered this well-known resistance from villagers. He writes, “I started to ask some people to be my research assistants. None of them agreed, arguing that witchcraft is an untouchable topic. As for them, they did not want to be associated with *boloi*.”<sup>78</sup> They were afraid of who might be listening. They knew of situations when *boloi* wiped out entire families. Mbambo gives an example of incidents that happened in one village.

These deaths affected three generations within the same family, from the great-grandmother to the great-grandchildren, ranging in age from a four-year-old child to an elderly woman of seventy-five years. . . . According to the councillor, the sequence of events started with the death of a four-year-old boy called Haingura, whose mother was Numba. The boy died within few hours after the appearance of Mbambi, the messenger, on Sunday 14 January 1998. That same day Haingura’s grandmother, Shidona (55 years) became very sick. She went to the clinic in Kandjara, a

---

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 186.

<sup>77</sup>Namoombe, “Witchcraft Among the Kamba,” 50.

<sup>78</sup>Gomang Seratwa Ntloedibe-Kuswani, “Witchcraft as a Challenge to Botswana Ideas of Community and Relationships,” in *Imagining Evil*, 204.

neighboring village, but the nurse at the clinic advised her to go to Nyangana Hospital. The following day, on her way to the hospital she died. Meanwhile Rukunde (75), the mother of Shidona and the great-grandmother of Haingura also got sick. She went to the clinic, where she died on the same day, January 15<sup>th</sup>. . . . During the course of the very same day, 15 January 1998, Namutenya (45), the younger sister of Shidonya and the third daughter of Rukunde, took her two-year-old grand-daughter Matumbo to the clinic. When she arrived at the clinic in Kanjara, her grand-child Matumbo died. In the meantime Namutenya also fell ill. She was taken to Nyangana, where she died on the same day. On that day, the Nyangana hospital decided to send a medical team to investigate the cause of these deaths at Dosa village. When they arrived in Dosa they found two boys dead: ten-year-old Kamonga and eight-year-old Shikokngo. The two boys were the children of Matumbo senior (51 years old), the daughter of Rukunde and a sister of Shidona and Namutenya. The Nyangana hospital staff brought nine people to the hospital for treatment and closer monitoring. Five of them were under treatment, while four were under observation only. The four who were under observation were discharged within two days without any problem. But three of the five who were under observation and treatment died. This included Wayera, a nine-year-old girl who died on 16 January 1998, Muku (10) who died on 17 January 1998, and Mudumbi (12) who died on 18 January 1998.<sup>79</sup>

What surprised the medical staff was that there were no signs of bacteria, virus, parasite, poison, or any medically known cause.<sup>80</sup> When medical doctors tell their patients to go home and find what is *eating* them, the Kamba people know what that means. They are being referred to the native doctors. Christians are not exempt.

Witchcraft has a lot of negative impacts on a community. Some people are falsely accused and punished, while others are rightfully accused. Sometimes it is not easy to punish a witch, unless it is done by another more powerful witch. Punishment depends on who has greater powers. That is why in many communities witchcraft is a subject not talked about.

In Kenya, killing through witchcraft is done by *remote control*. Things happen

---

<sup>79</sup>Mbambo, "The *Mbambi* Brought the Message," 186-187.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 188.



but no one can find the cause. Elaine, a witch, did incantations and sent demons to destroy or to kill a Christian medical doctor who was witnessing for Christ in the hospital. “Then, suddenly after about six months, I began to realize that every time I did an incantation in the direction of that doctor the demons came back to me unable to get through. They were not pleased! . . . That doctor who had left the hospital dying four months earlier had just that day returned to work. Not only had she returned, but she was completely healed! I was shocked.”<sup>81</sup> This kind of sickness inflicted by evil spirits is what Christians fear the most because unless the Christian is a true believer he/she will die of some unknown disease that is incurable. Elaine says that “demonic illnesses usually are a favorite because few doctors can diagnose what is wrong and the person so afflicted dies a very painful and slow death while doctors think he is imagining the symptoms.”<sup>82</sup>

Remote control killings are what make Christians fear witches. As Elaine’s story demonstrates, even Christians can be attacked and bewitched and some die a very painful death. Other Christians claim that there is no such thing as witchcraft, that Christians should not even believe in witchcraft, and that Christians cannot be bewitched.

### **Belief in Power to Ward off Witchcraft**

The Kamba Africans in general believe that if one is fully protected against evil spiritual forces, one cannot be attacked. One must carry whatever one is given wherever one goes. Failure to carry protection would jeopardize one’s life. These are “minor

---

<sup>81</sup>Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, 79.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 66.

protective charms and medicines sewn in small cloth bags.”<sup>83</sup> Even when enemies send attacks through remote control, people who are protected cannot be touched or harmed. It is therefore the individual’s choice and responsibility to make sure that he/she and the family are protected and covered. If a witch directs these powers towards a protected person, the powers go back after accomplishing nothing. This also means that the powers protecting the person are stronger than those that were sent. Thus one has to go to a more powerful native doctor to get more powerful protection.

Christians often visit these native doctors at night. When they meet other Christians who are also visiting the doctor, both parties are terribly embarrassed. Their hypocrisy has been discovered; the secret is known that they did not want to reveal. The native doctor also keeps records of those who visit, and to make matters worse, some names are revealed by the doctor because important people who are happy with their protection will bring even more customers and more wealth.

### **Belief in Protective Devices**

Witches in a village are usually known by their neighbors, relatives, and even the neighboring villages. It is also known by the villagers that “anyone can perpetrate acts of witchcraft. When living in a world with witches, it is not wise to fear only the well known witch.”<sup>84</sup> Everyone in the village must be ready, therefore, at any time because a witch can strike at any moment with no advanced notice. The only way to be secure from

---

<sup>83</sup>Stewart and Strathern, *Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors, and Gossip*, 61.

<sup>84</sup>Adam Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 64.

attacks is if a person is protected against witchcraft in general. It is therefore every villager's responsibility to make sure that their life is safe.

Christians are also often trapped in this practice. Parents, particularly the mother, and extended families take it upon themselves to make sure that their Christian relatives are not exposed to danger. Christians therefore go to church with protective devices in their pockets. The chances are also very high that the pastor himself has them in his pocket. Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz have complained that "there is an on-going dualism in many African Christians' religious beliefs. They keep one foot in the beliefs of their African Traditional Religion and one foot in Christianity."<sup>85</sup> One Zairean poet complained about this in his poem:

O unhappy Christian,  
Mass in the morning  
Witch doctor in the evening  
Amulet in the pocket  
Scapular around the neck.<sup>86</sup>

The traditional worldview is that God helps those who help themselves.

However, this worldview needs to be reviewed and impacted by the scriptural worldview.

### **Belief in Protective Ceremonies**

It is believed that anyone who gives out protective devices against the forces of evil must be a witch or a sorcerer. In fact, some people are scared that when they invite a witchdoctor to their home to give them full protective powers he might revert to his old

---

<sup>85</sup>Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 294.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*

practices of causing harm instead of giving help.<sup>87</sup> In family settings, every member must be present before the ceremony begins. The witchdoctor will be piercing and cutting where the power is inserted and then each member is given some device wrapped in a piece of cloth that is always to be carried everywhere they go. Even though fear is thus reduced, carrying it “promises no way out to a world in which evil is absent or at least substantially reduced, or can progressively be transcended and perhaps wholly conquered.”<sup>88</sup> The carriers still get sick, and at one time or another they will still die.

### **Kamba Christian Beliefs About Evil Spiritual Forces**

The churches often teach only the message that the missionaries gave them. That message has continued to be taught until today and by so doing the message has brought into the church what Mbula calls “Christian witches.”<sup>89</sup> The church members were taught not to believe in witchcraft. The emphasis was that Christians could not be bewitched. Once one had been born-again and had been baptized, he/she should no longer carry any device to ward off evil spiritual forces because that was for non-believers. God’s children were under His protection. The Church therefore “condemned the belief in witchcraft.”<sup>90</sup> The three main churches in Ukambani–The African Inland Church, The African Brotherhood Church, and the Roman Catholic Church–all condemn the belief in witchcraft. The Seventh-day Adventists came into the picture much later, but its

---

<sup>87</sup>Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 65.

<sup>88</sup>Parkin, “Entitling Evil: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Coastal Kenya,” 232.

<sup>89</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 229.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 225.

teachings on the subject are the same. Those witches who brought their paraphernalia to the church to be burned according to the Bible solved the problem from one point of view. But the blood part was not dealt with or the cuttings on the body, the vows exchanged, and the blood that witches and sorcerers drink was not addressed. Apart from the paraphernalia, the forces behind the paraphernalia were not addressed by the church. Mbula simply concludes that “there is also the hereditary part of it which remains with the individual Mukamba and it is upon him or her to stop bewitching.”<sup>91</sup> After all the paraphernalia was gone and after fully accepting Christ, Elaine complained, saying “I did not know that I was not supposed to use my powers and Satan and the demons continued to let me use them because they knew that so long as I did so I could not really grow as I should spiritually.”<sup>92</sup>

Thus the people who burned their paraphernalia in churches were left with many unanswered questions. The demonic powers that inhabited them were not exorcized and the areas of their bodies where they had been cut and evil powers deposited were not dealt with by the church. Eni had an unusual experience. He had a dream where he saw Jesus remove all the hidden devices that had been hidden in his body where the cuttings had been made.<sup>93</sup>

People are a product of their culture. Christian converts do not need to change every aspect of their culture, only beliefs and practices that go against biblical principles.

---

<sup>91</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 229-230.

<sup>92</sup>Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, 86.

<sup>93</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 37.

Christianity does not take away the old worldview but it must be Bible shaped. If it is not Bible shaped, all the previous structures remain the same and therefore there are still enticements to revert to the old ways that cause many to lead dual lives.

Christians see things falling apart around them but they cannot do anything about it because they have not been given anything biblical to replace what they had before. A lot of ministers are not fully trained on how to help somebody grow into a full Christian once they have given up their old practices of using the devil's powers.

#### Underlying Causes for Fear of Evil Spiritual Forces

Confusion in the way the Christian message was brought has lasted for a long time. The missionaries condemned the African culture as pagan. They demanded that one had to adopt the missionary culture and forsake the African one. One had to be given or choose a European name or a biblical one, wear European or missionary clothes, sing European missionary songs, and build European structures. In summary, everything had to be the way the missionary wanted. Native converts were not given an opportunity to decide what was biblical and what was not in their culture. They were not allowed to decide what part of their culture was biblically acceptable and what was not. They were not allowed to choose what part of the European culture they wanted to adopt and what part they did not want. The Bible and a new culture were forced on them and their culture was condemned. This forced them to live with three worldviews, the biblical one, the European one, and the African one. To the illiterate converts, this was worse than dualism, and this confusion caused them to go secretly to the witch doctor to meet their needs. Their worldview was now African shaped, scripturally shaped, and European

shaped. Adding to the confusion was the alliance between the colonial government and the missionaries. The missionaries needed the colonial government, while most converts did not like the colonial yoke. This resulted in the converts being ostracized by their own people if they remained faithful to their faith. They therefore led a life full of confusion. As a result, they had to cope with the colonial yoke, the European culture, the Christian culture, and the African culture. Wan-Tatah explained this very clearly:

Missionaries were hostile to African traditional culture and religion. Compounded with this antagonistic approach to the African way of life, which was considered intrinsically evil, was the unholy alliance between missionaries and their colonial compatriots. To the Africans, these two kinds of foreigners shared a lot in common and aimed at a complete control over them. Often, unfortunately, missions did not realize that they were being manipulated by the colonial powers. Religion was used as an institutional means of social control, while congregations were used as a vehicle for the pacification of the conquered. Few, if any, missions saw anything positive in African tribal society and religion. For an African to be a Christian, she/he had to reject traditional values and to sever his/her relationships and roots in traditional society. This amounted to self-ostracism. As if that were not enough, converts had to imbibe through formal education, Western ideas, dress and behave in a “civilized” way, like the white man.<sup>94</sup>

In this kind of environment Africans had no right to evaluate the Scriptures critically to see what God required of them and what He did not. Critical contextualization was not allowed. Somebody else, who did not understand the worldview of the culture, did that. Therefore, Africans continued to fear and respond to the fear of evil spiritual forces.

With Christianity arriving on the scene, the missionary churches often treated witchcraft as a form of superstition. This has not prevented their members from seeking other avenues to address this traditional belief. Both African Independent churches (A I C's) and more recently, charismatic churches uphold the traditional

---

<sup>94</sup>Victor Wan-Tatah, “Pseudo-Conversion and African Independent Churches,” in *New Trends and Developments in African Religions* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 287.

world view and offer remedies to witchcraft. In fact these newer Christian Churches have made evil and its removal fundamental to their message and activities.<sup>95</sup>

In some denominations Africans did not read or interpret the Bible. Roman Catholics made sure that the Bible was not placed in the hands of the Africans. Some denominations gave Africans the Bible. Wan-Tatah saw some balance when the missionary developed a “fervent zeal to give Africans the Christian scriptures translated into the vernacular languages.”<sup>96</sup> Putting the vernacular Scriptures in the hands of the people while still continuing to Westernize them did not seem to help. The missionaries continued teaching and condemning “the belief in witchcraft.”<sup>97</sup> Just condemning the basis of what people dreaded the most instead of dealing with it caused it to go underground. Mbula put it correctly when she wrote, “Nottingham, one of the early administrators to Ukambani thought that witchcraft and sorcery were very important to the understanding of the Akamba society: In Ukambani, sorcery would seem on our evidence to be the very marrow of the structure of the society.”<sup>98</sup> Quoting another early source she writes, “Witchcraft, *Uchawi* [in Kiswahili], in Kamba *Uoi* is a field in which the Akamba are reputed by the other tribes to have high accomplishments. . . . The Kamba did, and still do fear witchcraft; and their chief concern with it is to protect themselves against it.”<sup>99</sup> The Kamba was not allowed by the church to look at the

---

<sup>95</sup>Elom Dovlo, “Witchcraft in Contemporary Ghana,” in *Imagining Evil*, 80.

<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>97</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity into the Akamba Traditional Family,” 225.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*



Scriptures to see whether there was a basis for fear. People filled the pews in the churches, but you could count on your fingers how many people were not fully protected in traditional ways from sorcery and witchcraft. Kaniaki suggests that “there are individuals who are in the church today, yet they carry charms and perhaps practice direct witchcraft. They may be holding big positions in the leadership or the church choir, and they can talk about Jesus alright but they kill people before they hear the gospel. Satan’s agents are working overnight.”<sup>100</sup>

The problem has been compounded by the fact that African churches, which began to exist as offshoots of the Missionary Churches, did not address the problem either because of lack of theological training. In addition, the spirit with which the African churches were started was not conducive to dealing with human problems biblically for they were more political than biblical. Wan-Tatah describes this attitude as including “a recognition of contradiction in missionary attitudes toward the natives and the Christian principles that African converts were taught. The displacement of Africans from their own land and the resulting frustration and joblessness turned off converts from the new religion to nativistic interpretations of Christianity that fulfilled their basic spiritual and social needs.”<sup>101</sup> Thus, the native African Christian churches are political entities, most of which have non-trained non-qualified theologians. This condition has

---

<sup>100</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from Satan’s Claws*, 157-158.

<sup>101</sup>Peter B. Clarke, ed., *New Trends and Developments in African Religions* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 287.

allowed syncretism<sup>102</sup> and accommodation<sup>103</sup> to persist in those churches. Becoming a Christian in such a setting often leaves behind a convert who is confused, first a “switch from one’s tradition to missionary religion and on to the Independent Church.”<sup>104</sup> This quick succession of events did not leave the converts enough time to learn to handle deep spiritual matters on their own. Ncube wrote that in his country Christians are consulting ancestral spirits for difficult issues. They have been in the church many years but they do not see the Adventist Church helping to solve such issues. He argues:

Many Adventists do not believe in ancestral practices as a way of life; however, when faced with complex problems or when under social pressure, they may resort to these practices simply as a short term-measure—just to get the immediate problem out of the way. In such cases, the Christian faith is maintained as a way of life until one gets to the point where one’s life is seriously threatened by forces of evil or by the anti-social behavior of one’s neighbor. At that, one may take the special precaution of consulting a diviner-healer. While some Adventists believe strongly that Jesus Christ is all powerful, yet subconsciously they are not willing to take a chance. In spite of their belief in God’s care and protection, they still feel vulnerable to the powers of evil. . . . Causes of illness appear to fall into three categories: germs, spirits, and one’s neighbors. The cause of illness or death also determines the nature of the remedy. If it is believed that germs are the cause, the patient may go to the hospital. However, if spirits or one’s neighbor are thought to be the cause, a Christian may privately seek a diviner-healer. In all these options, an Adventist Christian may still offer prayer to God, but because of a strong desire to ward off enemy forces or to thwart any recurrence of misfortune, some Adventists call a spirit medium or diviner-healer to doctor their homesteads.<sup>105</sup>

Emmanuel Eni, himself an agent of Satan and a powerful wizard, was surprised one day when he met “some Church leaders who came [to a powerful spirit medium] for

---

<sup>102</sup>A. Scott Moreau, “Syncretism,” *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 924-195.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>104</sup>*Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>105</sup>Ncube, “Ancestral Beliefs and Practices,” 70-71.

powers, powers to say a thing . . . [that] is accepted without questioning in the Church.”<sup>106</sup> Mukendi states the same fact when he says that “some pastors and local representatives in many established Churches have acquired such authoritative voices to subdue their congregation through such means. In some churches today there are people using satanic powers for the same purpose.”<sup>107</sup> Olukoya makes another surprising statement when he talks of Christian witches. He suggests that Christians are in for a lot of surprises.

Our concentration in the time past has been limited to discovering witches among those who are outside the Church. We have not yet looked inwards to consider the possibility of the presence of witches within the Church. Hence we have not been able to locate the enemy within. Many people who talk about witches and wizards are not free. So-called witch hunters are also bewitched. . . . The moment you begin to realize that witchcraft can be practiced within the Church, you will discover the solution to most of your personal problems.<sup>108</sup>

Elaine confesses that after she became a witch and could take on anybody anytime, she had to lead a double life. “I was living a double existence. That is, I was a member of the satanic cult and also simultaneously a member of a very large Christian church where I taught and sang and participated in all sorts of activities.”<sup>109</sup> She was a well-trained witch who could tear somebody in pieces without the evidence of a physical hand. While fighting with another witch she “saw her grow weaker and weaker as I called demon after demon out of her and into myself. At first her demons fought back and I felt my own body being lifted up, I was thrown against walls, my throat being

---

<sup>106</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 16.

<sup>107</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from Satan’s Claws*, 78.

<sup>108</sup>D. K. Olukoya, *Overpowering Witchcraft* (Lagos, Nigeria: Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, 1999), 50.

<sup>109</sup>Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, 47.

strangled without the sight of a physical hand.”<sup>110</sup> At the same time she was a teacher in a Sunday-keeping Church.

### Occasions When Fear Occurs

Because Christians live among non-Christians, there are many occasions when Christians have witnessed things that surprise them. What may be noted is that things may not happen to Christians but they will happen to neighbors and friends caused by somebody displaying some magical powers. Williams says that “one may be with a friend, and a terror will take one even while his admirable voice is speaking; one will be with a lover and the hand will become a different and terrifying thing, moving one’s own like a malicious intruder, too real for anything but fear.”<sup>111</sup> He concludes by asserting that “there is, in our human center, a heart-gripping fear of irrational change, of perilous and malevolent change.”<sup>112</sup> The question has been asked whether a Christian can be bewitched. Can evil spiritual forces affect a born-again Christian?

Some will say there are conditions under which a Christian can be affected. Others say no, there is nothing to fear. Mukendi states that Satan’s agents divide people into three categories in order to know how to attack them: non-Christians, born-again Christians, and lukewarm Christians. The lukewarm Christians in the midst of the born-again Christians create hindrances because they open the doors for Satan to work among

---

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>111</sup>Charles Williams, *Witchcraft* (Berkeley, CA: The Apocryphile Press, 2005), 77.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid.

them and cause born-again Christians to believe that all Christians can be attacked by Satan. One wizard confessed, “We could not enter into a Christian house because it was filled with the blood of Jesus. Over the homes of lukewarm Christians we could see them clearly naked and open to destruction.”<sup>113</sup> That wizard testified that the two groups of Christians are distinct in the kingdom of Satan. Lukewarm Christians can be attacked and by so doing panic and fear can be spread to born-again Christians. Another wizard, after becoming a true born-again Christian, confessed that a Christian is not just anybody who goes to church every week, and not just someone who carries or reads the Bible or even the one who prays. “They are known in the spirit world by the light that shines continuously like a very bright candle in the heart or a circle of light around the head or a wall of fire around him or her.”<sup>114</sup>

Born-again Christians are the ones targeted. They are impossible for even Satan in person to defeat. His agents are also scared to take them on because they are feared by even the strong, well-trained agents of Satan. Evil spirits are trained to use their well-devised tools. One approach is to remind the born-again Christians of their embarrassing or depressing past, and if they respond, to go ahead and provoke them, so that they respond in a furious rage, by so doing opening the door for Satan and his demons. Another way to defeat born-again Christians is to get them to sin. One wizard working for Satan confessed that no one can be possessed by evil spirits if they do not open the door to those evil spirits. He tells how he opened such doors in the spirit world. Born-

---

<sup>113</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 8.

<sup>114</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 29.

again Christians are always clothed, but the rest, both lukewarm and non-Christians, are naked all the time.<sup>115</sup> He gives an example of how they succeeded in attacking the naked.

I remember what happened during the early part of my assignment with Christians. Armed with my radar, I viewed people walking along a certain street in Zaire, and to my surprise, there was only one beautiful girl who was clothed. The rest were naked. I wanted to possess her right away, but there was little chance. I walked behind her. There was no way. Meanwhile Satan kept pressing me to catch up and possess her, I went ahead to greet her, "Hullo lady." "She smiled evasively, ignored me, shrugged her shoulders as she moved away in disgust. I realized she thought I looked awful . . . and I decided to provoke her. I said something to annoy her. When she was provoked, I started calling her names. 'You are a prostitute,' I said as we faced each other, tensed, 'You think you are beautiful? You are ugly, I tell you. My wife is much more beautiful than you are.' She became quite mad at me. And immediately, [as] she flared up in anger, I threw demons of prostitution in her. Then I viewed her again after the rage, and found that she was now completely naked. I managed to possess her with demons of prostitution. It was not long before she completely backslid and took to the street for prostitution. She ended up carrying out several abortions, in the years following the incident.<sup>116</sup>

An incident like this one will send most Kamba Christians to the native doctors to know for sure who bewitched their daughter. Once the witch is known, the next thing would be to decide how to treat her so that this does not happen again, and lastly the young would need to carry some device to ward off such evil spiritual forces in case the witch tries again. This is when Christians may think that God has failed them, and they will use all available resources at their disposal to find the cause, for "as long as people fail to find solutions to their problems in life, they will try to associate malevolence occurrences with the actions of the witch."<sup>117</sup> Most Christians fear that this will happen

---

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 115.

<sup>116</sup>Kaniaki, "Snatched from the Claws of Satan," 115-116.

<sup>117</sup>Cletus Namoombe, "Witchcraft Among the Kamba," in *African Cultures and Religion* (Trenton, NJ: African World Class, 1999), 54.

to them. They need to be prepared in advance and look for preventive measures. Preventive measures are not looked for where Christ is, but this happens when the traditional worldview kicks in, when they go to the local native doctor or medicine-man at night under cover to get protection.

One of the worst parts is when a Christian cannot have children or is barren. The majority of the Christians will end up visiting the local native doctor for help, and once they receive a child they bring it to the church to be dedicated. Ncube was right when he said “a sense of shame and social rejection propels childless individuals to consult ancestral spirits and diviner healers who they believe are able to make them fertile. This requires the performance of a ritual.”<sup>118</sup> He adds, “In many cases Adventist families have literally encouraged such childless men to get other wives for the sake of having children and prolonging their lineage.”<sup>119</sup> Even when doctors can help with a cure, most Christians want to make sure that the problem will not recur in the future. This calls for the services of a local native doctor.

Fear of evil powers can also take a different direction. When one seems to be prospering, one has to be extra careful because this triggers jealousy. Building a good house or acquiring wealth through genuine means causes fear. One journalist wondered while traveling in a modern village at the number of graves outside the modern houses. (Usually Africans do not use cemeteries.) He stated:

My fellow travelers have often explained to me why there is a grave before each modern house alongside the road: these are the last resting places of people who had

---

<sup>118</sup>Ncube, “Ancestral Beliefs and Practices,” 71-72.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., 72

demonstrated too much ambition by constructing such impressive houses. As one might expect, such a mixture of fascination and rejection proves to be a fertile breeding ground for novel uses and experiments with the ancient themes of witchcraft and sorcery.<sup>120</sup>

Linking the modern way of life with witchcraft has become common. Once one has begun to drive an expensive vehicle and is living well, jealousy from neighbors is aroused. Neighbors think that the person needs to be slowed down. Geschiere comments, “Such rumors about the dark side of new objects of wealth offer a good starting point for exploring the conceptual link between witchcraft and peoples’ images of a modern way of life. Apparently this link is obvious to many in Africa today, as elsewhere.”<sup>121</sup> Therefore people see “witchcraft as a traditional barrier against development and innovation.”<sup>122</sup> Prosperity is another area that usually calls for protection against evil spiritual forces.

### **Methodologies to Deal with the Fear**

Mukendi states that when he was serving the devil as a witch, he and the other members (wizards and sorcerers) could not enter into a “Christian house because it was filled with the blood of Jesus.”<sup>123</sup> He testifies that a prayerful Christian has nothing to fear, but even when this is a fact many still fear. This is because they are not aware of the difference between the two powers. Elaine, together with other agents, tried to destroy

---

<sup>120</sup>Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 138.

<sup>121</sup>Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft*, 137.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., 138.

<sup>123</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 8.



one Christian family but felt a strong resistance. The angels of God protected the family, so she too learned for the first time that Satan is not as strong as he claims.

The high priest gathered a number of us together and told us that there was a family nearby who had been interfering with Satan. They had been converting a number of cult members to the enemy, Jesus Christ, and were making a nuisance of themselves. Satan had given orders for them all to be killed. The high priest told us that we were all to go together in our spirit bodies (astral projection), and kill them. So, we sat down in a circle with our candles in front of us and consciously left our bodies going in our spirits to the house to destroy these people. I was not at all enthusiastic about the project, but had no choice. If I had disobeyed I would have been killed. Much to our surprise, as we arrived at the edge of this family's property, we could go no further. The whole area was surrounded by huge angels. The angels stood side by side holding hands. They were dressed in long white robes and stood so close together that their shoulders touched. They had no armor or weapons. Nobody could go through them, no matter how we tried. Any kind of weapon used merely bounced off them doing them no harm. They laughed at us at first, daring us to come ahead and try to get through them. The other cult members got more and more furious with each passing moment. Suddenly their countenances changed and the fierce look from their eyes made all of us fall backwards onto the ground. A very humbling experience I might add!<sup>124</sup>

This story shows that there is a big difference between the power of Satan and that of Jesus Christ. This also shows that Christians fear the powers of evil forces because they do not know the clear difference between the two powers.

I will never forget as I sat on the ground looking up at them, one of the angels looked directly into my eyes and said to me in the most loving voice I have ever heard, "Won't you please accept Jesus as your Lord? If you pursue the course you are taking you will be destroyed. Satan really hates you, but Jesus loves so much that He died for you. Please consider turning your life over to Jesus." That was the end of the battle for me. I refused to try any longer to get through. I was very shaken. The others tried for a while longer, but none succeeded. I doubt the family ever knew of the battle going on outside their house. They were completely protected! We called this particular type of angels "link angels." Absolutely nothing can go through them. I was secretly thankful that we did not get through and the link angels had given me much to think about.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup>Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, 57.

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*, 57

The above example indicates that there is need of power evangelism and power revivals. Christians need to be aware of the working of the two powers. Kaniaki talks of another similar event. During an evangelistic series, the evangelist needs to first pray, asking God to bind all evil spiritual powers that are around, before he begins the meetings. He states, “If she had made a mistake to start talking before binding demons and pleading the blood of Jesus, it would have been far easier for Mukendi to possess them [with demons].”<sup>126</sup> This suggests that where Christians are, the evil spiritual powers are also nearby ready to begin their work. Therefore, instead of fearing them, Christians need to equip themselves with the power of Christ.

Mukendi saw how he succeeded with some Christians and how he failed with others no matter how he tried. He broke into one office at night to mess up the records. Mukendi was surprised to see the difference between files of Christians and files of non-Christians. He writes, “As I looked through the list, I noticed that some names shone brightly like flames of fire. Lucifer notified me that those were the names of those who are Jesus.’ I dared not touch them.”<sup>127</sup> Evangelists need to preach more about this power.

Around the 1980s, a man famous for detecting witches came from the coast and began his work in Ukambani. People turned their hidden powers over to him. Those who tried to deceive him were exposed. Kajiwe was reputed for his accuracy in what he said. Christians turned their paraphernalia over to him, and since this was done openly those Christians were embarrassed. Parkin noted, “Kajiwe saw himself as a savior delivering

---

<sup>126</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 149.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid. 142.

the community from the bondage of witchcraft and superstition, and though hardly educated himself, proposed the virtues of literacy, modern medicine and even Christianity.”<sup>128</sup> The magician himself recommended Christianity to the witches. This way of detecting and neutralizing the evil powers by Kajiwe was a “form of therapy to remove the fear of witchcraft heightened in the campaign against it.”<sup>129</sup> But people forget quickly, so after Kajiwe left the community, some Christians went back to their old ways. Nyaga wrote, “Rich people and successful businessmen are always believed to be using medicines to attract customers to buy their merchandise. They are therefore associated with witchcraft practices.”<sup>130</sup> Many of these people are those who fill the pews in Christian churches.

How is it that people go to church, get baptized, and then begin to bewitch the family. Kgatla narrates how it happens:

Most of those witchcraft accusations emanate from the ‘home’ and the family, where people spend much of their time together as kinsmen and friends, disrupting social harmony and relationships. As a rule, the first people to be suspected of witchcraft are those living near the complainant. People who are supposed to live communally and care for one another find themselves in antagonistic relationships, fighting where they should be cooperating. Witchcraft accusations, therefore, underlie the sad fact that jealousy, hatred and aggression exist within the intimate circle of the family, where solidarity and trust should reign supreme.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup>Parkin, *Entitling Evil*, 4.

<sup>129</sup>Stewart and Strathern, *Witchcraft, Rumors, and Gossip*, 61.

<sup>130</sup>Stephen Nyoka Nyaga, “The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices on the Socio-Economic Development of the Abakwaya in Musoma-Rural District, Tanzania,” in *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007), 259.

<sup>131</sup>Selaelo Thias Kgatla, “Containment of Witchcraft Accusations in South Africa: A Search for Transformational Approach to Curb the Problem,” in *Imagining Evil*, 269.

Many methods have been used to curb family members from using their evil spiritual powers on their own kinfolks. The only solution that has been found to be effective is the use of protective devices. When family members are the ones accused, the power of Christ is diminished.

Years ago the government tried to do away with this menace by eliminating evil spiritual powers in the area where the Kamba live. Every person accused of witchcraft was rounded up by the government. The church talked of future punishment, but this passive way of dealing with witchcraft was hurting a lot of people. Families were looking for help, but neither the government nor the church was doing anything. The government thought that the preaching of the church was enough to eradicate the menace. Mbula says that the church was not even coming close to curbing the problem. “Such condemnation of witchcraft was not effective as the Kamba witches were used to sterner punishments than to be told of a punishment to come.”<sup>132</sup> Because the church failed in her responsibility, the government began “rounding up of witches in Ukambani.”<sup>133</sup> The government “launched a campaign to destroy all witches and their *uoi*. This was a frustrating campaign for all those who were concerned.”<sup>134</sup> This campaign produced another shock that no one had thought of. Many of the wizards, sorcerers, and witches were Christians in good and regular church standing. This divided the families after finding that the people known to be good Christians were actually witches.

---

<sup>132</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 227.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid.

The Christian witches produced their objects and admitted that witchcraft was something within themselves, and that they could not give it up. The things which the witches produced as part and parcel of their craft were very odd looking. . . . The true witch can not stop bewitching unless she or he is punished by the society, and perhaps threatened with death. Christian witches speak of burning their witchcraft, but witchcraft is two fold. There is the witchcraft paraphernalia which can be destroyed, but there is also the hereditary part of it which remains with the individual Mukamba and it is upon him or her to stop bewitching.<sup>135</sup>

Fear of evil spiritual forces needs to be dealt with by the Church. This is one area that the Church is afraid to deal with. However, the fear itself is beginning to bring people together. “This fear brings numerous people together in dramatic settings to repulse and react against what they perceive to be an inherently evil force which plagues them all.”<sup>136</sup> Elom Dovlo talks of how the community formed an anti-witchcraft cult to identify those disturbing the community. Once the culprits were identified they were cleansed and exorcized of the evil spirits that gave them their powers. The most surprising events were when Christians were among those identified. He states, the cult “drew not only traditional believers but also attracted Christians. Several modern Christian prophets equally affirm belief in witchcraft and lead followers in rituals of detection and exorcism. These rituals validate cultural beliefs and sustain a reaction against, and attempts to control, a widespread fear of evil.”<sup>137</sup> Many denominations have changed their methods of dealing with believers. They are now acknowledging the usefulness of power ministries. For a church to be powerful it must include a way to deal

---

<sup>135</sup>Ibid., 229-230.

<sup>136</sup>Elom Dovlo, “Witchcraft in Contemporary Ghana,” in *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007), 70.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid.

with spiritual forces. Any church that lacks this type of ministry is going to lose members. Recently, “African churchmen and women of different backgrounds who have offered suggestions for dealing with the problem of witchcraft have emphasized the view that addressing needs raised by witchcraft ought to be an integral part of pastoral care.”<sup>138</sup> The Seventh-day Adventist Church has also added one additional fundamental belief, which deals with power ministry. The denominations that fail to deal with the fear of evil powers are driving their church members to practice witchcraft secretly in their search for help.

Bongmba suggests that we need ‘cities of refuge’ so that those who fall victim of evil powers can go there to be prayed for, be anointed, have the powers of Satan cast out, and be shown how to invite Christ to protect them. “The city of refuge not only provides safety from whatever is in the process of overwhelming the individual, it also provides the environment in which the person can become strong enough to expel his ‘demons’ and ultimately go into the world healed and with a new courage.”<sup>139</sup> African church leaders need to recognize that “missionaries did not normally engage with the phenomenon, and thus failed to interact with a thought and belief system that affected the people across the continent.”<sup>140</sup> For this reason “Christianity has had a very difficult relationship with the subject of witchcraft.”<sup>141</sup> Even today there are some countries where

---

<sup>138</sup>Elias K. Bongmba, “Witchcraft and the Christian Church: Ethical Implications,” in *Imagining Evil*, 123.

<sup>139</sup>Bongmba, “Witchcraft and the Christian Church,” 124.

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>141</sup>*Ibid.*, 118.

the yoke of the missionary worldview has never been lifted from the church members.

Relating his conversation with some pastors, Bongmba states:

During a recent conversation with Cameroonian pastors, several told me that there is no such thing like witchcraft and that they cannot waste their time talking about it. Some told me that they believe witchcraft exists, but has no power over the ‘child of God.’ A child of God is the one born-again practicing Christian. A luke-warm Christian is the one vulnerable. This calls for a new appreciation and a new reading of the Bible in the African context.<sup>142</sup>

Healey and Sybertz have argued that inculturation of the gospel is necessary in order to “overcome and break down the dualism and parallelism between Christianity and African Traditional Religion.”<sup>143</sup> They argue that if healing could be an integral part of the gospel as it was both in the Old and the New Testament periods and as it was in the early Christian church, dualism would not exist in the church. Churches which have included healing in their worships, such as the African Independent Church and the Pentecostal Churches, have reduced dualism. Those churches that are rigid in their traditions, like the Catholic Church and the mainline Protestant Churches such as the Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians, have not accepted an emphasis on power, so the problem persists.<sup>144</sup>

### **Impact of Dual Allegiances on Kamba Christians**

The houses of lukewarm Christians are not protected by Christ’s blood. This is the group that the devil is not afraid of and against whom they can do anything he and his

---

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., 128.

<sup>143</sup>Healey and Sybertz, *Toward an African Narrative Theology*, 303.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., 304.

agents wish. Mukendi and the other witches could “sneak into peoples’ houses at night unnoticed in the form of an ant, a cockroach or a fly”<sup>145</sup> and could do anything they wanted. “Over the homes of lukewarm Christians we could see them clearly naked and open to destruction. We played with them like toys. We would look for such tiny openings in their lives to throw sickness, depressions, and misunderstanding on their homes. And when they woke up in the morning, they felt discouraged, sick and got problem after problem because they were carnal.”<sup>146</sup> This is not the same for born-again Christians. Luke-warm Christians fear because evil things are happening, but their faith is not protecting them. Their fear influences born-again Christians, who also have fear that can lead to involvement in activities they should not be involved in.

Many Christians “attend Sunday services while at the same time participating in traditional rituals. In cases where the rains delay or floods continue to cause devastation, the Christians not only conduct prayers in the church but also join the traditionalist believers in their rituals to alleviate impending calamities.”<sup>147</sup> Nyaga adds one more surprising activity by saying, “I was told how Muslims and Christians, including even members of the parish councils, contribute animals for sacrificial services in the traditional shrines.”<sup>148</sup> The belief is that the ancestral spirits would deal with anybody who fails to participate, including the Christians because Christians also fear the spirits of their dead relatives.

---

<sup>145</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 8.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid.

<sup>147</sup>Nyaga, “The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices,” 251.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., 252.



Daniel Himmans-Arday, a Ghanaian gospel minister, is unhappy with those ministers who seek protective powers from native doctors because of this influence. He admitted that he knew of gospel ministers who seek evil powers to protect themselves and their families from other evil powers. There are ministers of the Gospel who are also lukewarm. Haar says:

There are even Christian pastors . . . who go to them to protect themselves against witchcraft and other types of evil. They do so, in his view because these pastors are unable to cast out demons in their own Churches and they lack the ability to ‘see’ who is evil. Having no spiritual eye, they lack spiritual vision and insight. Relying on traditional healers in these matters is a dangerous path to follow, in his view, because they always demand ‘their pound of flesh’, as he puts it, wanting something in return. Himmans is convinced that in the long run a strategy of seeking solutions outside the church will backfire. He does believe that there are powers in the universe, and that other people may use those powers to heal. But as a Christian he regards those powers as offering only a temporary solution.<sup>149</sup>

When church pastors are involved, what about the sheep that they lead? The new converts will not see the difference or know it. Ashforth asserts:

Even people with unshakable faith, however, can never be completely confident that they do not deserve punishment for some lapse or sin. Nor can they be confident that a misfortune that might be construed as resulting from contact with pollutants is not in fact an attack by witchcraft. So the wise know better than to attract unnecessary attention from malicious people who would do them harm. They try not to arouse the jealousy of others. And they try to be discreet. In a world of witches, loose talk costs lives.<sup>150</sup>

If this is the condition of some ministers, then it is clear that they have opened a door for Satan to attack them. They also open doors for Satan to attack the whole church.

---

<sup>149</sup>Gerrie Ter Haar, “Ghanaian Witchcraft Beliefs: A View from the Netherlands,” in *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007), 102.

<sup>150</sup>Adam Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 72.

Spiritually weak pastors will have weak congregations and weak youth. The power to fight Satan and his evil forces that was given to the disciples will be absent, hence Satan will push that church in the direction that he wants, for the church cannot fight the devil with the devil.

The Bishops at the Synod remarked that African Christians, because the faith has not been received into their culture, often live in two separate worlds, the world of the traditional religion and customs and the world of Christian faith. Often they feel tension between their culture and their faith and move from one to the other. . . . They are like frogs who have two legs on land and two in the water. When there is disturbance in the water they jump onto the dry land and when there is trouble on the land they rush into water. . . . [They] pray the rosary in the morning and take to witchcraft in the afternoon.<sup>151</sup>

Many Christians migrate from their ancestral homes to dwell in cities for fear of being bewitched. It is always believed “that a bewitched person is the victim of a close relative.”<sup>152</sup> This belief is the basis for much immigration not only to the main cities where people can be anonymous but also to foreign lands where they believe such powers cannot reach them. Many African Christians have been blamed for not returning home to serve after their training in foreign countries. One reason for not returning home is that they are scared of exposing their families to evil powers. Those who have gone home have often left again because their prosperity attracted jealousy, which then would lead to sickness and probably death if they were not protected from these powers by the usual devices. Recently, African Christians have felt the need to be protected even when they are abroad. Haar emphasizes that “Ghanaians living in Amsterdam believe that ‘witches’

---

<sup>151</sup>Cletus Namoombe, “Witchcraft Among the Kamba,” in *African Cultures and Religion*, 55.

<sup>152</sup>Haar, *Ghanaian Witchcraft Beliefs*, 107.

now also travel overseas to strike their victims there. Just as in Ghana, and other parts of Africa for that matter, witches are often believed to be able to make themselves disappear to evade capture. One such tactic that allows an alleged witch to escape is by transforming into a bird.”<sup>153</sup> Christians abroad are believed to be faring well spiritually because “the social integration of African migrants into Western society . . . will help a great deal to reduce their fear of witchcraft.”<sup>154</sup>

Christians who immigrate to cities within their own country often remain fearful because when their extended family members arrive from home no one is sure they are safe unless they are protected. This is because “witches are thought to attack their own kin.”<sup>155</sup> Educating one’s children very highly is also a cause for fear. Well educated children either need to be kept away from the relatives’ eyes or they need to carry devices to protect them because jealousy can result in witchcraft attacks. The question that many people ask their Christian friends is whether they can be afraid of evil powers from witches and sorcerers and still call themselves Christian. This question will not have a satisfactory answer until the churches deal biblically with evil spiritual forces.

### **Critical Contextualization and Elimination of Fear**

Hiebert defines critical contextualization as a situation whereby “old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without examination.”<sup>156</sup> This examination is a

---

<sup>153</sup>Ibid.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid., 109.

<sup>155</sup>Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft*, 64.

<sup>156</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights*, 186.

comparison of what the Scriptures say and what people believe traditionally. It is a process of removing what is not acceptable according to the Scriptures and maintaining what is scripturally acceptable. The old cultural beliefs which formed the peoples' worldview "are first studied with regard to the meanings and places they have within their cultural setting and then evaluated in the light of biblical norms."<sup>157</sup> This process recognizes that people groups have unique cultures. Therefore, the missionary should not say Christians should not believe in witchcraft when this is part of the worldview. Instead, the fact that witchcraft exists in the culture is recognized, but the emphasis is on how Scripture deals with it. How does God address witchcraft in the Bible and how did the apostles deal with it? The missionaries brought a Western worldview to a continent that had its own worldview. Two worldviews cannot be practiced by a Christian.

Dean Gilliland also asserts that this problem can be solved through critical contextualization. He says, "Here the culture and the Scriptures are evaluated concurrently in search for new ways to express belief and practice. One must ask who will carry out the process, and how accurate are the meanings derived from both customs and the Scripture."<sup>158</sup> Instead of teaching that Christians do not believe in witchcraft, the missionaries should have led the people to be "actively involved in the study and interpretation of Scripture so that they will grow in their own abilities to discern the truth . . . but they must allow the people to make the final decision if they wish to avoid becoming policemen. In the end, the people themselves will enforce decisions arrived at

---

<sup>157</sup>Ibid.

<sup>158</sup>Dean Gilliland, "Contextualization," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000 ), 227.

corporately, and there will be little likelihood that the customs they reject will go underground.”<sup>159</sup> Presently, after so many years, there is no other spiritual issue which is so practiced in secret as the fear of evil spiritual forces not only in Ukambani but also in the whole of Africa. Nothing is more practiced in secret than the seeking for protective devices to ward off evil spiritual forces while at the same time pledging open allegiance to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Church pastors and the church members often meet at night secretly at the native doctors’ houses seeking full protection. In this one area there is no particular denomination that is immune. Half of all the Christians in Ukambani are Catholics. The remaining belong to other denominations. The Catholics did not give the Scriptures to the people until the late 1970s. They practiced accommodation, adaption, inculturation, and indigenization.<sup>160</sup> This led to what Kraft calls ‘Christo-paganism.’ He says that “Roman Catholic missionaries, especially, have fallen into this trap by assuming that when people practice so-called ‘Christian’ rituals and use ‘Christian’ terminology, they mean by them the same thing that the European Christians mean.”<sup>161</sup>

Culture should be guided by Scripture, for it is written, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (Hos 4:6). Where the name Jesus is mentioned, the devil trembles, but he

---

<sup>159</sup> Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights*, 187.

<sup>160</sup> Gilliland, “Contextualization,” 226.

<sup>161</sup> Kraft, “Culture, Worldview, and Contextualization,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, 390.

will not tremble when Christians continue to practice the evil aspects of their culture.

Through the most horrifying spectacle, we soon witnessed how Satan hates the very mention of the name Jesus. One day someone dared mention it in front of Lucifer when we were in a meeting. Lucifer fell off the seat, got up in anger with a start and struck him down, killing him instantly and drinking all his blood as we watched in fear, horrified and startled. He then turned and sounded a threat at any one of us who would dare. And as he lectured us about his displeasure of that name, someone tearfully asked him why he was particularly perturbed by it and why we should not mention that name.<sup>162</sup>

Satan's answer to this question was a perversion of the biblical truth. He answered:

“One day I Lucifer sent somebody to kill his elder brother who used to pray against us. But this person found his elder brother praying in that name of Jesus. And the mention of that name made my man to fall down in front of his brother.”<sup>163</sup> Eni mentions that Satan has the same fear for Christ that human beings have for witchcraft. Satan said that his time was near, therefore we should fight as never before and make sure that no one enters “that place.” So one of us said to him: “We hear that God has sent someone to rescue mankind back to God.” Satan then asked, “Who is that?” One member answered “Jesus” and to our greatest surprise, Lucifer fell from his seat. He shouted at the man and warned him never to mention that name in any of our meetings if he loves his life.<sup>164</sup>

One wonders why a born-again Christian would fear the evil spiritual forces of Satan when Satan himself is even more afraid of the name of Jesus. Timmons offers a

---

<sup>162</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 107.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid.

<sup>164</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Satan*, 21-22.

possible answer.

It is surprising, however, that while the ministers in this part of the world (Africa) know more about spiritual things in the Dark Kingdom than we do in the West, they are overall inept at spiritual warfare. We are involved in training the churches there about how the evil powers attack them and what to do. Their lack of knowledge in spiritual warfare is probably because the Gospel is relatively new there as revival just began in early 1970s. So although they know much about the Dark Kingdom, they do not know much about the spiritual weapons God has given to the church.<sup>165</sup>

Timmons does not say whether the Gospel was given to the West in the same way it was given to Africa. The two worldviews about evil spiritual powers that exist in Africa cause confusion for Christians. Africans were not given an opportunity on how to grow, instead they were told what to do and what not to do. They were instructed what to believe and what not to believe. Various denominations presented different Gospel beliefs on the power of evil spiritual forces.

The European Christian worldview was largely accepted, but since it did not address the issues of evil spiritual power, instead of replacing the old views it allowed the old views to co-exist alongside the new. A worldview has been defined as “a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”<sup>166</sup> Worldview includes the “basic assumptions about reality which lie behind the belief and behavior of a culture” and “they are taken for granted, they are generally unexamined and therefore largely implicit. But they are reinforced by the deepest of feelings and anyone who challenges them becomes the object

---

<sup>165</sup>Timmons, *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom*, 99.

<sup>166</sup>Ken A. McElhanon, “World View,” *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000), 1032.

of vehement attack.”<sup>167</sup> The best way to challenge a worldview is by replacing it with something else. A worldview is what holds a culture together, what gives security to people. It is what makes life meaningful.

The old beliefs and assumptions concerning spiritual power could not be replaced simply by saying that people should not believe in witchcraft or any forces of evil. Such a statement did not challenge the deepest feelings that people had about the forces of evil, hence the feelings of born-again Christians went underground, causing pastors to become policemen who checked on Christians to make sure they were doing the right thing.

A good example of what critical contextualization consists of is what was done by the Bereans. They examined what they believed in the past to see whether what Paul and Silas were preaching was the truth. They are called noble Bereans (Acts 17:10-12). They were given an opportunity to examine the Scriptures themselves so that they too could own what was being preached to them. Africans were not given this opportunity to deal with their old beliefs; everything was given to them, therefore they did not own the Scriptures.

The Scriptures say, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12). Kamba Christians know what this means.

If Christians could be given the opportunity to discuss witchcraft critically in churches led by a knowledgeable person, nobody would come to church wearing

---

<sup>167</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights*, 45.



protective devices, and Christian witches would be put out of business. Eni and others have learned that the blood of Jesus is a perfect replacement for all protective devices. Instead of concealing protective devices or coming to church carrying devices, one should pray a prayer for protection invoking the blood of Jesus as the shield. Eni tells what happened when he boarded a taxi with a zealous Christian.

He was very zealous and started distributing gospel tracts inside the taxi. When he gave me the tract I rejected it. He started preaching. So I became disturbed and knocked him with the ring on my finger that was to kill him. This boy shouted 'THE BLOOD OF JESUS' and immediately lightning and fire and an Angel appeared. A strong wind again removed me with great force out of the taxi and into the thick jungle.<sup>168</sup>

Africans need a theology of their own that is different from the rest of the world. They need to learn how to use the name and authority of Jesus as frequently as possible. They need to learn that the blood of Jesus Christ should be in the forefront in all their daily activities. Mentioning the blood of Christ carries some power.

African church leaders are considered poor in material things. They need to keep their jobs and feed their families, and for this reason they hesitate to promote a new belief that addresses problems in their worldview for fear of losing their jobs as pastors. So they continue preaching what has been handed down to them. They have continued to present the same worldview of disbelief in witchcraft. But this approach will continue to promote weak congregations who are easily assailed by Satan.

The view that the powers of the devil do not exist, that he is a myth, and even that there is no such thing as witchcraft and so forth is a huge challenge to Christians. When Eni was serving Satan face to face he observed, "The devil would either encourage you to

---

<sup>168</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Satan*, 58.

believe that he is a myth or simply evil thoughts, or would make you see more of his powers and less of the power of God.”<sup>169</sup> Critical contextualization would go a long way in removing the powers of Satan out of the church and would make Christians stronger.

Mukendi, being a powerful sorcerer, brought a strong couple down very easily, but they went back to church to repent. This episode led him to Christ. Mukendi says he was finally defeated when the two powers came face to face.

I approached Mutombu as he was in charge of the store key, and told him my problem. Little did he realize who I was. I knew his nagging confession of Christ, but all the same I decided to request him to simply leave the store open for me to steal and sell an item from the company. My wife was about to give birth and I had no money. Mutombu resisted for a while but eventually he gave in and left the store open for my easy access. . . . I was so happy to get such a chance. I waited eagerly with my demons, ready to meet Mutombu the day after. On seeing him, I told him how much the item fetched, and as a reward, offered to take him out for tea. As soon as Mutombu drank the tea, I viewed him with my ladder, and I saw that he was already naked. What a target! I remember telling Lucifer that I was working hard to take him everybody I was working with [Meaning Spirit-filled Christians]. As soon as Mutombu started sipping his tea, I was able to plant in him a demon of stealing. He did not hesitate but took up his new assignment, and became a thief. Because of sharing the stolen items I also attempted to possess his wife, at home through the loot we shared she soon became a liar. She also became naked. As I advanced to destroy them completely, that couple went to Church and repented in tears, after hearing a fiery sermon and after spending a whole night of prayer.<sup>170</sup>

The following day they got Mutombu on a chair they had anointed for the purpose of delivering him and by evening he was a born-again Christian. Therefore, safety from witchcraft lies in becoming a fully submitted follower of Jesus Christ.

In the next chapter I will examine how the Old Testament viewed God’s people who dealt with evil spiritual forces.

---

<sup>169</sup>Ibid. 48.

<sup>170</sup>Kaniaki, *Snatched from the Claws of Satan*, 145-146.

## CHAPTER IV

### OLD TESTAMENT DEALINGS WITH EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS

This chapter deals with various responsible people who were first favored by God and were even anointed with the Holy Spirit but who later chose to associate and work with evil spiritual forces. The consequences of working with evil powers illustrate how God abhors such associations. God instructed His people:

There shall not be found among you any one that . . . useth divination or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee . . . [for they] hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee to do so. (Deut 18:10-14)

God added, “thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exod 22:18). The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* states that the word “witch” referred to a sorcerer “who claimed supernatural knowledge or power, which he used either to influence the gods or to cast magic spells.”<sup>1</sup> The *SDA Commentary* links sorcery with the female gender by stating that “the fact that women are designated rather than men suggests that the female sex was more addicted to this crime.”<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word that God used for punishment

---

<sup>1</sup>“Exodus,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976), 1:622.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

for this crime was *charam*. This word is not used in the common language, but is a verb with strong religious overtones meaning to exterminate.<sup>3</sup> Sacrificing to any god other than the true God carried the same capital punishment. Joseph Exell seems to accept that in the West the word “witch” has been replaced by spiritualism, which he calls *modern witchcraft*.<sup>4</sup> He simply defines it as “unlawful trafficking with the unseen world.”<sup>5</sup> W. H. Gispen seems to suggest that the word that God used was not “witch” but “sorceress,” saying, “do not allow a sorceress to live.”<sup>6</sup> Gispen also points out a difference of how such people were viewed in different cultures. “In Mesopotamia sorcerers and witches were opposed because they caused harm to people, while in Israel they were threatened with death because they served another god.”<sup>7</sup> Exell seems to be hinting at the same thing when he says that they “pry into and traffic with the unrevealed matters of the spirit world” and therefore they are in competition with God.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the point is that witches, enchanters, soothsayers, and diviners were competing with God.

Old Testament witches, in addition to harming others, offered sacrifices, which were “then the chief act of worship, [and] to do so to a false god was to renounce the

---

<sup>3</sup>Roy L. Honeycutt, “Exodus,” *Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. C. J. Allen (Nashville, TN:Broadman Press, 1969), 1:225.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph S. Exell, *Biblical Illustrator* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1955), 427.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>W. H. Gispen, *Bible Students Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 1:221.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Exell, *Biblical Illustrator*, 427.

Lord.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, giving allegiance and sacrificing to other gods “under [the] theocracy of Israel . . . was treason and thus punishable with death.”<sup>10</sup>

Witches and sorcerers continued their “practice within Israel through much of her history,”<sup>11</sup> and many Israelites continued to seek out diviners and mediums for counsel and advice. Even though the people were not bowing down to worship the powers, yet they replaced God. Isaiah asks, “Should not a people seek unto their God?” (Isa 8:19). Fear drove people to replace trust in God with trust in other powers. Knowing this, Isaiah emphasized “a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord your God and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread” (Isa 8:12b–13).

### **God’s Response to Evil Spiritual Powers**

God commanded saying, “A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them” (Lev 20:27). This was because God wanted total loyalty. He said, “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine” (Lev 20:26). The command of the Old Testament to eliminate people with evil powers was only possible because God had separated Israel from the other nations. Today in every country people mingle with carriers of evil spiritual powers. So eliminating them is not possible because of the laws of the land.

---

<sup>9</sup>“Exodus,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 1:622.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Honeycutt, “Exodus,” 1:425.

## Separation and Elimination

God had separated His people from the rest of the nations to be in their own land, free from competition and enticements. King Saul, Israel's first monarch, at first obeyed the command to eliminate anybody who was a spirit medium, a sorcerer, or a witch. The Bible states, "Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. The witch of Endor declared to Saul himself, 'behold, thou knowest what Saul has done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?'" (1 Sam 28:9). Seeing that she used the word "die" suggests Saul had killed them. One may wonder how this woman was left alive when others were eliminated, especially since the people who recommended her were high-ranking officers in Israel. It is possible that these officers were enjoying her services since they had kept quiet up to this time. Her services directly competed with the services of the prophets. When God stopped communing with Saul, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets" (1 Sam 28:6), the spirit medium of Endor replaced the Urim, replaced dreams from God, and replaced God's prophets. She competed with God. The word *'elohim* that she used was used in the Old Testament with "a variety of meanings which include the God of Israel, idols, and spiritual beings of various types."<sup>12</sup> It was clear to Saul that he was seeking guidance from another source that was taking God's place.

The Bible does not say exactly what it means by "had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land" (1 Sam 28:9). Were they made refugees

---

<sup>12</sup>Honeycutt, "1 Samuel–Nehemiah," *Broadman Bible Commentary*, 3:81.

in other lands, or were they killed? Did the witch of Endor sneak back into the country? Jean Comay says that putting away did not mean that Saul killed the witches but suggests that “the King had banished all fortune tellers and mediums on pain of death, and she was not going to fall into any trap.”<sup>13</sup> William Deane and Thomas Kirk argue differently, and state that Saul exterminated sorcerers and witches but this woman could not be touched because she was the mother of Saul’s high ranking military officer. They agree that “Jewish tradition has represented this person as Abner’s mother, which would account for her being spared at the time when the witches were exterminated.”<sup>14</sup> Jewish tradition also has it that the two officers whom Saul took to her were in fact Abner and Amasa.<sup>15</sup>

It does not seem, however, that when Saul put away people with familiar spirits he obeyed 100 percent, for the removal of such people from Israel was not complete. Some suggest that the reason why he had acted was not in direct obedience to God but “that the action was taken when Saul found himself possessed of an evil spirit, and that he hoped thereby to rid himself of the cause of all his trouble.”<sup>16</sup>

What is God’s response when His people seek the services of evil spiritual powers? Does God forsake born-again Christians when they go to mediums to seek protection from them? Saul’s case illustrates how God treats such people. Early in his

---

<sup>13</sup>Joan Comay, *World’s Greatest Story* (London, UK: George Weidefeld and Nicolson, 1978), 112.

<sup>14</sup>William John Deane and Thomas Kirk, *Studies in the First Book of Samuel* (Minneapolis, MN: Klock and Klock, 1983), 203.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>“1 Samuel,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:585.

life, Samuel told Saul that “the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you, and you shall prophecy with them and be turned into another man. . . . God gave him another heart” (1 Sam 10:6–10). Saul was a Spirit-led man but later became disobedient to God. His disobedient life led to the Holy Spirit leaving him, which resulted in him leaving God and finally seeking the services of other אֱלֹהִים (Elohim). Saul knew that he was in front of a *‘elohim* because the woman had told him, “I saw gods ascending out of the earth” (1 Sam 28:13b). It is true that Saul bowed down in the Jewish manner of worship in front of this apparition and worshiped it when “he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself” (1 Sam 28:14b). It is not clear whether the witch was referring to Samuel as “gods” or whether there were other gods that Saul worshiped.

#### Spiritual Dangers of Incomplete Conquest

Endor, the location where Saul went to seek the witch, was located in the tribal territory of Manasseh. It was a town that lay at the foot of the northern face of the hills and was two miles north of Shunem. Shunen was where the Philistine army was camped. This was one of the places where the Israelites let God down by disobeying His commands to root out all Canaanites. It was here where “Manasseh had failed to expel the old tenants, and it was still inhabited by a mixed population, comprising many Canaanites, who retained their old superstitions, and were imitated by their Jewish fellow-citizens. Hence therein were to be found sorcerers and professors of black art.”<sup>17</sup>

Israel made another terrible mistake when Joshua made a covenant with the

---

<sup>17</sup>Deane and Kirk, *Studies in the First Book of Samuel*, 203.



heathen in this region. He established an oath with them that allowed them to remain alive. This was mistake number one. When the men had appeared to Joshua they acted like they had traveled for days, for they said, “We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us. . . . And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them” (Josh 9:6b–15). Thus Israel broke its covenant with God when it established a league with these neighbors. This league started a long comfortable toleration with evil spiritual powers. God had made it very clear that they were not to do this for they were to be God’s special and separate people.

Israel’s mistake led to additional problems, for the abominations of these people were a temptation to the common people of Israel, to the leaders, and also to their kings. This acceptance of evil would eventually cause many to disobey God. Israel’s second mistake followed. “And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out” (Judg 1:28). The Bible records how they failed:

And the Lord was with Judah . . . but [Judah] could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron. . . . And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem up to this day. Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell [there]. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwell in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. Neither did Zebulum drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries. Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob. But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out. Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the

land: Nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them. And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley: But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries. (Judg 1:21-35)

How did God feel to see His own people disobey Him like this? One may also wonder what God was going to do about it. Would God force His people to obey Him against their will or would He let them destroy themselves? Unfortunately the people mingled and lived among these nations. “Even in the regions where the Hebrews were strong, a large number of Canaanites who submitted to forced labor for the privilege of living in their villages or on their farms were permitted to remain.”<sup>18</sup>

The Israelites were comfortable with this arrangement but God certainly was not. God said, “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Sam 15:23b). Disobeying God directly is “as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry” (1 Sam 15:23a). The *SDA Bible Commentary* concludes that “the danger of this to Israelite religion and morals is apparent in the latter history of this book.”<sup>19</sup> Leslei Hope makes a plausible point by stating, “Without someone providing the kind of leadership that Moses and Joshua gave to Israel, the tribes could not be successful.”<sup>20</sup> In Israel’s case “the irony of the situation is that a nation that remembered forced labor as part of its own oppressive history made use of the same system when it

---

<sup>18</sup>“Judges,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:313.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Leslie Hope, *Joshua, Judges, Old Testament Message: A Biblical–Theological Commentary* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982), 111.

suiting its purposes.”<sup>21</sup> Very soon the effect of enslaving pagan peoples began to be felt.

Notice God’s response:

And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spoke these words unto the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. (Judg 2:1-4)

Merrill Unger states that “the name of the place Bochim (weepers) became a standing witness against the nation’s lack of genuine repentance even in the face of divine Presence.”<sup>22</sup> They wept when the angel described their sin against God, but they took no action to reform.

The vow they made was not binding; it could have been annulled any time it was discovered to have gone contrary to God’s directives. The Lord had said:

Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it then he shall be guilty in one of these. . . . And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. . . . And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him. (Lev 5:4-13a)

That meant that their league with other nations was not binding. If people take a woman as a symbol representing the church, God had shown how to break this kind of oath.

---

<sup>21</sup>Hoppe, *Joshua, Judges, Old Testament Message*, 111.

<sup>22</sup>Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1981), 1:315.

And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath; and her husband heard it, and held his peace at her, and disallowed her not: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond where with she bound her soul shall stand. But if her husband has utterly made them void on the day he heard them; then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond, of her soul shall not stand: her husband has made them void; and the Lord shall forgive her. Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void. (Num 30:10-13)

God is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride (John 3:29). This swearing and oath making had been annulled by God when He said, "Ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars" (Judg 2:2a). The reason the Canaanites were to be driven out of Israel was forgotten. God was therefore forced to drive Israel from the land for the very reasons that they refused to drive out the Canaanites. Israel became an abomination just like the Canaanites. They began to do the very things the Canaanites were doing. They allowed diviners, soothsayers, enchanters, witches, charmers, consultants with evil spirits, wizards, and necromancers to remain among them.

God had given them the only reason for driving them out saying **עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ** (You shall be blameless before Yahweh your God). Those who consult with evil spiritual forces are not blameless for "occultism was part and parcel of the debauched Canaanite religion, which was honeycombed with demonism, sexual perversion, and violence."<sup>23</sup>

Failing to obey the prime covenant stipulation of separation from idolaters, the people lapsed into idolatry and served Baal (the local varieties of the chief Canaanite fertility deity) and Ashtaroth. . . . In peace time there was a powerful pull toward Baal worship since it was considered effective in insuring good harvest, Baal personifying the rain

---

<sup>23</sup>Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 257.

and fertility forces of nature. . . . That cult so weakened and divided the Lord's people that they could no longer stand before (withstand) their enemies. As a result, they incurred divine displeasure and chastisement.<sup>24</sup>

Baal or Ashtaroth symbols stood for evil spiritual beings. God had commanded His people to be separate from those who worshiped idols.

### Marrying Strange Wives

The Israelites had also married non-Jewish women from the surrounding nations. The people had seen the results of such forbidden unions with Solomon and probably many others. God had forbidden such unions, but they were still present in Israel. Ezra prayed, weeping and confessing the sins of the people, and asked,

“Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us till thy hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?” (Ezra 9:14). Foreign women had caused many to worship idols. Ezra repeated the commandment in his prayer saying, “Thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, . . . now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace, or their wealth forever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever” (Ezra 9:13). There is a phrase here that is used, “that ye may be strong.” Ezra demanded that the women from the surrounding heathen nations be divorced without exception because as he said in his prayer, “Since the days of our fathers have we been in great trespass unto this day: and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the

---

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 315–316.

kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day” (Ezra 9:7). Nearly all of them had “taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and the rulers hath been chief in this trespass” (Ezra 9:2). The result was that all the wives from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites were divorced and sent away with the little children that were born of the Jewish men. This is one thing Solomon should have done to save the kingdom. Repentance was accompanied by action. Another good thing they did was to return the children, for “the foreign wives of these back-slidden Jews had undoubtedly introduced idolatrous rites in their homes.”<sup>25</sup> It is also sad to note that “the leaders were the chief offenders.”<sup>26</sup> They had forgotten that “they were the ordained . . . kingdom of priests, and an holy nation, separated . . . from all the people that are upon the face of the earth, a peculiar people, that is God’s own.”<sup>27</sup> Nehemiah wanted to call sin by its right name. He stated, “Did not Solomon King of Israel sin by these? Yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin” (Neh 13:26).

When the people of Israel forsook their sin and turned to God then God kept His promise which He had made saying, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall

---

<sup>25</sup>“Ezra,” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 3:380.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 381.

humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chr 7:14). It would have been better if they had obeyed at the very beginning by destroying all the surrounding nations.

C’eline Magan points out that it was only the two southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin) that are referred to in the passage. He writes, “The foreigners mentioned in the matter of mixed marriages include no mention of the Northerners under any name.”<sup>28</sup> But, we may conclude that the same pagan marriages were being contracted in the Northern tribes too. Syncretism was the rule of the day. Dual allegiance prevailed in both regions.

Language is also mentioned in connection with the foreign wives. Language carried the names and the symbols of the foreign religion, which was now being mixed with the culture and language of Israel. In order to be separate they had to maintain their identity through their language. They realized “the importance of a language as an indication of the survival of the distinctive identity of a people.”<sup>29</sup>

Gordon Davies suggests another thought. “Marriage within one’s group is called endogamy and marriage outside it exogamy. . . . Early restrictions against intermarriage seem to have been to preserve tribal property and prerogative. But Ezra does not discuss

---

<sup>28</sup>C’eline Mangan, *1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982), 175.

<sup>29</sup>R. J. Coggins, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 143.

marriage in these terms.”<sup>30</sup> Ezra concentrated on the religious need to keep the people pure of heathenism. Davies goes on to state:

Ezra requires endogamy in order to imbue Israel with its lost sense of self and continuity. . . . Now Israel’s identity is to be carried by a ‘holy seed,’ the purified people descended from the returned exiles. The priests had always needed to be culturally pure, and Ezra declared them so. . . . But now all the people must be separated from blood contamination.<sup>31</sup>

Heathen wives had brought with them their heathen practices based on heathen gods and evil spiritual powers. By sending the foreign wives away, syncretism was eliminated from Israel as the children and their mothers returned to their heathen lands.

### **Moses and Pharaoh**

#### **Magicians Imitate God’s Power**

The next four sections deal with conflicts between the power of God and the power of Satan and also show who should be feared: God or the powers of Satan. The conflicts assure God’s people that Satan’s power must surrender to God’s power in the end. These conflicts beautifully illustrate how Christians should respond to the presence of evil spiritual powers.

Magic has been defined as a “belief that one can manipulate God, the gods or spirits by some form of words or actions and so make them do one’s will.”<sup>32</sup> The Egyptians relied on magic and magicians to manipulate their gods. God allowed a

---

<sup>30</sup>Gordon F. Davies, *Ezra and Nehemiah* (Collegeville, MN: A. Michael Glazier Book, 1999), 57.

<sup>31</sup>Davies, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 58.

<sup>32</sup>“Exodus,” *The Daily Study Bible*, ed. John C. L. Gibson (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1946), 40.



competition between Himself and the magicians of Egypt by telling Moses, “When Pharaoh shall speak to you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent” (Exod 7:9). Aaron went ahead and took his rod and cast it down “before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent” (Exod 7:10). The Bible says, “Then Pharaoh also called the wise men, and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods” (Exod 7:11-12).

William Ford says that Aaron’s miracle did not impress Pharaoh because it could be duplicated.<sup>33</sup> Pharaoh therefore hardened his heart because Moses and Aaron had done nothing new. Quoting Midrash Rabbah, Ford says that Pharaoh mocked Aaron and Moses when he said:

So these be the signs of your God! It is usual for people to take goods to a place which has shortage of them; but does one import murics into Apamea or fish into Acco? Are you not aware that all kinds of magic are within my province?’ He then asked for children to be brought from school and they also performed these wonders moreover, he also called his wife, and she did thus. . . . Even children of four and five years of age whom he called did likewise.<sup>34</sup>

Ford concludes that “the divine sign is made to look like a cheap, juggler’s trick, which a whole row of Egyptian magicians can duplicate with apparent ease.”<sup>35</sup> So God’s miracle in this situation was meaningless to Pharaoh’s team and none was convicted that

---

<sup>33</sup>William A. Ford, *God, Pharaoh and Moses* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006), 127.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 130.

Moses' God made a difference. Swallowing other serpents looked like entertainment.

However, the power behind the swallowing of the magician's snakes held great meaning because "beyond itself the miracle bore testimony to the triumphant power of the Lord over Egyptian men and gods."<sup>36</sup> It also indicated that "the Lord was [the] sovereign Lord of all the powers of the world."<sup>37</sup> But, more was needed to prove God's complete sovereignty. It is when God allows Himself to be challenged and opposed that the difference is noticed. The succeeding miracles proved God's superiority and total sovereignty.

#### God Competes with the Magicians

The magicians' powers had to be tested again and again. God commanded Moses saying "Take thy rod and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all the pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of water, and in vessels of stone" (Exod 7:19). Pharaoh's magicians duplicated this miracle too. "And the magicians of Egypt, did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the Lord had said" (Num 7:22). The *SDA Bible Commentary* states:

Just as during Moses' previous visit, the magicians were again consulted. Once more they counterfeited a genuine miracle by seeming to transform a certain quantity of water into blood. The question as to where the water the magicians used came from is answered in v. 24, which implies that newly dug wells furnished satisfactory drinking water. That the magicians actually turned the water into blood is not

---

<sup>36</sup>C. J. Allen, "Exodus," *The Broadman Bible Dictionary*, 347.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 348.

necessarily implied in the vague expression “did so.” They needed only to convince Pharaoh that they were able to do what Moses and Aaron had done. No critical examination was given their pretended miracle, which, in spite of being a trick, consequently passed as genuine. Had these men possessed the power they claimed to have they should have been able to turn the bloody water of the Nile back into normal water. That the King was satisfied with an imitation miracle shows stupidity, in his case probably the result of his hardened heart. He believed what he wanted to believe.<sup>38</sup>

Pharaoh had an opportunity to ask his magicians to change the bloody water of the Nile back to normal. But Pharaoh just let them go after they added to the problem.

Gibson argues that Pharaoh went to the river Nile in the morning for religious reasons.

The Nile was linked to the god of fertility, so Pharaoh went there to worship that god with his entourage.<sup>39</sup> Clements suggests that it had rained and the Nile river was filling with water. He states, “At the time when the Nile rises at the beginning of its flood season (late June) it carries with it a large quantity of reddish-brown soil deposit (red marl) which gives it a dark, opaque appearance, which could readily be compared with blood.”<sup>40</sup> But God’s message to Pharaoh was clear. Culturally the appearance of blood was considered a bad omen or a curse. “Akkadian texts . . . regard blood like water as portentous. And in the Egyptian ‘Admonitions of Ipu-wer,’ a bloodied Nile betokens hard times.”<sup>41</sup> John Oswalt also suggests that the river Nile was worshiped during the

---

<sup>38</sup>“Exodus,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 1:530.

<sup>39</sup>L. H. Ellison, “Exodus,” *The Daily Study Bible*, ed. John C. L. Gibson (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1971), 45.

<sup>40</sup>Maxwell Miller, “Exodus,” *The Cambridge Bible Commentary*, ed. Ronald E. Clements (Cambridge, UK: The Cambridge Press, 1972), 45.

<sup>41</sup>William H. C. Propp, *The Anchor Bible: Exodus 1–18* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 349.

flood stage and was considered to be a goddess, the giver of life.<sup>42</sup>

When Moses and Aaron changed the water into blood and all the life in the river died, attention was drawn from the river god to another more powerful God. This challenge to the river god gave the Egyptians an opportunity to look at their god from a different point of view.

The Israelites also saw this punishment as revenge for what happened to their children who had been killed in the river Nile. This Egyptian god was now to be under the control of another God for seven days. The *Preacher's Commentary* records:

The Nile was venerated as a divinity, under the name Hapi, [a] cognate, if not identical, with Apis. Its waters were therefore regarded as sacred, and highly esteemed as salubrious to the drinker, and fertilizing to the soil. If Moses was endowed with the power to turn these waters into blood, it was a pledge that his delegated power should prevail over all the power of Egypt. This sign also denoted that the time was now at hand when God would judge the Egyptians for the death of the Hebrew infants, whose blood they had shed in the waters.<sup>43</sup>

This miracle was experienced throughout Egypt except in Goshen where the Israelites lived. It was therefore not just local news. Rita Burns makes the point clearer when she says, "While the picture of Egyptian magicians using secret arts against their own people might seem humorous, their success as narrated here underlines the fact that Yahweh's struggle with Pharaoh was in every way a real struggle and as such was marked by ambiguity and tension."<sup>44</sup> No one in Egypt seemed to care that their king was being

---

<sup>42</sup>John N. Oswalt, "Exodus," *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 340.

<sup>43</sup>George Barlow, "Exodus," *The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Old Testament* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1885), 64.

<sup>44</sup>Rita J. Burns, *Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers: With Excursuses on Feasts/ Ritual and Typology* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 74.

humbled by another more powerful King. Then and now magicians always seek to do what only God can do but they cannot reverse what God has done; this difference was overlooked.

The next episode by the magicians takes place when Moses' rod is stretched over the waters of Egypt and frogs appear everywhere on the dry ground. The Bible says, "And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice unto the Lord" (Exod 7:6-8). Pharaoh does not command his magicians and sorcerers to take the frogs away, for he seems to realize their impotence. Frogs were also sacred to the Egyptians, because frogs knew

how to live in two worlds at once. The Egyptians saw in this a parallel to their concern with finding the keys to living in the next world, the world beyond death. Thus, Heqet, the wife of the ram-headed god Khnum, was depicted as a woman with [a] frog's head, blowing life into the clay figures of humans her husband had formed on a potter's wheel. But frogs do not know the secrets of life, and Yahweh was going to prove it.<sup>45</sup>

John Oswalt suggests that the battle was between Pharaoh and God. In Egypt, Pharaoh was a god, that is why he did not want to lose face in front of his counselors. He was not concerned that the magicians' serpents could not swallow Moses' serpent. He was more concerned to show that he could still do something. Bloody water in the Nile and the brooks and streams did not bother him either. The only challenge was the frogs.

---

<sup>45</sup>John S. Oswalt, "Exodus," *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 342.

They were a nuisance in his kingdom because they were everywhere and he began to realize that his powers were limited.

Oswalt notes that “this is a contest between Yahweh and Pharaoh, and second, Pharaoh could not evade it. He may have given little consideration to the bloody Nile . . . because it did not affect him directly. But that was not going to be the case in the future. He would not be able to ignore the frogs that were suddenly everywhere he turned—even where food was being prepared.”<sup>46</sup> Oswalt final point is important. He says that

the magicians were never able to deliver Egypt from the deadly signs or even to counter them. . . . The most they could do was to appear to duplicate what Moses and Aaron had done. . . . Finally, it appears that the magicians themselves understood that what they were doing was the result of human ingenuity and inventiveness. The evidence is found in their response when they were finally defeated. . . . They said, ‘This is the finger of God!’ an admission that what they had been doing was not from the divine realm at all. Since they could not reproduce this sign, it had to have come from God.<sup>47</sup>

The magicians witnessed to Pharaoh that it was God doing these miracles through these two men, so even Pharaoh was given an opportunity to acknowledge God. One may note that the magicians knew about God but did not want anything to do with Him. They told Pharaoh what they discovered to be the truth, but they did not want to be a part of it and be converted.

---

<sup>46</sup>Oswalt, “Exodus,” *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, 342.

<sup>47</sup>Oswald, 340.

## The Magicians Drop Out from the Competition

The magicians surrendered after the third miracle. The evil spiritual forces could go no further. They could not respond to the remaining eight miracles and they could not reproduce any of them. Pharaoh himself does not seem to accept the advice of the magicians or acknowledge that the gods and the powers of Egypt are defeated.

And the Lord said unto Moses, say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. (Exod 8:16-19)

The word for lice in Hebrew is *הַעֲרָב* which means swarm of flies. There is no agreement on what kind of flies these were. The King James Version translates it as lice. The New Living Translation calls them gnats and the *Webster's Pocket Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines a gnat as a small, winged insect, specially one that bites or stings.<sup>48</sup> If one accepts the dictionary definition as correct, then the KJV is not correct in calling them lice. Lice have no wings and the Hebrew language calls them flies, indicating that whatever came from the dust could fly. God was so creative that He forced the magicians to see something they never had seen before and by so doing brought an end to the competition. They noticed the difference between the finger of God and the finger of Satan. To them it was clear that Moses and Aaron were not involved in human trickery like they were. Nevertheless, even though they gave God glory, they were not converted and neither was Pharaoh.

---

<sup>48</sup>*Webster Pocket Dictionary and Thesaurus* (1999), s.v. "Gnat."

Some suggest that these insects were not visible, so most likely the magicians could not see them: “The Egyptian gnats were so small as to be barely visible to the eye but had a sting which, according to Philo and Origen, caused the most painful irritation of the skin.”<sup>49</sup> Many languages have no exact word for these flies, so various languages appropriate or create possible words for people to understand. The Egyptian word *Chenemes* was understood to mean gnats or mosquitoes. The Hebrew language borrowed from them and used the word *Kinnam*, which to them meant lice. Rendering the word lice “follows the opinion of the Jewish historian Josephus and Talmudic writers, but has no linguistic basis.”<sup>50</sup> “This insect is very small and troublesome, for it not only produces an unpleasant and noxious itching, but gets into the nostrils and ears, and flies into and damages the pupils of the eye.”<sup>51</sup> This miracle was meant to encourage the magicians to surrender and learn from Yahweh. They did learn that they were not contending with Moses or Aaron but a powerful God. They saw that “the Lord mediated the first three through Moses and Aaron but then began to play a more active role with the fourth plague.”<sup>52</sup> Scripture seems to suggest that it was not easy for magicians to forsake their trade of magic and surrender to Yahweh. Thus ceasing their magic was a better solution.

The Egyptian magicians realized that their magical arts had limits. They also noticed that they were dealing with a power which had no limits. Therefore, for the

---

<sup>49</sup>“Exodus,” *The SDA Bible Commentary*, 1:532.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>J. Philip Hyatt, “Exodus,” *New Century Bible*. (London, UK: Purnell and Sons, 1971), 110.

<sup>52</sup>Ronald F. Youngblood, *Exodus* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1983), 50.



remaining seven plagues, they were forced to drop out of the competition for they had nothing more to offer. They treasured magic, power, and money more than Yahweh.

### The Magicians Also Get Sick with Boils

The magicians now get punished for refusing to give glory to Yahweh who defeated not only them, but also Pharaoh and their gods. When the boils came, the Scripture says that “the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boils were upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians” (Exod 9:11). When the most powerful men in Egypt got boils like everybody else in the kingdom, there was no place to go for help. Pharaoh realized that he had no power in his kingdom to counteract or counterfeit the power of God, for even his magicians “fled to their homes for protection and treatment.”<sup>53</sup> Ellison suggests that “boils, whatever their cause, were a commonplace in Egypt.”<sup>54</sup> This suggests that the magicians could usually find a solution for boils, but in this case they could not. Oswalt writes, “Amon-Re, the Great Bull, does not have the key to life, and neither do those humans who are magically identified with him and his power. . . . Magical ritual had not been able to remove the plague, only duplicate it.”<sup>55</sup> When the Hebrews in Goshen did not experience this plague, God gave a colossal lesson but the Egyptians failed to see it. Thus God protects His people from evil.

At this point, our author recorded the discomfort of the magicians with the sense of hearty humor. They had earlier been forced to give up their contest with the God of Israel. Now they could no longer even protect their own bodies. But there was a

---

<sup>53</sup>“Exodus,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 1:537.

<sup>54</sup>Ellison, “Exodus,” *The Daily Study Bible*, 51.

<sup>55</sup>Oswalt, “Exodus,” *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, 1:351.

deeper meaning to this plague. . . . So when people in Egypt began breaking out with these boils, they would have been treated as if they had leprosy. Such a quarantine of major portions of the populace would have severely disrupted the government, economy, and religion of Egypt. They had a multiplicity of gods, but the plague of boils would have brought the observances at the shrines to a limp if not to a halt. Once again the God of Israel was sovereign, putting the entire system of Egypt to flight.<sup>56</sup>

The magicians were not only humiliated and embarrassed in front of Pharaoh and the rest of the dignitaries, but they “who had already been forced to admit defeat . . . suffer the added indignity of contracting the plague just like the rest of the population.”<sup>57</sup> Pharaoh had been using these magicians as God’s competing forces to demonstrate that he too could challenge God. The Israelites had been serving Pharaoh, and now God wants them to see the difference. Pharaoh had been using the magicians as evidence that there were powerful gods in Egypt, but when the magicians were embarrassed by their lack of power they disappear in order not to lose face and suffer more shame. Pharaoh also realizes that his gods are defeated when the magicians withdraw from his presence and from the presence of Moses and Aaron with a sickness they could not cure.

The next section looks at how God’s people employed evil spiritual powers and how God responded. God’s people did not seem to have learned the difference between His protective power and the powers of evil. Lessons will be drawn from the way the Israelite kings treated God and how God responded. These lessons will then be applied to the way Kamba Christians treat God when they use evil power for protection.

---

<sup>56</sup>Floyd V. Filson, “Exodus,” *Layman’s Bible Book Commentary*, ed. Robert L. Cate (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 2:56–57.

<sup>57</sup>G. C. D. Howley, ed., *A Bible Commentary for Today* (London, UK: Pickering & Inglis, 1979), 184.

## Israelite Kings

### Saul

The story of Saul illustrates what is quite common for many Christians. When disease, sickness, or life-threatening problems come, if one has learned to depend on God before the problem came, most will continue to depend on God. But Saul had a habit of compromise, of practicing dual allegiance.

When Saul visited the witch of Endor, many believe that what appeared was really Samuel and not an evil apparition. William Deane and Thomas Kirk state that “it may be believed the spirit was present by Divine permission, so Saul was enabled to understand the message then delivered.”<sup>58</sup> The belief that this was really Samuel has been picked up and supported by other theologians and church leaders. Deane and Kirk go on to say that

I cannot believe that the whole was deception; I cannot believe that the form and voice of Samuel were assumed by a demon; I cannot believe that all that passed was a subjective illusion in Saul’s diseased mind. I think that Samuel, by God’s command, not in response to the witch’s spells, did appear as really as did Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration.<sup>59</sup>

This belief has led some to conclude that God is not limited to who He can work with, that God can work through witches, medicine-men, and witch doctors.

This reappearance of Samuel was not due to her magical incantations at all. She manifestly saw what she did not expect to see. Had she expected to do what she undertook, and pretended to be able to do, she would not have been so surprised and alarmed by her success. Her extraordinary fear proves her to have been an impostor. The apparition of Samuel in an outward form, corresponding to what he had been in his extreme old age, was due to the will and power of God alone. To deny the possibility of this is surely to limit the power of the Almighty; and to suppose that such an exertion of divine power would give countenance to witchcraft, is to overlook

---

<sup>58</sup>William John Deane and Thomas Kirk, *Studies in the First Book of Samuel* (Minneapolis, MN: Klock & Clock Christian Publishers, 1983), 205.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, 207.

the fact that He thereby struck the witch with dismay, and thus made it clear that her sorcery was all a delusion and a lie.<sup>60</sup>

The above argument by two theologians seems to allow Christians to use any available power in times of distress. These Christian theologians have indirectly approved consulting spirit mediums by Christians.

Saul faced a situation whereby God no longer responded to him, no longer communicated with him through prophets or the Urim and Thummim. If the Holy Spirit had left Saul, why would God now speak through a witch and work through her genre which He had commanded to be wiped out in the land. “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Cor 14:33). Saul knew that God had no part in spiritism. Why would theologians reason in a way to encourage spiritism? Why would God yoke Samuel the prophet with the witch of Endor to work together to communicate with a person who had parted ways with God? If one accepts the fact that God says, “I am the Lord, I change not” (Mal 3:6b), then it would be impossible to link God with necromancy. If one accepts the fact that God does not change and that “of a truth . . . God is not a respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34b), then in this case “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Cor 11:14b). But the witch marveled because she said she saw אֱלֹהִים (Elohim, God).<sup>61</sup> This is the same word God used for Himself on Mount Sinai, when He said אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ (I am YaHWeH your God). The correct word that the witch should have used is אֱלֹהִים (god). Saul was

---

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 240–241.

<sup>61</sup>Deane and Kirk, *Studies in the First Book of Samuel*, 207.

ready to give allegiance, listen, and accept the “prophet’s” words. Saul bowed down to the ground as if to worship “Samuel,” but he would never have done this when Samuel was alive.

The sad fact is that Saul was willing to obey what the apparition said but he had been unwilling to obey God. His allegiance was divided between two masters. Saul had killed the priests but was not willing to kill all the witches as God had commanded. Saul was willing to enter the field of battle and die according to the words of the apparition but he was not willing to kill Agag as God had commanded him to.

Even though Saul continued as king, this final disobedience sealed his fate. The Scripture states that Saul died “for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it” (1 Chr 10:13b). Going to Endor was a direct act of disobedience and rebellion “for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” (1 Sam 15:23a)

Other theologians have also suggested that the appearance of Samuel had God’s approval. They declare, “It could only have been God himself who made this possible, and it was a shock to the woman to realize that she was in the grip of something much more powerful than she had supposed.”<sup>62</sup> Sarah Nicholson claims that Saul had a divinely evil spirit sent to him by God<sup>63</sup> and that the whole activity with the witch of Endor was an act of God. She suggests the ghost of Samuel “even in death knows God’s

---

<sup>62</sup>P. R. Ackroyd, *1 Samuel*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, ed. P. R. Ackroyd, A.R. C. Leaney, and J. W. Packer (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 214.

<sup>63</sup>Sarah Nicholson, *The Three Faces of Saul: An Intertextual Approach to Biblical Tragedy* (London, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 99.

plans.’<sup>64</sup> She continues to make her case by quoting the fact that “God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.” (Judg 9:23) The argument is that God was directing Samuel in the spirit to make His point.<sup>65</sup> In any case, the story of the witch of Endor shows how evil powers can confuse even Christian scholars when they accept the idea of an immortal soul.

The story of the witch of Endor illustrates several points. First, it shows that the witch was not the one in control but that evil powers were. She screamed because what she saw was not what she expected. Second, she realized that what she was doing was a sin against God because Saul witnessed her necromancy. Third, it shows that Satan only increases discouragement and despondency. Fourth, it illustrates that when God’s people deal with evil spiritual powers, the end result is destruction and death.

This story also illustrates the consequences of teaching contrary to what the Bible teaches. Changing the Word of God to suit the physical and spiritual needs of people will result in playing into the hands of Satan. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was first suggested by Satan in Eden. It succeeded then and it continues to succeed among Christians today.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a reality to billions of Christians and is often mentioned in connection with funeral services. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* declares:

---

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 97.

<sup>65</sup>Nicholson, *The Three Faces of Saul*, 98.

In full consciousness of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church in its pilgrim members, from the very earliest days of the Christian religion, has honored with great respect the memory of the dead; and because it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins she offers her suffrages for them. Our prayer is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective.<sup>66</sup>

The immortality of the soul is fully imbedded in the Kamba worldview, a fact that has made the introduction of biblical truth difficult. The Catechism declares of dead saints “I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth.”<sup>67</sup> Most Kamba Adventists also come from a similar background and easily slip back into consulting the dead when faced with threatening problems.

The Scripture says “the dead know not anything” (Eccl 9:5b). There is “no work, or thought or knowledge, or wisdom in the place of the dead to which you are going” (Eccl 9:10b). Catholic and mainline Protestant teachings on this subject actually encourage Kambas to maintain beliefs in the living dead, the ancestors, and to feel comfortable with dual allegiance. Christians can easily engage in necromancy as long as this belief in the immortal soul is part of their belief system.

### Solomon

Solomon is a prime example of what follows when an ordained and anointed worker compromises in one little point. If a relationship with God is only partial, it takes very little to give additional ground to the devil. The rulers in Jerusalem, from Solomon to Manasseh, surrendered more and more until Manasseh brought evil spiritual worship

---

<sup>66</sup>Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 250.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 249.

right into the Temple where God dwelt. But all the deeds of Manasseh and the other Israelite leaders who compromised with evil spiritual powers originated and are a reflection of Solomon's first departure from God. Solomon, the most favored of all kings, was the one involved in introducing evil spiritual forces into daily life in Israel. His wives and children bowed down and worshiped idols. While Solomon may not have personally sacrificed to or worshiped idols, he was the only man in Israel who had the authority to allow it. He could kill anyone involved in it or cleanse the whole country of everything connected with evil powers. By building temples and allowing his wives and children to worship and to introduce idols, he was an accomplice. It was from his silver and gold that heathen gods were made. He needed someone like Ezra to force him to divorce those wives and send the children away with their mothers.

Solomon's example provides several lessons. First, a Christian should only marry a Christian. Second, one should not rely on one's own wisdom in religious areas. Third, God expects obedience even from kings. Fourth, God is not a respecter of persons. When a person disobeys, the end result is the same for all. Solomon's example offers many lessons for Kamba Christians, for a Christian must never compromise.

God warned the Israelites that their future kings should "not multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deut 17:17). Solomon did not heed this command, but took many foreign wives who came with their false gods and beliefs.

Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. . . . For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods. . . . For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the



abomination of the Ammonites. . . . Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. (1 Kgs 11:2-8)

It is not just the idols that mattered, it was the evil spiritual powers they stood for.

Solomon was the one supposed to implement God's law and show a godly example.

Notice what Joshua said before he died:

If ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. (Josh 23:12-13)

Solomon did not seem to understand what he was doing until the Lord appeared to him with a message that his kingdom would be taken from him. "Solomon, who knew what the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth meant, who knew how unclean were their rites, and what painful and shameful sacrifices Molech and Chemosh demanded of their votaries, nevertheless gave the word, and presently the hills about Jerusalem were crowned with chapels of devils."<sup>68</sup> Solomon knew the idols represented devils. Thus, Solomon invited demonic powers into his kingdom. The very evils God detested, Solomon introduced to his nation. Solomon, the wisest man on earth and a king of a powerful nation, led his people into the practice of seeking evil spiritual powers.

Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land wither thou goest, lest it be a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their

---

<sup>68</sup>P. C. Barker, "1 and 11 Kings," *The Pulpit Commentary*, ed. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), 234.

altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: for thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go whoring after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods. (1 Kgs 34:11-17)

God had also instructed that the king of Israel was not to behave like other kings but was to be subject to the law of God like all other citizens. The instructions read:

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel. (Deut 7:2-4)

If Solomon lost ten tribes from his kingdom because of his behavior, what about born-again Christians who hide paraphernalia at home or on their bodies and at the same time go to church to preach and to baptize? “Solomon was acquainted with this instruction, and there was no excuse for his violation of the explicit command.”<sup>69</sup> Solomon kindled the anger of God, reduced his years in the kingdom, and gave away ten parts of the kingdom because he invited evil spiritual powers into the land.

[Solomon] who should have set the highest example of obedience to this command and of enforcement of the law, became its most flagrant violator. The man who had been of all men most wise became of all men most foolish. When a godly person compromises, Satan takes them to depths to make coming back impossible. It is never the course of wisdom to go contrary to an explicit command of the Lord.<sup>70</sup>

The gods Milcom, Molech, and Ashtoreth, “the goddess of love and fertility,”

---

<sup>69</sup>“1 Kings,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:785.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

demanded human sacrifice and “other rites too horrible to mention. So monstrous were the crimes committed in the service to these gods that the Lord commanded that the native peoples of Canaan engaged in the worship of these deities should be utterly destroyed.”<sup>71</sup> Molech, an Ammonite god, was also called Cronus, and of this deity Diodorus wrote, “a brasen statue of Cronus with hands extended upwards, but with the palms bent downwards toward the earth, so that the child who was laid upon them rolled into a pit of fire below.”<sup>72</sup> Human sacrifices were common and Philo talks and writes “of the god of his city, whom he called Cronus, that he sacrificed his own son.”<sup>73</sup>

After Solomon witnessed the results of his compromise, he felt he had gone too far to bring about any reformation. The very behavior that God had warned never to be practiced was the behavior that King Solomon promoted and allowed through his wives. Anybody challenging the King could forfeit his own life. Thus devil worship and the infiltration of evil spiritual powers were brought into the center of the capital city. Solomon allowed the introduction of the gods of the Moabites, Egyptians, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and the Hittites, “of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.” (1 Kgs 11:2)

The number of temples erected for these gods is not recorded, but if Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines most of whom were heathen, from

---

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>William Emery Barnes, *The First Book of the Kings* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 100.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

the above six nations, then one may conclude that there were many heathen temples. God warned that heathen marriages would result in apostasy. The word that God used was אֲכִן, an adjective meaning “surely.” Marriage with a non-believer is a sure way of forsaking God and backsliding for those connected with evil spiritual powers cause others to backslide.

Several commentaries seem to indicate that Solomon himself did not participate in worshipping the idols, but that “his wives . . . [offered] incense and sacrificed to these deities.”<sup>74</sup> Paul does not buy this idea. He contends, “Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh” (1 Cor 6:16). So Solomon was connected to the evil spiritual forces through his wives. He erected temples for the false gods and permitted the worship and provided the sacrifices.

#### Ahab

Ahab’s case has some different features from Solomon’s. Ahab not only married a foreign wife but his wife’s father was a priest of heathen gods. Jezebel openly fought against God and was the cause of three and a half years of famine in Israel. She killed in order to give a vineyard to Ahab. Jezebel also worked to make sure God was forgotten. She is another example of what happens when God’s people marry unbelievers. She was involved in witchcraft. Jehu answered Joram, “What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?” (2 Kgs 9:22). וְכַשְׁפֵּיהָ הָרַבִּים נִוְיָ מִהַּ הַשְּׁלוֹם עַד־זִנוּיָ אִיזְבֵּל אִמִּיָּךְ The two words of significance here are נִוְיָ (whoredoms) and וְכַשְׁפֵּיהָ (witchcrafts). Whoredom and sorcery were two principal

---

<sup>74</sup>Barnes, *The First Book of Kings*, 99.

apostasies in the northern kingdom. The word sorceries does not refer to Israel's apostasy so much as to Jezebel's seductive skill in enticing Israel to follow Baal. Jezebel's name has a Baal prefix, as *B'l'zbl*.<sup>75</sup> Her father was Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon and at the same time the priest of Astarte.<sup>76</sup> Baal and Astarte demanded a perverted type of worship in Canaan involving "sacred prostitution at the various hill shrines, but mostly on account of the husband-wife simile."<sup>77</sup>

Through Baal and Astarte, Jezebel introduced "sorceries, consultations with evil spirits, the use of spells and charms, the telling of fortunes, and divination of many kinds."<sup>78</sup> One may wonder why God reprimanded King Solomon, but King Ahab never received a word from God. However, by marrying totally outside God's instructions Ahab led his country to ruin. The whoredom of Jezebel in the literal sense included "idolatrous religions of Palestine [which] were fertility cults, whose sacred rites involved the most flagrant forms of indecency and immorality."<sup>79</sup>

If this was happening in the king's house, what about in the rest of the kingdom? The king was supposed to carry out justice and judgment, but he perverted the kingdom with immorality and violence.

---

<sup>75</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary* (1960), s.v. "Angel."

<sup>76</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary* (1960), s.v. "Angel."

<sup>77</sup>Raymond Catkins, "II Kings," *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1954), 3:235.

<sup>78</sup>"II Kings," *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:907.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*

## Manasseh

Manasseh was a descendant of Solomon. He is an example of what followed when Solomon compromised and introduced the worship of evil spiritual powers in Israel. He illustrates what happens today when an ordained and anointed person begins to seek the services of evil spiritual powers.

Manasseh, the 14th ruler of the kingdom, ruled Judah for 55 years from 696 B.C. to 641 B.C.<sup>80</sup> Manasseh “made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards” (2 Kgs 21:6). He “built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord said, in Jerusalem I will put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord” (2 Kgs 21:4, 5). The heavenly host that they worshiped were “the sun, moon, stars, and the planets.”<sup>81</sup> Mordekai Cogan suggests that this kind of worship was already present among the Canaanites. Therefore, Manasseh did not introduce anything new. Concerning the passing of Manasseh’s sons through fire, the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* refuses to use the singular “son,” the *LXX* also uses sons, which is considered more correct because the act was repeated as many times as they wanted to sacrifice.<sup>82</sup> The *LXX* says, “and he caused his children to pass through the fire” (2 Chr 33:6). Cogan also asserts that “in prophetic denunciations of the cultic mispractice of Israel, there are no distinctions between burning, sacrificing, slaughtering, and passing children through

---

<sup>80</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary* (1960), s.v. “Angel.”

<sup>81</sup>Mordechai Cogan et al., *II Kings*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 266.

<sup>82</sup>Barnes, *The Second Book of Kings*, 118.

fire. . . . A hint of burning children appears in documents from the Assyro-Aramean cultural realm.”<sup>83</sup> Manasseh also appointed those with familiar spirits to positions of power to consult them in times of crises. These people poured from Chaldea into the land of Israel to pursue their gainful occupations, especially during the reigns of the latter kings; and Manasseh was not only their liberal patron, but zealous to appear himself as adept in the arts. He raised them into an influential class at his court, as they were in that of Assyria and Babylon, where nothing was done till they had ascertained what was to happen and promised a happy future.<sup>84</sup>

Manasseh’s leadership indicated “the loss of all respect for the divine commands and promises.”<sup>85</sup> He practiced necromancy, observed times, used enchantments, and used the influences of the wizards. He was raised up by people who had pagan influence in the יהוה אלהים (YaHWeH ELHM) fearing community. The name יהוה was used for only God in Israel, meaning a particular God who led a peculiar people. Manasseh was only twelve years old when he began to reign, so depended on other mature leaders to educate and guide him. Manasseh “shed innocent blood very much till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another” (2 Kgs 21:16a). The priests, counselors, and elders joined him in doing much evil.

---

<sup>83</sup>Cogan et al., *II Kings*, 266–267.

<sup>84</sup>*The Preacher’s Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Books of Kings*, 623.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*

## Daniel, the Chief of the Magicians

### The Wise Men before the King

Daniel presents a good example of how a Christian should live in the midst of magicians, witches, and sorcerers without being influenced by their powers. He also illustrates how fear and threats to life can be dealt with by Christians. He began his services in the midst of men who possessed evil powers. Instead of fearing them and their powers, he stuck to his principles as he lived side by side with them. He challenged them and they challenged him. He was in the middle of a battle between their gods and his God. Even though Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king, he was eventually so influenced by Daniel to the point that he acknowledged יהוה (YaHWeH) as the true God. This is how Christians should live in the midst of evil spiritual forces.

In order to create fear, the king demanded that the magicians “tell . . . the dream and its interpretation.” (Dan 2:5b) The king commanded them to reply and if they could not, they knew that they would be cut in pieces and their houses destroyed. (Dan 2:5a) In Babylon the wise men (magicians) were educated in the use of sacred books containing formulas to arrive at conclusions drawn from dreams.

These experts in dreams worked on the principle that dreams and their sequel followed an empirical law which, given sufficient data, could be established. The dream manuals, of which several examples have come to light, consist accordingly of historical dreams and the events that followed them, arranged systematically for easy reference . . . [but] he had to know the dream to begin with before he could search for the nearest possible parallel.<sup>86</sup>

The usual practice was for the magicians to be told the dream and then they would

---

<sup>86</sup>Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 87.



give an interpretation. Therefore, their interpretation was based on historical examples mixed with manipulation.

The magicians and their fellow-prognosticators may consult their sacred book containing enchantments, predictions, and incantations, but they will fail to make any impression. They may try by bluff and blandishment, as with Nebuchadnezzar, to side-step the intractable problems life throws up or else play for time, but in the end it will be of no avail. With all their secret learning and all their accumulated esoteric lore, they cannot even tell the present, far less the future.<sup>87</sup>

There were categories of wise men in the Babylonian court that are similar to those in Kamba land. Each category had a specific role to play in advising the king. The sorcerers were responsible for muttering charms and ritual incantations. The Chaldeans were specially known for wisdom not usually common to human beings. They claimed authority from the sacred books.<sup>88</sup> The word magician has its origin in Egypt, but in the Assyrian courts magicians were used for dream interpretation. The word enchanter (*assapin*) “is related to a fairly common Akkadian word (*asipu*) for magical practitioners skilled at interpreting signs of people who are ill.”<sup>89</sup> One wonders why, of all the words used here, it is only sorcerers that are condemned in the Hebrew writings. Baker and Wenham suggest that *assapin* was closely related to an Akkadian word *kasapu* (*mekasspim* in Hebrew), and designated people skilled in charms and incantations.<sup>90</sup> The term Chaldeans here is special. It was not necessarily that these Chaldeans were wise, but that the king needed them to cheer him up when he was depressed. They were

---

<sup>87</sup>Russell, *Daniel*, 37.

<sup>88</sup>Ackroyd, *I Samuel*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, 26.

<sup>89</sup>“Daniel,” *Apollo's Old Testament Commentary*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 69.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*

his fellow tribesmen, from his home village who spoke his native tongue. Shea writes: “Nebuchadnezzar himself was not a native-born Babylonian in the ethnic and cultural sense. He, and his father Nabopolassar before him, belonged to one of the tribes of the Chaldean people who lived in Southern Babylonia.”<sup>91</sup> Therefore apart from the Chaldeans, the rest of the wise men used different devices to arrive at their interpretation of a dream. The “astrologers used the stars; the diviners used sheep livers; others used different signs in nature that signaled something to them—such as the birth of an animal with a congenital deformity. Nebuchadnezzar supplied none of these things.”<sup>92</sup> James says that “this wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.” (Jas 3:15) In contrast, Daniel used only prayer. James adds, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (Jas 3:17).

Nebuchadnezzar was disgusted with their failure and decided that “if they were so worthless that they could not do what he asked of them, something supposedly well within their powers, he would do away with them all.”<sup>93</sup> Instead of fearing the king, Daniel feared his God. Instead of allowing himself to be influenced by the magicians, Daniel sought the influence of God. Instead of even associating with the magicians, Daniel sought to be alone except when they had a common project to work on.

---

<sup>91</sup>William H. Shea, *The Abundance Life Bible Amplifier: Daniel 1–7* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1996), 58.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*

## Daniel Comes before the King

Daniel was taken to the king, and “asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.” (Dan 2:16-19) He went home “and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions that they might seek mercies from the God. Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in the night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.” (Dan 2:17) Instead of fearing the king and his threats, Daniel knew whom to fear and consult. Daniel also demonstrated a lot of faith in his God. He talked confidently to the king that he would give him the interpretation. Faith dispels fear. Writers have indicated that “Nebuchadnezzar believed in dreams as one of the means by which the gods revealed their will to men. Divine wisdom always meets men where they are. . . . He ever adapts His modes of working with men to the capacity of each individual and to the environment of the age in which each lives.”<sup>94</sup> Even in cultures that are filled with beliefs in evil spiritual powers, God has ways of revealing truth.

## Daniel Named the Chief of the Magicians

One spiritual lesson that can be learned from this story is that the lure of the “pagan world, with its wonder workers, astrologers, soothsayers, and exorcists, cannot even begin to compare with the wisdom possessed by the followers of the true God.”<sup>95</sup> Daniel did not challenge his appointment as chief of the magicians as long as he could witness that there was a God in heaven who reveals secrets to people. Instead of killing the wise men of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel “chief of the magicians,

---

<sup>94</sup>“Daniel,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:767.

<sup>95</sup>“Daniel,” *Appolos Old Testament Commentary*, 69.

astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.” (Dan 5:11) Nebuchadnezzar still was not converted for he continued to keep these men around in case he needed them. Syncretism prevailed. Dual allegiance is often practiced not because the individual does not know the difference but because the individual seeks benefits from both systems.

### The Difference Between the “God” of the Wise Men and the God of Daniel

The Babylonian “wise men” took credit for their knowledge. Daniel on the other hand gave God credit when he said, “The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days” (Dan 2:27b-28). Thus, God through Daniel pointed out the lack of wisdom of the so-called “wise men.”

A second point is that the wise men could not describe the dream or its interpretation, claiming that “there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh” (Dan 2:11b). They believed in the existence of the gods but could not consult them to receive answers to their secrets.

The wise men used sophistry and clever arts and the king knew this, for he said, “Ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed” (Dan 2:9). They felt the king was asking an impossible thing for they said, “Therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asketh such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean” (Dan 2:10b).

The wise men wanted to define their terms of service to the king. They wanted to dictate what and how they could serve the king, for this was the best way to manipulate

the king. This again shows the difference between serving evil spiritual powers and serving God. Evil spiritual powers have limits, God does not. Evil spiritual powers leave their servants to perish at the time of need, while God comes to His servants' rescue. Evil spiritual forces refuse to cooperate in difficult situations because they are limited, while God is present at every moment and in every situation. Evil spiritual forces and their wise men cannot tell the secrets of God and usually work through manipulation.

The first lesson to learn is that "God is in control of the day by day affairs of men. . . . A second lesson is that, despite the vaunted wisdom of pagan philosophers, they can do nothing at all to interpret life's mysteries or to make known the secrets of the Most High."<sup>96</sup> Even when human beings from supernaturalistic cultures know this, they still maintain contact with both powers in case of need.

God intended to show Nebuchadnezzar that "the course of history was ordained by the Most High and subject to His will. Nebuchadnezzar was shown his place of responsibility in the great plan of heaven, in order that he might have the opportunity of cooperating effectively with the divine program."<sup>97</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was also shown that the people he called wise men were in fact liars. It seems that Nebuchadnezzar did not at this time seek to know more about the God of Daniel. He lost the chance that God gave him. No one knows whether he continued to use the services of the so-called "wise men" after discovering that they were liars.

Joseph Parker believes that what Nebuchadnezzar asked was not a difficult thing

---

<sup>96</sup>Russell, *Daniel*, 37.

<sup>97</sup>"Daniel," *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:767.

because “Christianity must do something that no other religion can do, else it will become one of many.”<sup>98</sup> Christianity should never be compared with other religions. Daniel requested extra time to consult with his God. The wise men would never have dared to do this because that would have given Nebuchadnezzar hope that they could come up with an answer. “The Chaldeans dared not even to promise this; they would only pledge themselves for the interpretation, provided the king would furnish them the dream.”<sup>99</sup>

Daniel told the king that “the secret which the king had demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king” (Dan 2:27-28). Thus, Daniel made his point, that only God could reveal such secrets. “Daniel had no desire to exalt himself above the wise men. He aimed, rather, to impress upon the king the futility of trusting his wise men for counsel and help. He hoped to turn the king’s eyes to the great God in heaven, the God whom Daniel worshiped, and God of the Hebrews, whose people had been conquered by the king.”<sup>100</sup>

Collins makes another interesting point when he says that “the king pays little attention to the interpretation. The entire focus . . . is on the test to see who can find out and interpret a dream which he has not been told.”<sup>101</sup> Daniel’s method is simply prayer, the wise men’s method was simply any human techniques.<sup>102</sup> Even though the king saw

---

<sup>98</sup>Parker, *The People’s Bible*, 363.

<sup>99</sup>Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments* (New York, Phillips & Hunt, 1998), 4:569.

<sup>100</sup>“Daniel,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:770.

<sup>101</sup>“Daniel,” *Old Testament Message: A Biblical–Theological Commentary* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1981), 5:30.

<sup>102</sup>“Daniel,” *Old Testament Message*, 30.

that the wise men had been devising and telling lies, he did not fire them. Even though his demands sounded “unreasonable and implausible, so is his reaction,”<sup>103</sup> for they still kept their jobs.

God called “Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant” (Jer 25:9). One way he served God was by showing the difference between God and the evil spiritual powers. Nebuchadnezzar came to know the futility of depending on soothsayers, magicians, witches, sorcerers, and Chaldeans.

### **Balaam**

Balaam’s behavior was similar to that of Saul’s. God ordained and anointed him to be a prophet. But, he loved power, money, and wealth, and that is what Balak promised him. He was willing to leave God if he received the promised gifts. He was also willing and did use augury and witchcraft to obtain material wealth.

Balaam was originally a prophet of the Most High according to the book of Numbers, but in the rest of the books of the Bible he is described as a witch. *The Cambridge Bible Commentary* acknowledges that Balaam became a “devious practitioner of augury, foretelling the future by interpreting signs and omens.”<sup>104</sup> Balaam had some beautiful things to say about God, “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh, there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Num 24:17). Balaam rose up “and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went to his

---

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> J. Maxwell Miller et al. *Joshua*, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. Leaney, and J. W. Packer (London, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 110.

place” (Num 24:25). One would wish that this was the end of the story. The Bible does not tell us how Balaam found himself again in the presence of Balak, the king of Moab. This time the Spirit of the Lord did not come upon him to prophecy because he had switched allegiance and was using augury. The result was that the Spirit of God left him. The *SDA Commentary* states, “Balaam decided to resort to other means to obtain the reward offered by Balak. Returning to the land of Moab, he persuaded the Moabites to entice the children of Israel into idolatry and immorality. The plan was successful.”<sup>105</sup> He did not use evil spiritual powers at first to achieve his goals but he knew the effect of evil spiritual powers, so this is what he used. Therefore “what Balaam could not accomplish with a curse he did so through seductive means.”<sup>106</sup> He received a bribe from Balak to pronounce a curse and accepted it.<sup>107</sup> All this he did against a direct word straight from the mouth of God, telling him that he should not accompany Balak in any way. (Num 22:12) But Balaam could not resist the temptation of material gain, so was willing to turn his back on God to acquire wealth and power.

Poverty can still lead to dualism. The desires for what God can offer and what the worldly powers can offer are in competition. Balaam was tempted and unfortunately did not resist the temptation, meaning he had not built a godly character. He befriended the world and became God’s enemy. Working with both powers leads to a point of no return.

---

<sup>105</sup>J. Maxwell Miller, “Joshua,” *The Cambridge Bible Commentary* (CBC), ed. P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. C. Leaney, and J. W. Parker (London, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 110.

<sup>106</sup>Lawson Hatfield, “Balaam,” *Holman Bible Dictionary* (HBD), ed. Trend C. Butler (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 146.

<sup>107</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary* (1960), s.v. “Angel.”



## **A Point of No Return**

This section deals with the fact that if a godly person who knows God and what the Scripture states about associating with evil spiritual powers and still plays around with them, the result is often to move past the point of no return. When people continue to use evil spiritual forces, even when they know it is wrong, the Holy Spirit can withdraw. Such people do not even seem to have a desire to repent.

Josiah, King of Judah, worked to bring reforms in Judah and to be a good example to God's people. He pushed for spiritual reformation and spiritual transformation. Josiah "walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (2 Kgs 22:2). Besides, Hilkiah the High Priest informed Shaphan the scribe that he had "found the book of the law in the house of the Lord" (2 Kgs 22:8). This book was read to the king and "when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes" (2 Kgs 22:11). Josiah realized that God must be angry because none of the words in the book had been kept. He organized a great passover for the whole nation; however, after inquiring from the Lord about the state of the nation since their fathers had not kept the words found in the book, God remained unmoved. The Lord promised to carry out his threats, but, mercifully, only after Josiah had died. This grace was only extended because of Josiah's transformation.

Josiah and the people "stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all their heart, and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant" (2 Kgs 23:3).

All the vessels of Baal and the rest of the gods were destroyed and burned and the

Temple was cleaned; after that the city was cleaned of all idols. The king “put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the hosts of heaven” (2 Kgs 23:5).

In order to cleanse the whole kingdom, the king put away “the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem . . . that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book” (2 Kgs 23:24). But, God did not change His mind about punishing Judah, even after all this.

The king led the nation to honor God. The Bible writes of him that there was “no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him” (2 Kgs 23:25). However, God still did not change His mind. Even after the great reformation, the Lord was determined to do as He promised.

Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. (2 Kgs 23:26-27)

John Traylor records that despite Josiah’s “extermination of outward idolatry, he could not save the nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem from God’s judgment upon them for their sin, which had reached the point of no return.”<sup>108</sup> The point of no return

---

<sup>108</sup>John H. Traylor, “2 Kings,” *Layman’s Bible Book Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1981), 98.

here might have a deeper meaning. Superficial reformation may be worse than no reformation at all. Sweeney strengthens the point by adding that Josiah's premature death was due to "YHWH's decision to destroy Judah, Jerusalem, and the temple because of the sins of Manasseh."<sup>109</sup> If this statement is true, then there was nothing anyone could do to change God's judgment.

Ackroyd seems to downplay dual allegiance in Judah. He says that "the practice of calling up ghosts and spirits had been introduced into the temple by Manasseh . . . [and] household gods seem to have been small, easily portable statuettes. No objection had been made to them in earlier times."<sup>110</sup> He suggests that David had portable gods and Jacob had them even though he concludes that his were for inheritance and not for worship.<sup>111</sup> The *SDA Bible Commentary* does not share this opinion. It states that "these were household gods. . . . Their worship had a peculiar appeal to the Hebrews, who clung to these idols with tenacity."<sup>112</sup>

It seems that the third and fourth generations were going to suffer for the sins of their fathers. It is clear that Josiah turned back to the Lord, but the Lord did not turn back from His fierce anger. Josiah's fidelity, in other words, does not cancel out Manasseh's infidelity. However, it looks like there was one aspect of life that Josiah could not change even though God loved his reforms. Josiah's reforms were not deep heart

---

<sup>109</sup>Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings, A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 450.

<sup>110</sup>Ackroyd et al., *The Cambridge Bible Commentary*, 227–228.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>"2 Kings," *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:979.

transformations because “demonology had taken strong hold of the Israelites. The people were serving the rulers of darkness instead of the lord of Heaven. Not angels but devils were their daily companions. They were giving ear to evil spirits rather than to the Holy Spirit.”<sup>113</sup>

Thus, “the reforms that good King Josiah inaugurated affected the majority only superficially.”<sup>114</sup> Another suggested reason why God refused to withdraw His judgment was that the “future generations, who would learn that flagrant iniquity and idolatry of the previous generation had been permitted with impunity, would be emboldened in iniquity.”<sup>115</sup> It seems that people and nations can reach a point no of return where they are unwilling or unable to be totally committed to God.

This type of situation is seen in Eli the priest’s children when God said to Samuel, “I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever” (1 Sam 3:14). They had reached a point of no return. Eli’s answer matches the verdict. He said “It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good” (1 Sam 3:18b). Eli took no action to bring about change in his sons. There is no remorse seen in his answer, no humbling, and no reformation or transformation. He takes no action with his children. Perhaps he knew they had passed the point of no return. Even when the prophet tells him that “thy sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.” (1 Sam 2:34b) Eli took no action to remove them or to appoint

---

<sup>113</sup>“2 Kings,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:979.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*, 2:980.

<sup>115</sup>*Ibid.*

others instead. They continued outwardly serving God while inwardly they were serving the devil in the tabernacle. Jesus told people that “either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.” (Matt 12:33) Jesus makes it clear that one cannot be good and corrupt at the same time. He seems to be saying that it is even worse for one to play both sides. Jesus is asking for a choice and a firm stand. A tree cannot be good and corrupt at the same time, and in His kingdom His people must be either good or corrupt but not both. Double allegiance seems to push people to a point of no return.

Jesus concluded by saying that “all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” (Matt 12:31-32) The Holy Spirit leads people to keep them from dabbling in dual allegiance, but if people persist they can soon reach the point of no return.

Sin that cannot be forgiven is committed by a servant of God who consistently continues in sin while knowing what the Scripture teaches. Jesus suggests that those who know the truth, but nevertheless continue doing the wrong, get to the point where their sin will not be forgiven. This seems to be especially true when people purposely combine the wrong in conjunction with evil spiritual powers. Working purposely for evil powers while at the same time working for God is a slippery slope that quickly leads people to a point of no return. Therefore, church members who consult and use the services of magicians and native doctors for protection against evil spiritual powers are in great

danger of reaching the point of no return.

### **Implications for Kamba Christians**

This chapter looked at how God dealt with evil spiritual powers in the Old Testament. These Old Testament stories have at least eight implications for Kamba Christians who continue to play around with witchcraft and use amulets and charms to protect them from Satan's power.

First, the competition between God and the Egyptian magicians showed how weak Satan's magic is compared to God's power. This type of demonstration is necessary to help people make decisions on which power to follow. Power encounters like the ones in Egypt and on Mount Carmel show God's superiority and help people understand that God is more powerful than the gods and spirits people fear and worship.

Second, when Satan displays his powers to scare people and cause fear, God is also present to show that His power is greater. The Adventist Church should study the difference between God's powers and Satan's so that new Christians can see the difference. Moses and Aaron showed God's powers to be superior, forcing the Egyptian magicians to give up.

The third implication is that if people would just obey the Word of God, the evil powers would not come near them. Disobeying God's direct command is a direct invitation to Satan and his evil spiritual powers to enter one's life. Marrying a non-Christian is one way to invite Satan and a first step to incorporating the use of evil spiritual forces in one's spiritual life. Solomon and Ahab show this very clearly. People may not know the depths to which they will sink when they compromise God's

commands. The case of Solomon and his descendant Manasseh shows the effects on children of an ordained and anointed man of God who seeks the services of evil spiritual forces.

Fourth, appointing a person who does not fear or respect God to a position of leadership invites evil spiritual powers into that realm and jurisdiction. Manasseh is a good example. Some Christian pastors, deacons, and church elders in times of distress do consult native doctors at night. They do not realize what the outcome will be in the future or how their actions weaken the church.

Fifth, while the Bible does not teach divorce, yet in a situation where one's spiritual life is in jeopardy, divorce with a clear conscience may be necessary. Ezra demanded that the foreign wives be put away together with their children. This shows how serious God is about the use of evil spiritual forces in one's spiritual life. One's spouse, who uses evil spiritual powers, should be divorced. Even though pastors are scared of losing their jobs or church positions, they should divorce their wives if they are involved in witchcraft.

The sixth implication is that one must decide what should come first in one's Christian life: material things and power or Christ. When one has not made up one's mind in these areas, one will fall when temptation comes. Balaam is a prime example. If one could be tempted to use augury and witchcraft to acquire material wealth and power, it indicates a lack of conversion and commitment to God. It has been claimed that pastors consult native doctors in order to be re-elected to administrative positions. Many others carry protective devices on their bodies. They have placed themselves in a position of compromise that most often will lead to eternal ruin.

The seventh implication is that obedience to God includes removing anything which could be used as an enticement to engage with evil spiritual forces. The Israelites forged a relationship with neighboring heathen people because of an oath. In Kamba society, it is best if one's family is kept from unnecessary association with heathen friends and neighbors. Marriage with witchcraft practitioners and participation in public sacrifices to bring rainfall are some of the ways people still engage in evil practices.

The eighth one is the example of the point of no return. The Bible is clear that once born-again people decide to invite the services of evil spiritual powers into their lives, there are eternal consequences. Even if they try to make reforms like Josiah did, the reforms might not accomplish much since they may be only superficial and unacceptable.

After investigating how evil spiritual powers in the Old Testament affected and influenced God's people, the writer is now going to see how the evil powers affected and influenced the New Testament Church. It is here in the New Testament that the Church confronted directly the influences of the evil powers.



## CHAPTER V

### NEW TESTAMENT DEALINGS WITH EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS

This chapter looks at how evil spiritual forces were dealt with in the New Testament, then lists implications for Kamba Christians.

#### **Christ's Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces**

Christ dealt with evil spiritual powers out in the open where everybody present could witness what He did. Those present gave glory and honor to God as they witnessed people being freed. It was also His wish for His disciples to use God's power and authority to set people free.

#### The Demonized Son (Mark 9:14-29)

The story of the demonized son illustrates why Christians fear evil spiritual powers instead of having the power to overcome them. If Christ's disciples could be defeated, it is easy to understand why church members would be scared too.

Jesus had taken Peter, James, and John with Him to the mountain of transfiguration. The rest of His disciples were left behind. When He came down from the mountain with the three disciples, He found the nine disciples arguing with the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. The disciples had just failed to deliver a youth who had been brought by his father to be freed from a controlling evil spirit. The religious

leaders were now pushing the crowd to disbelieve Jesus and His claim that He was the Christ. It is interesting that His accusers were not offering any help for the youth. The religious leaders, however, were surprised at the behavior of the multitude when they saw Jesus coming down from the mountain. The Scripture reads:

And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway, all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, "what question ye with them?" And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answered him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If you canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straight away the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. (Mark 9:14–29)

Matthew uses slightly different language but says the same thing. He, however, omits the religious leaders' part of taunting the nine disciples. Matthew states:

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer with you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this

kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. (Matt 17:14–22)

There are several lessons to draw from the disciples' failure. First, if the disciples who spent every day with Christ and to whom Christ gave power and authority to do His work could fail and concede defeat because of evil spiritual forces, how about the Adventist Church which does not practice or promote a power ministry? Second, the disciples had been arguing about positions and who would be the greatest. Adventist Church officials today often campaign for positions at constituency meetings. Seeking leadership positions and campaigning for positions of authority can block God's ability to use people to set captives free from evil spiritual powers.

There is a third lesson to draw from the event. Jesus was unhappy with the disciples for failing and called them "faithless." The words that Jesus used were γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, "faithless and perverse generation." Arguing about who would be the greatest was a diversion to ministry. Worldly methods of administration were not a part of Christ's kingdom. Jesus answered them, "Whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 18:4). He then used the mustard seed as a symbol of faith. Faith like a little child and faith that starts like a tiny mustard seed but grows to a large shrub is necessary for spiritual ministries. To be involved in a power ministry one has to humble oneself, be subject to God, and pray and fast in order to maintain a close relationship with God.

Alan Cole states, "As usual, those theological critics, the scribes, were at the forefront, doubtless, in the face of this failure, questioning once again the theological credentials of the disciples or their rabbi. One wonders why these same scribes, instead of embarrassing the crestfallen disciples before the crowd, did not set about exorcizing

the demon themselves as a proof of their orthodoxy.”<sup>1</sup> However, even if the scribes did not exorcize the demon, “some orthodox Jews acted as exorcists, presumably in the name of Yahweh.”<sup>2</sup> The father of the youth had brought his son to Jesus, but when he found that Jesus was not there, he presented his case to the nine disciples. However, he was not sure they could heal the boy. The father had little faith. He needed help with his unbelief. He blamed the disciples for not healing his son, but Jesus also mentioned the father’s unbelief. The father does not seem to have doubted Jesus’ ability, because he was on his knees pleading with Jesus to help. The contempt and the scorn of the scribes had caused Jesus’ disciples “bitter disappointment and humiliation.”<sup>3</sup> It is also important to note that the father had not taken his boy to the Jewish exorcists because he had heard of Jesus’ power.

The fourth lesson is that for power ministries to work, everybody involved must have faith. Hendriksen makes a keen observation on the γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, “faithless and perverse generation,” when he argues:

The fact that he directed his complaint to the “generation” shows that he cannot have been thinking only of the nine disciples who had failed in this emergency. He was

---

<sup>1</sup>R. Alan Cole, “The Gospel According to Mark,” *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 214.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), 427.

evidently deeply dissatisfied with his contemporaries: with the father, who lacked sufficient faith in Christ's healing power (Mark 9:22-24), with the Scribes, who, instead of showing any pity, were in all probability gloating over the disciples' impotence (Mark 9:14); with the crowd in general, which is pictured in the gospels as being generally far more concerned about itself than about others (John 6:26); and, last but not least, with the nine disciples, because of their failure to exercise their faith by putting their whole heart into persevering prayer (Mark 9:29).<sup>4</sup>

The main lesson here is that in a community where fear of evil spiritual powers is concerned, every individual who knows God is responsible for the fear. God holds everybody responsible and accountable for the information He has imparted to them whether they are His friends or His adversaries. God also holds Christians and the ordained ministry responsible for growing in faith and expects His people to always be ready to minister. God's people do not have time to get ready—they must always be ready. The words of Jesus indicate that this failure was unnecessary.

Hendriksen suggests that the disciples could have been successful had they not given up. When they saw that the evil spirit was not responding, they gave up.<sup>5</sup> Christ wondered whether after three years of training they needed more time, "How long shall I put up with you?" In a way Jesus was asking for accountability for the years they had been with Him. Many months before, He "gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease"<sup>6</sup> (Matt 10:1b). One may ask what had happened when they had been successful in the past. Hendriksen suggests they had little faith:

---

<sup>4</sup>William Hendriksen, "Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew," *New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), 674.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 675.

A mustard seed . . . though at first very small, yet, because of its uninterrupted and vital contact with its nourishing environment, grows and grows until it becomes a tree so tall that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches. . . . Accordingly, “faith as a mustard seed” is the kind of trust in God which does not immediately give up in despair when its efforts do not meet with immediate success. It maintains its uninterrupted and vital contact with God and therefore continues to pray fervently, knowing that God at His own time and in His own way will bestow the blessing.<sup>7</sup>

The word *διεστραμμένη* “perverted” should be given a proper analysis. Jesus meant something when He used the word “perverted,” which means to “lead away from the proper course [of action].”<sup>8</sup> The nine Apostles had been led away from God’s methods and power to something else. Chouinard claims that “rather than exercise the divine authority given them, in Jesus’ absence they had become part of a ‘faithless’ generation.”<sup>9</sup> White explains why they were perverted.

The words of Christ pointing to His death had brought sadness and doubt. And the selection of the three disciples to accompany Jesus to the mountain had excited the jealousy of the nine. Instead of strengthening their faith by prayer and meditation on the words of Christ, they had been dwelling on their discouragements and personal grievances. In this state of darkness they had undertaken the conflict with Satan.<sup>10</sup>

Satan wants the followers of Christ to focus on the cares of this world so he can more easily defeat them. The scribes’ failure should also not go unnoticed. Jesus asked the scribes “what question ye with them?” (Mark 9:16b). They had played a role in making the deliverance difficult. It is discouraging in a Christian setting when the most respected leaders are the ones lacking faith and a relationship with a God who gives

---

<sup>7</sup>Hendriksen, “Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew,” 675.

<sup>8</sup>*Webster Pocket Dictionary and Thesaurus*, s.v. “perverted.”

<sup>9</sup>Larry Chouinard, “Matthew,” *The College Press NIV Commentary* (Joplin, MS: College Press Publishing Company, 1997), 316.

<sup>10</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 431.

authority to set captives free.

### **The Gadarenes Demoniac (Luke 8:26-39)**

The story of the Gadarenes demoniac illustrates that when the Word of God is kept from a people, the people fear God's power. The miracle also illustrates that the Word and power of God cannot only cleanse the individual but the land too. Satan's power was pushed back when the power of God entered the land.

Second, the story illustrates how the Jewish nation in this territory had compromised to the point that truth was nearly obliterated. Keeping pigs for commercial and food usage was strictly forbidden for Jews. The law of Moses instructed, "And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass" (Deut 14:8). The people of this territory preferred keeping swine to keeping God's law.

And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For often times it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he broke the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered unto him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken

with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done to him. (Luke 8:26-39)

The fact that those who cared for the pigs did not run towards Christ shows how much material possessions meant to them. They ran and “told it in the city and in the country.” “Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear.”<sup>11</sup> The demoniacs had been feared such that “no one had been safe to pass the place where they were; for they would rush upon every traveler with the fury of demons.”<sup>12</sup> The people had been defeated by the “legion” of evil spirits, but now a single man handled them with only a few words.

This deliverance was titanic for it was the power of six thousand demons versus Jesus Christ. If Jesus could defeat six thousand demons, then no evil power could stand in His way. “[Legion] highlights the fact that a titanic spiritual struggle was taking place in which Jesus was encountering demonic forces.”<sup>13</sup>

The region where this miracle took place was inhabited by Jews and Gentiles. Keener suggests that “Gadara and (Mark’s) Geresa were both part of the Decapolis, a

---

<sup>11</sup>White, *Desire of Ages*, 338.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>“The Gospel of Luke,” *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, ed. Allison A. Trites, 12:136.



primarily Gentile area with a large Jewish population.”<sup>14</sup> Keener also wonders why the evil powers could introduce Jesus as the “Son of God Most High,” while “many people remain[ed] unaware of Jesus as Lord and Judge.”<sup>15</sup> By delivering this man Jesus proved that He was truly the Son of the Most High. There was “suspicion that these demons are inordinately powerful” so “the Gadarenes viewed Jesus as a magician, dangerous to their interests.”<sup>16</sup> Since they were angry at the loss of their material wealth, the best option was to plead with Him to leave.

They feared Jesus’ power and at the same time they feared the demons’ power. When God’s power conflicts with the material interests of a community, some turn their back on God, but when God works for their material welfare then they turn to God. For some, “Jesus was not a comfortable person to have around.”<sup>17</sup> John Meier states that the people were filled “with superstitious fear”<sup>18</sup> in the presence of Jesus. “The manifestations of supernatural power aroused the superstitions of the people, and excited their fears. Further calamities might follow from having this Stranger among them. They apprehended financial ruin, and determined to be freed from His presence.”<sup>19</sup> They feared Jesus just as they feared the man with demons for “the conqueror of demons might be a

---

<sup>14</sup>Craig S. Keener, *Matthew*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 183.

<sup>15</sup>Keener, *Matthew*, 183.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 183-184.

<sup>17</sup>R. T. France, *The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 164.

<sup>18</sup>John P. Meier, *Matthew* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980), 90.

<sup>19</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 339.

greater demon . . . so they beg[ged] the dangerous stranger to leave.”<sup>20</sup> The presence of the pigs in the story proves that Jesus was in a non-Jewish territory. No Jew would raise pigs or eat pork. A different argument was presented by Ralph Earle, Harvey Blaney, and Charles W. Carter. They state that “it has often been said that these people had no right to keep hogs, since the eating of these animals was forbidden as unclean in the law of Moses. . . . [But], the deliverance of the demoniacs was related to the destruction of the pigs. The fate of the latter highlighted for the healed men the desperateness of their previous condition and the miracle of their deliverance.”<sup>21</sup> White also comments that the part the pigs played was significant because it was the part played by Satan. “In causing the destruction of the swine, it was Satan’s purpose to turn the people away from the Savior, and prevent the preaching of the gospel in that region.”<sup>22</sup>

The name “legion” is also significant. The demoniac was telling Jesus and His disciples that “six thousand spirits inhabited the poor soul. (A Roman legion usually had six thousand foot soldiers.)”<sup>23</sup> For this reason they were powerful and had defeated all people in the region. Could this mean that they could also terrify Jesus and cause Him to run away like all the other people? Jesus’ twelve disciples ran away like terrified children. “The disciples and their companions fled in terror; but presently they noticed that Jesus was not with them, and they turned to look for Him. He was standing where

---

<sup>20</sup>France, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 90-91.

<sup>21</sup>Ralph Earle et al. “Matthew-Mark-Luke-John-Acts,” *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, ed. Charles W. Carter (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 4:45.

<sup>22</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 340.

<sup>23</sup>“Luke,” *The International Bible Commentary*, 1397.

they had left Him.”<sup>24</sup> Jesus was not just dealing with power, but reasonable beings who knew who they were fighting and how to win. They knew the person to defeat was Christ. They knew who Jesus was and recognized His power. Why did the evil spirits ask to enter the swine? “Perhaps the demons anticipated what would happen and found this to be a way of striking back at Jesus.”<sup>25</sup> If this was their intention, they won. The demons also play another role. They were an evidence of what the man was suffering from. Robert H. Stein indicates that “the swine’s destruction proves that the demons truly left the man as does the description of the man’s condition.”<sup>26</sup>

Demonization is not a biological sickness that can be treated in a hospital. No medical doctor can heal a demonized person regardless of skill, knowledge, or experience. Medical doctors often argue “that [a] mental disorder also could arise from organic or psychological causes.”<sup>27</sup> This is true, but Jesus knew that the man was possessed by devils. So when they requested to enter the pigs He let them go.

Augsburger argues that “the incident of the destruction of a herd of 2000 swine . . . [was] demonstrating that human life and well-being were far more valuable than the swine business.”<sup>28</sup> George Arthur Buttrick argues that salvation is costly not only to God

---

<sup>24</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 337.

<sup>25</sup>Myron S. Augsburger, *Matthew*, The Commentators’ Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1982), 118.

<sup>26</sup>“Luke,” *The New American Commentary*, ed. Robert H. Stein (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 24:257.

<sup>27</sup>“The Gospel of Luke,” *The Century Bible*, ed. E. Earle Ellis (Nairobi, Kenya: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1966), 131.

<sup>28</sup>Augsburger, *Matthew*, 118.

but also to people. Jesus did not wish human life to be equated with material possession, “but the loss in their business, the destruction of the herd of swine, was too great for them to see the movement of God in their midst.”<sup>29</sup> People value material things, God values people. When people are willing, Jesus can cleanse them, the land, and anything demons can hang onto.<sup>30</sup>

Later, Jesus went back to Decapolis to see if the people still feared Him like they feared the evil spiritual powers. But, when He returned to the area He found that the people “had listened to the messengers He left behind, and a desire had been aroused to see Him.”<sup>31</sup> This was where Jesus fed the four thousand and where Jesus healed the deaf and the dumb man.

And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straight away his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. (Mark 7:31-35)

The local people wanted Jesus to act like one of the local magicians. They instructed Him on what method to use to heal. They told him to put His hand on the man. But Jesus put His fingers in his ears, spat, and touched his tongue. This had cultural significance. “Although ancient literature preserves numerous examples of the use of saliva by physicians and wonder workers who believed it able to communicate healing

---

<sup>29</sup>Augsburger, *Matthew*, 119.

<sup>30</sup>Wilfrid Harrington, *Mark* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), 67.

<sup>31</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 404.

from their bodies to those of their patients, and thus to have curative properties, there is no apparent reason why Jesus chose here to heal in this manner, . . . [which was] unusual for him.”<sup>32</sup>

Jesus did not wish to make this man a public spectacle. McKenna argues that this man had been embarrassed enough. He had not been born deaf or with impediments of speech. Disease had reduced him to something that caused his age mates to mock him. This prompted Jesus to take him aside.<sup>33</sup> Jesus demonstrated what it means to understand the feelings of others and to treat them with respect.

The word that Jesus used was also significant. Εφθαθα was an Aramaic word, not Hebrew. It is significant to note that “when Jesus spoke . . . to the peasant people of Palestine, he used Aramaic. To the Syrophenician woman, he almost certainly spoke Greek.”<sup>34</sup>

The next story illustrates that people could be worshiping with evil powers in the church and not know it. Spiritual things are only spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:14). Some people have more supernatural knowledge than others, and church members often assume that they are more spiritually wise than they are.

---

<sup>32</sup>“Mark,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1953–57), 5:627.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>34</sup>“Mark,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 684.

### **The Demoniac in the Synagogue (Mark 1:21-28)**

Demons in people feel uncomfortable when the person they live in comes close to the power of God. This particular man had come to the synagogue because he was seeking deliverance after having been harassed by evil spirits. However, the demon in him had a different agenda. This story illustrates how easy it is to deliver somebody from demonic control, but those involved in freeing people should follow Christ's example of spending the night in prayer.

This story also indicates that demons are intelligent beings and they know that they cannot stand up to the power of God. They are not to be feared but should be commanded to obey the power of Christ.

The truth that this demoniac uttered was quite revealing. However, the fact that evil spirits have uncommon knowledge is no reason to start talking or dialoging with them. Evil spirits have knowledge, power, and influence that common people do not have. Lack of knowledge draws many to them, but the knowledge they have is only used to mock God. Thus the lesson here was clear: Even though this man may not have known what he was saying, yet he was mocking God.

The purpose of Satan was to cause disruption and fear. The words of the evil spirit were strong. The man "cried out saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God" (Mark 1:23-24). In the whole synagogue only two people were talking, the evil spirit and Jesus. It was a conflict between two powers. The phrases τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί and ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; "Let us alone," and "Have you come to destroy us?" indicate that conflict.

Jesus was being accused. The phrase, ἦλθεε ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς, definitely accuses Jesus of being a destroyer. However, Jesus showed that He is a deliverer and not a destroyer. The congregation had no problem seeing the difference after the man was delivered. Evil powers often accuse others of what they themselves do: destroying. But, they are good in disguising their destructive power.

In Greek culture, “*daimonion* . . . held no inherently evil connotation. They were used to specify a god or a minor deity, a personal intermediary believed to exercise supervision over the cosmos.”<sup>35</sup> It is very possible that this man was using this power for gain. However, in Hebrew culture such practices were anathema. The Hebrew words for him were *sedim* or *se’rim*, which meant one involved in the “practices of idolatry, magic, and witchcraft.”<sup>36</sup> So it is possible that this man had drifted in this direction for financial gain.

The words from his mouth were from the demon, for “the evil spirit put words into his mouth, and he cried in agony of fear,” because he was in the presence of the most powerful spiritual force in the universe.<sup>37</sup> It “was Satan’s purpose in leading his victim to the synagogue . . . [so that he could cause] confusion and alarm.”<sup>38</sup> However, Christ does not accept truth coming from an unconverted man. This man revealed much truth about Christ. He called Him “the Holy One of God.” In Mark 5:7 a demonized man called

---

<sup>35</sup>Rod Cooper, “Mark,” *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 25.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 255.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

Him “the Son of the Most High.” In Matthew they called Him “the Son of God.” (8:29) Jesus however, refused to acknowledge truth coming from demons. It is not acceptable to come to Church to confess Christ while at the same time possessing and having a relationship with Satan. God does not accept people riding on two horses. In the presence of Christ, Satan wished to embarrass those he had been controlling. Bock’s observation is clear, besides the embarrassment, the presence of Christ makes Satan and the demons nervous.<sup>39</sup> This was why the demons could not remain silent: They were nervous. Christ’s presence was tormenting them and caused the demons to reveal themselves.

The demons knew they could no longer control the man; they knew Jesus’ only purpose was to deliver and save. As the victim also realized he was in the presence of his only hope, “the conflict between the power of Satan and his own desire for freedom was terrible.”<sup>40</sup> It is clear that most people who have been used by Satan wish to be delivered when they come into the presence of God. They hear the message, but Satan holds them back and speaks through them. This man “tried to appeal to Jesus for help, [but] the evil spirit put words into his mouth.”<sup>41</sup> It is of special interest to note that the Hebrew idiom, ἡλθεε ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς? “what to us and to you?” is poorly translated, “What have we to do with thee?” It really meant, “What do we have in common?”<sup>42</sup> If evil spirits preach

---

<sup>39</sup>Darrell L. Bock, “Luke,” *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 147.

<sup>40</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 255.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>“Mark,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 5:569.



about Christ, it is worthless because Christ and the devil have nothing in common.

The greatest lesson given here is that He who dwells in Christians is greater than he who dwells in non-Christians and the power in Christians, makes the devil so uncomfortable that he has to disrupt in order to be left alone. Christians should listen carefully for clues to know when Satan is speaking through those he controls in order to deliver the victim from evil spiritual powers.

### **Disciples' Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces**

The disciples also had to deal with evil spiritual forces in their ministries, and their approaches are helpful to Christians today in knowing what to do. First, their preaching was accompanied by power (miracles). Like their Teacher, their words were accompanied by deeds. Any dual allegiance was met with an open rebuke. The case of Simon is a good example.

#### Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9–24)

Simon was born in Gitto, “a village of Samaria.”<sup>43</sup> He was popularly known as Simon Magus. His second name comes from the Greek word *magos* meaning “sorcerer” or “magician.”<sup>44</sup> Ralph Earl also suggests that the name Simon in Hebrew indicates that he belonged to a class of people who practiced magic.<sup>45</sup> It seems that Simon’s magic had made him great; he was referred to as “the great power of God.” (Acts 8:10) Simon’s

---

<sup>43</sup>“Acts,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:215.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ralph Earle, “Acts,” *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, ed. Charles W. Carter (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 4:629.

conversion to Christianity had a hidden agenda. Philip's arrival in Samaria belittled Simon. Simon lost his greatness when faced with Phillip's power. "Simon is linguistically linked to the story of Philip by the word *prosecho*, "to give heed" (vv. 6, 10, 11). Just as the Samaritan crowd 'with one accord gave heed' to the gospel (v. 6), they had "all . . . from the least to the greatest" once "given heed" to Simon (v. 10)."<sup>46</sup> This competitive mentality went on for a long time. Besides offering money for the power of the Holy Spirit in order to restore his stolen status, he opposed the early Church, "transforming the simple story of Acts into a series of public debates between the orthodox Peter and gnostic Simon."<sup>47</sup> The Bible narrative shares this story about Simon but it does not talk much about his later life.

But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he might receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the

---

<sup>46</sup>"Acts," *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*, ed. J. Bradley Chance (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2007), 132.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. (Acts 8:9-25)

James Hastings asserts that Simon's later actions prove that he was not converted, that he used his skills and went to Rome "where he preached a religion of his own invention."<sup>48</sup> Simon's first mistake was wanting to buy God's power. He was torn between his love of power and prestige and his attraction to Christ. Beverly Roberts Gaventa wonders why Luke bothered to record Simon's story and suggests that Simon was not the type that could easily change.<sup>49</sup> As a Jew, Simon knew that sorcery and magic were condemned, and that the penalty was death. If he refused to follow his Jewish religion, would he obey Christ's way? Usually an honest person in any religion will be an honest seeker of God when introduced to Christianity. It seems that "Luke is not concerned about Simon's interior life, he is concerned about Simon's connection with Satan."<sup>50</sup> Gaventa shows how "a miracle contest between Simon and Peter that takes place in Rome, and Simon's own claim to be the Christ,"<sup>51</sup> exposed who he was. In Rome he was "honored as a god."<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>"The Acts of the Apostles," *The Speaker's Bible*, ed. James Hastings (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1971), 1:130.

<sup>49</sup>Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 137.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>52</sup>Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Company, 1995), 295.

Simon had been called “that power of God which is called great” (Acts 8:10). Simon “received praise as if he were an angelic or divine supernatural being” and “capitalized on their attention and presented himself as the embodiment of the occult power.”<sup>53</sup>

He did not follow Philip because he was converted but because “Philip cast out demons, cured the palsied, and healed the crippled so that the people could see what he had done.”<sup>54</sup> “He regarded Philip’s work as merely a higher form of his own art.”<sup>55</sup>

He wanted to be a part of this new Jewish fame by fulfilling its outward requirements but with no innate commitment. This transformed him into what Mbula calls a “Christian witch.”<sup>56</sup> Such a person among born-again Christians can cause a lot of havoc and fear. Peter’s comment: “I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity . . . [therefore] thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God,” was correct. (Acts 8:21–23)

Simon is a good example of Christians who have been baptized while at the same time clinging to their protective powers because they feel that they need both. Simon might also represent those ordained ministers who preach and baptize but see nothing wrong in consulting local native medical doctors. I have information of a Bishop and a

---

<sup>53</sup>William J. Larkin, *Acts*, IVP New Testament Commentary Series, ed. William J. Larkin (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 5:127.

<sup>54</sup>Henry Leo Boles, *A Commentary on Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Company, 1976), 127.

<sup>55</sup>J. W. Packer, *Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 65.

<sup>56</sup>Mbula, “Penetration of Christianity,” 229.

former Professor at Scott Theological College in Machakos, Kenya, who announced to his students that he had bought a new car and needed the protection of the native doctors so that he would not have an accident.

This type of spirit allegiance should never be tolerated in the Christian Church. Such people have no place in God's kingdom (Acts 8:23).

#### The Sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13-20)

The story about the sons of Sceva illustrated the danger when weak people who know about Jesus but do not know Him or have a personal relationship with Him try to use God's power. Those who work with evil spiritual powers cannot also work with Christ at the same time. The danger of dual allegiance is shown in this story.

The story about the sons of Sceva is similar to the one about Simon the sorcerer. Sceva, the father, was called a chief priest, who was responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Jewish nation. It is not clear however what kind of priest he was. He most likely belonged to Judaism, but this fact is refuted by some scholars. Some say he was simply a leading priest, which "was a natural designation for exorcists who became involved in the occult, since the Jewish 'chief priest' in Judaism was the only one permitted to . . . utter his 'unpronounceable name.'"<sup>57</sup>

But "magic was the means employed in this art of demon exorcism [in which] correct formulae employing the sacred name of Jehovah were recited over the

---

<sup>57</sup>Larkin, "Acts," *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, 560.

possessed.”<sup>58</sup> The Greek word *exorkizo* meant “to exact an oath”<sup>59</sup> which when properly used yielded some success. Success depended on the use of the unpronounceable name of Yaweh. It is clear that “Jews in ancient times played an important role in mediating the magical wisdom of the east to the Greco-Roman world.”<sup>60</sup> Others like Bar-Jesus or Elymas did the same (Acts 13:6, 8). This method shows how Judaism in the first Christian century had degenerated in pursuit of financial gain.<sup>61</sup> Jesus had said “without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5b). He had also asserted that “if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand . . . [and] how can Satan cast out Satan?” (Mark 3:23- 25). The Bible records the story:

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of priests, which did so. And the evil spirits answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. (Acts 19:13-16)

Magicians perform their duties using the power attached to their paraphernalia. From the Jewish point of view these sons seem to have had permission from their father to involve themselves in this trade. “Since the high priest was the only one permitted to utter the ‘unpronounceable name of God’ . . . it makes sense that these brothers would use

---

<sup>58</sup>Ralph, “Acts,” *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, 4:629.

<sup>59</sup>H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Company, 1976), 302.

<sup>60</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 276.

<sup>61</sup>Ralph, “Acts,” *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, 4:629.

that title as part of their ‘hype.’”<sup>62</sup> Like Simon, the sons of Sceva were at Ephesus in a non-Jewish environment. It is possible that by being Jewish they felt they had to show the power of their culture and amaze the Gentiles.

Josephus, referring to Solomon’s skill of exorcism, said in reference to the sons of Sceva, “This kind of cure is of very great power among us to this day.”<sup>63</sup> These sons were professionals in this trade; they were “itinerant Jewish exorcists.”<sup>64</sup>

Bradley states that “Jewish magic was famous in antiquity.”<sup>65</sup> The sons tried to use the name of Jesus “in a somewhat formulaic manner to cast out evil spirits.”<sup>66</sup> The *Testament of Solomon* required the exorcist to pile “name upon powerful name so as to create incantations strong enough to require spirits to do one’s bidding.”<sup>67</sup> So using the name of Jesus and Paul was according to the formula. The mistake was that they failed to first establish a personal relationship with Jesus. The sin of presumption<sup>68</sup> was not new among the Israelites. A person who does not wait to be equipped and informed by the Lord or who is “in disfavor with God, and yet unwilling to humble his heart in

---

<sup>62</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 277.

<sup>63</sup>“Acts,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:375.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup>Bradley J. Chance, “Acts,” *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*, 346.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 277.

<sup>68</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958), 616.

penitence”<sup>69</sup> should not attempt “to commence a contest with Satan, when he has received no authority and possesses no faith.”<sup>70</sup> Such attempts will only lead to embarrassment and shame.

John Lange suggests that it is the unconverted children of the religious clergy who can bring the greatest shame because Satan knows that there is no concord between Belial and Christ.<sup>71</sup> The sons of Sceva were professional exorcists. They were doing what their professional daily duties called for. But, since they did not know Christ and had no authority to use His name, the demon was right in “questioning the right of the non-Christian exorcists to use”<sup>72</sup> the name of Jesus.

It is necessary to note that non-born-again Christians can cast out demons in some circumstances. They can use the name of Jesus to cast out demons. But there is a type “which goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” (Matt 17:21b)

Jesus was aware that His name would be used. He warned that many will come to Him saying, did we not “in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?” (Matt 7:22b) His answer will be simple, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matt 7:23b) The New Living Translation uses the most correct phrase, “Go away; the things you did were unauthorized.” (Matt 7:23b) The

---

<sup>69</sup>White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets*, 622.

<sup>70</sup>John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1915), 19:356.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>William Neil, “The Acts of the Apostles,” *New Century Bible* (London, UK: Oliphants, 1973), 205.



Greek text uses the phrase differently: Οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν “who work lawlessly.” Somebody must be authorized before they can use another’s name in the financial profession. Also the owner of the name must give permission for his name to be used. There is some success in pirating until the law catches up with the pirates.

*Webster’s Pocket Dictionary* defines a pirate as “someone who uses or reproduces someone else’s work without authorization.”<sup>73</sup> When a pirate is caught there is a penalty to pay. The sons of Sceva were trying to pirate the name of Jesus but they were caught before they could start. If they had succeeded many would have been deceived. Today there are many who charge fees for delivering an individual from demonization. Simon wanted God’s power for the wrong reasons and was rebuked in very strong language. Mbula suggests that “Christian witches” can work for Christ with a certain degree of success, but there is a price to pay when Christ casts them out as doers of iniquity.

Luke did not leave this issue without a conclusion. He showed what magicians needed to do in order to be a part and parcel of Jesus Christ. He wrote: “Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver” (Acts 19:19). Ephesus “was a city most hospitable to magicians, sorcerers and charlatans of all sorts. . . . [it was] a territory that Satan had firmly and manifestly in his grasp.”<sup>74</sup> Richard Pervo states that these books belonged to Christians and not non-Christians. He

---

<sup>73</sup>*Webster Pocket Dictionary*, s.v. “Pirate.”

<sup>74</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 275–276.

argues that burning books was “a sign of repudiation, sometimes of conversion.”<sup>75</sup>

William Willimon goes further and argues that one’s denunciation of evil powers in public “is not simply about conversion nor is it only about wonder-working power; it is conversion into and power derived from a relationship with the risen Christ.”<sup>76</sup> Larkin also argues that true repentance is costly. It can cost one all one’s life savings. It cost the Ephesians a total of “thirty-thousand dollars in today’s U. S. Currency.”<sup>77</sup> These Ephesians who burned their books were “Christian witches.” Thus the Bible establishes that dual allegiance is not something new. Christian witches existed even at the very beginning of Christianity. Perhaps those Ephesians had been keeping the books in case they needed to use them later if the need arose. When their duplicity was exposed, they saw the issue as it really was—a denial of faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

It has been suggested that “many of the believers who had been deeply infected by magic and superstition, and were secretly holding on to their charms and books, now made a clean break and burned the relics of their superstition.”<sup>78</sup> Bradley Chance also says that “books in antiquity were very expensive, and magical books, containing formulas and recipes to manipulate the cosmic powers, brought an even greater

---

<sup>75</sup>Richard Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 481.

<sup>76</sup>William H. Willimon, *Acts: Interpretation* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1973), 147–148.

<sup>77</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 278.

<sup>78</sup>Albert C. Winn, “Acts of the Apostles,” *Layman’s Bible Commentary*, 20:108.

premium.”<sup>79</sup> Luke puts the price at “fifty thousand pieces of silver” (Acts 19:19). And “if one assumes the drachma to represent a day’s wage, 50,000 days of wages represent an impressive sum.”<sup>80</sup> James warns that “your gold and silver have become worthless. The very wealth you were counting on will eat away your flesh in hell. This treasure you have accumulated will stand as evidence against you on the day of judgment” (Jas 5:3 NLT).

The beating up of the sons of Sceva played an important role in causing the Ephesians to burn their books and caused many to question the value of magic in the presence of the name of Jesus. The event led them “to resolve to turn from magic to miracle, from pagan writings to Israel’s Scriptures, from demonic charlatans to Paul.”<sup>81</sup>

#### Peter’s Shadow (Acts 5:12-16)

The story about Peter’s shadow healing people introduces a new method of healing. Peter and his compatriots had been commanded by the Sanhedrin not to preach in the name of Jesus Christ. But God introduced a new way that the enemies of those early Christians knew nothing about. God cannot be limited, and this shows how creative God is in the midst of adversity. Where people do not want Jesus Christ to be introduced in hostile countries, Christians need to allow God to meet the spiritual needs of the people. The power in the name of Jesus Christ will preach.

---

<sup>79</sup>Chance, *Acts*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary, 348.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>“Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians,” *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 10:269.

Shadows had significant worldview meaning in the apostles' time. The "ancients believed the shadow was an extension of the personality and power of the person, a view that the narrator assumes."<sup>82</sup> This meaning is not assumed in many parts of the world but in Luke's time, it "made sense and [he] wrote of things in the contexts of their lives and accompanying worldviews."<sup>83</sup> The people were therefore confident that "Peter's shadow with its healing power" would heal people as it passed.<sup>84</sup>

Any culture's worldview can be used by God as long as it does not conflict with His Word. Lange states that God can use anything "such as the shadow of Peter, if only the instrument humbly yields to his control."<sup>85</sup>

Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds of couches, that at least the shadows of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were released every one. (Acts 5:15-16)

Jesus had said "they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16: 18). James wrote: "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. . . . Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up" (Jas 5:13-15).

People often limit God and the methods He can use to heal or help people. God

---

<sup>82</sup>Bradley J. Smith, "Acts," *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*, 91.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Larkin, *Acts*, 90.

<sup>85</sup>Lange, *A Commentary on Holy Scriptures*, 91.

used Peter's shadow to heal. God used a touch of faith by the hemorrhaging woman to bring her hope and healing. (Matt 9:20-22) Many times God chooses a method that the local people are used to and which they can identify with.

Imagine the scene as Peter walked along the streets or alleys. His shadow on the ground was probably several times his height and reached more people than he could reach physically. Perhaps as he walked by, the sick stood up one by one as his shadow went over them and the word went out to the other cities. But the healing was "not in Peter and his companions, but in the Lord, whom the apostles represented."<sup>86</sup>

Instead of taking the sick to the hospitals and dispensaries and clinics, the people brought them to the streets. "The whole amazing work of healing was carried on in the most public fashion possible. Not only throughout the city of Jerusalem, but also to the surrounding towns . . . did the news of the extraordinary activities of the apostles and their fellow believers spread, and great was the harvest of souls."<sup>87</sup> Thus, those who threatened the apostles were put to shame. Think of the possibilities if God would do this again in Muslim countries.

Miracles play a major role in moving people to give allegiance only to God. They "demonstrate the liberating power of God, through which God releases people from the forces that corrupt their lives."<sup>88</sup> Peter "does not need to speak, to touch, or, it seems, to

---

<sup>86</sup>"Acts," *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:179.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Chance, *Acts*, 90.

give any attention to the sick person.”<sup>89</sup> Peter’s silent ministry through his shadow might have been necessitated by the fact that he had been warned by the Sanhedrin “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18b). The Sanhedrin tried to limit God. But, Peter, by being silent and just walking by the enemies, caused Jerusalem and the surrounding villages to learn of God’s love and power. It also seems that the people were aware that Peter was not allowed to talk because when his shadow healed them there was no interaction between them and Peter.

### **Paul’s Methods of Dealing with Evil Spiritual Forces and the Kamba Implications**

#### Elymas the Magician (Acts 13:6-12)

Elymas is a Greek “transliteration of an Aramaic or Arabic word equivalent to *magos*.”<sup>90</sup> The Greek rightfully call him Ελύμας ὁ μάγος (εἶρον ἄνδρα τινὰ μάγον ψευδοπροφήτην, “they found a certain man, a sorcerer, a false prophet”). The word *alama*-Ελύμας in Arabic means “to know” and is derived from ‘*alim* “wise man” or “learned man.” The plural is *oulema*<sup>91</sup> (wise men, wizards, or magicians.) In Kiswahili or Swahili, the word is etymologically close: *elimu* (education), learned. Therefore Elymas means learned wise man. In Hebrew, he was simply called “sorcerer Bar-jesus.”<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup>Pervo, *Acts*, 136.

<sup>90</sup>S. F. Hunter, “Bar-Jesus,” ISBE, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 1:431.

<sup>91</sup>H. D. M. Spence, “Acts-Romans,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, ed. H. D. M. Spence (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), 403.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

He was therefore working against the teachings of Judaism and Christianity. Elymas  
“withstood Barnabas and Saul just as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses.”<sup>93</sup>

The Bible reads:

And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. (Acts 13:6-12)

This event took place in Cyprus, a Gentile land. The city “Paphos was a fairly new city and the seat of Roman government on the island.”<sup>94</sup> The location was “seven miles northwest of the old Phoenician city of Paphos.”<sup>95</sup> It could rightly be called New Paphos. The proconsul Sergius Paulus “had been a priest at Rome before being sent to Cyprus.”<sup>96</sup> He was therefore interested in religion and for this reason he was interested in hearing Elymas, but also in hearing Paul and Silas whose message was superior. He had

---

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 403.

<sup>94</sup>John B. Polhill, “Acts,” *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 26:292.

<sup>95</sup>Richard N. Longenecker, “The Acts of the Apostles,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (EBC), ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 9:419.

<sup>96</sup>“Acts,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:283.

not “been dominated by the sorcerer”<sup>97</sup> but was playing around with both powers. If this miracle had not taken place, the deputy would most likely have continued giving allegiance to both powers.

Bar-jesus saw a competition between himself and the apostles arising, and should the proconsul accept the new message, then Bar-jesus would have lost influence in the area. During this period of the first century, magical workers were common among the Jews. This class of witches “traded on the religious prestige of their race, and boasted, in addition to their sacred books, of spells and charms that had allegedly come down to them from Solomon.”<sup>98</sup> Solomon had allowed the worship of evil spiritual forces by his heathen wives. It is very possible that these practices were written down and were still having influence in Paul’s day.

Elymas wanted to keep the proconsul from listening to Paul and Barnabas because “their teaching apparently produced on him a considerable impression . . . [and also] fearing that his position of influence and gain would be taken by the new teachers.”<sup>99</sup> There is another interesting element in this story that also has an impact on dual allegiance.

Saul’s future intercourse with gentiles made it desirable that, after the common custom of the Jews of his day—as seen in Peter, Stephen, Mark, Lucius, Jason, Crispus, Justus, Niger, Aquila, Priscilla, Drusilla, etc—he should have a gentile name, and so in honour of his illustrious convert, or in memory of his conversion, or at the special request of Sergius Paulus (Barronius), he took the name Paul, which in sound

---

<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

<sup>98</sup>“Acts” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:282.

<sup>99</sup>S. F. Hunter, “Bar-jesus,” *ISBE*, 1:431.



was not unlike his Hebrew name.<sup>100</sup>

Saul changed his name for the sake of identification.<sup>101</sup> Paul wanted the Gentiles to own the message so was willing to do anything to keep it from being called a foreign message. “Paul means little; Saul means desired. He abandons the name that prophesied of favour and honour, to adopt a name that bears upon its very front a profession of humility.”<sup>102</sup> Alexander Maclaren adds that “his very name is the condensation into a word of his abiding conviction: ‘I am less than the least of all saints’,”<sup>103</sup> Instead of giving converts foreign names, he took for himself one of their names.

Missionaries often gave Africans European names instead of them taking African names as a sign of humbleness, humility, and identification. Paul writes, “And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that under the law, as are under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law” (1 Cor 9:20).

Missionaries brought the Gospel to our country and did the best job they knew how to do. If it were not for them Africa would not have been introduced to Christianity, so we are thankful for what they did. However, they made some mistakes. A few Western missionaries took African names temporarily. Most gave Africans “Christian” names. They brought spoons, forks, knives, and plates instead of using the

---

<sup>100</sup>Spence, “Acts-Roman,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, 403.

<sup>101</sup>“Acts,” *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, ed. Francis Martin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 5:160.

<sup>102</sup>Alexander Maclaren, “The Acts,” *Expositions of Holy Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1974), 15.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

African wooden ones. They brought suits, neckties, the mackintosh, and hats to areas with blazing hot weather instead of wearing light clothes to fit the weather. They brought Christmas trees and Santa Claus and condemned the African ways of living, but promoted theirs as Christian. This has promoted a double standard for African converts to this day. Africans were not part of the process in deciding whether it was necessary for them to use European names. Neither were they partners in deciding what aspects of their culture were redeemable, for the missionaries saw little of value in Africa. One of the tragedies of this approach was that crucial issues like spiritual power were never addressed openly in a way that kept the new believers from practicing dual allegiance.

Paul, however, practiced incarnational ministry. The change of his name at this time is as significant as was Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, and Simon to Cephas.<sup>104</sup> This little change helped Sergius Paulus not feel like a foreigner, and when he saw Elymas go blind, he fully believed. The two powers were presented to him in understandable ways so he understood which one was true. Double allegiance for Sergius Paulus ended at once. He dismissed the weaker power. Unfortunately, many Christians in Africa continue living with a double allegiance because they do not see the difference between the two powers.

Paul did not permit any power to stand in the way of the gospel. He publically and immediately showed the difference between the two powers. To Elymas, Εἶπεν ὁ πλήρης παντὸς δόλου καὶ πάσης ῥαδιουργίας, υἱὲ διαβόλου, ἐχθρὲ πάσης δικαιοσύνης, οὐ παύση διαστρέφων τὰς ὁδοὺς [τοῦ] κυρίου τὰς εὐθείας. “He said, ‘O full of all deceit

---

<sup>104</sup>“Acts,” *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, 5:160.

and of all fraud, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the right ways of the Lord” (Acts 13:10). In the whole New Testament this word ῥαδιουργίας “fraud” is found only here in this verse. This word refers to someone misguiding and misleading for business gain. It refers to “reckless conduct, villainy, [and] wickedness.”<sup>105</sup> Paul was just as forceful as Peter had been with Simon Magus.<sup>106</sup> The apostles did not teach there was no such thing as witchcraft, but they forcefully demonstrated the difference between the two in public. καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ χεὶρ κυρίου ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ ἔση τυφλὸς μὴ βλέπων τὸν ἥλιον ἄχρι καιροῦ. παραχρημά τε ἔπεσεν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀχλὺς καὶ σκότος καὶ περιάγων ἐζήτει χειραγωγούς. “And now behold, the hand of the Lord is on thee, and you will be blind not seeing the sun until such a time and at once fell on him a mist and darkness, and going about he sought leaders by the hand” (Acts 13:11).

By blinding Elymas, God demonstrated that the proconsul had no reason to fear magicians and sorcerers. Jesus had said, “No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other” (Matt 6:24). Elymas, who had been leading people with magic, now sought someone to lead him. It became clear that he had been deceiving people. He could not heal himself with his magic. However, the mercy of the Lord was here shown: καὶ ἔση τυφλὸς μὴ βλέπων τὸν ἥλιον ἄχρι καιροῦ “and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season” (Acts 13:11). God gives the magician a probationary period. He was not to be blind until he died but until he saw the uselessness of magic, witchcraft, and sorcery.

---

<sup>105</sup>Spence, “Acts-Romans,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, 403.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

Origen and Chrysostom mention an ancient tradition “that Elymas, in consequence of this became a sincere convert to the religion of Christ.”<sup>107</sup> Thus medicine-men, witch doctors, sorcerers, and witches can be converted if God’s power can be shown to be more powerful than their power.

The major subject of this story is not the magician but the proconsul. The end result was that the proconsul believed. We are not told that he was baptized but that may be assumed, for “such omission of the mention thereof should not be thought to warrant us in believing that the sacrament was neglected on any occasion.”<sup>108</sup> The Greek reads: Τότε ἰδὼν ὁ ἀνθύπατος τὸ γεγονός ἐπίστευσεν ἐκπλησσομένης ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ κυρίου “then having seen the proconsul what happened believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord” (Acts 13:12).

The subject of the sentence is the proconsul, ὁ ἀνθύπατος, and the direct object is the τὸ γεγονός. The indirect object introduced by the preposition is εἰς τὴν διδαχὴν τοῦ Κυρίου. The indirect object is introduced by three verbs, the indicative ἐπίστευσεν and the participles ἰδὼν and ἐκπλησσομένης “astounded” Simply, “when he saw he believed.”<sup>109</sup> “Sergius Paulus was more decidedly the first fruits of heathenism than Cornelius,”<sup>110</sup> for he could clearly see the distinction between the two powers.

---

<sup>107</sup>Adam Clarke, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1988), 5:782.

<sup>108</sup>J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of Apostles* (Cambridge, UK: The University Press, 1934), 160.

<sup>109</sup>Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 618.

<sup>110</sup>*Holy Bible Commentary and a Revision of the Translation*, ed. F. C. Cook (London, UK: John Murray, 1899), 2:440.

Adam Clarke's conclusion is striking. "Thus the word of God is a two-edged sword: it smites the sinner with judgement or compunction; and the sincere inquirer after truth, with conviction of its own worth and excellence."<sup>111</sup> Instead of telling the proconsul not to believe in witchcraft, Paul allowed him to decide on his own that magicians are liars and that their power is limited. Thus once he made the choice he stuck with it.

#### The Damsel, the Soothsayer (Acts 16:16-22)

The story in Acts 16:16-22 is about a demonized slave girl who was a trusted power in the community. People obeyed her word, and it was only a matter of time before she would use that trust to lead people away from Paul. The purpose of evil powers is to divert people from Christ. Paul had allowed this damsel to bother them for awhile because he knew what would happen if he delivered her immediately.

The KJV translates Luke's words, "she had the spirit of divination." But, "a spirit of Python is a more appropriate translation."<sup>112</sup> It is recorded that this is

an allusion to Pythian Apollo, the god who was supposed to be embodied in a snake at Delphi. The snake-god at Delphi allegedly supplied the priestess with oracles.

According to Plutarch the *pythones* (Python men) were ventriloquists. The slave girl at Philippi had been trained by her owners to give oracular utterances by means of ventriloquism. They used her in this manner for financial gains.<sup>113</sup>

The girl claimed prophetic power "and was used as a means of foreknowing the

---

<sup>111</sup>Adam Clarke, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (New York, NY: Abingdon Press), 5:782–783.

<sup>112</sup>T. C. Smith, "Acts-1 Corinthians," *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. Clifton J. Allen (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1970), 10:98.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*

future.”<sup>114</sup> The word Python here fits better than the name Apollo, the spirit of divination.<sup>115</sup> “Any one so possessed was reckoned to be able to foretell the future, like the original priestess of Apollo herself.”<sup>116</sup>

She had heard Paul and Silas preach and she longed to be a part of that salvation. It is argued that “the girl’s darkened mind was longing for a share in the ‘the way of salvation,’ but the demon within her was challenging that ‘way,’ and her words impeded the missionaries’ work.”<sup>117</sup>

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants 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 16:6-18)

“It is clear that the local population believed that the slave possessed supernatural abilities, and doubtless her wild cries were noted and received as oracles. Her masters took advantage of her supposed inspiration, and made the girl give answers to those who made inquiries of her.”<sup>118</sup> Paul could have allowed this girl to continue shouting since she was establishing the apostles’ claims, but the power in Paul not “only liberates a slave-girl from exploitative owners, but also, and more importantly, shows itself able to liberate, or save, people from the very forces of the cosmos,” which have enslaved

---

<sup>114</sup> Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 207.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Neil, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 182.

<sup>117</sup> “Acts,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 6:331.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 6:330.

them.<sup>119</sup>

Joseph Parker makes it clear that even if the evil spirit “reads God’s own Bible word by word, his spirit stains whatever it touches; and the very pureness of the divine truth might run risks of distainment [i.e., defilement] if touched by diabolic powers.”<sup>120</sup> However, the girl’s message had another connotation, for the Jewish worldview of salvation was quite different from the Hellenistic worldview.

The Hellenistic worldview viewed salvation as “an escape or liberation from the powers which controlled the destiny of man. Thus the slave girl was telling the people, as she followed the missionaries, that they were proclaiming a way of liberation from fate by the power of Yahweh, the Jewish God.”<sup>121</sup> This is what annoyed Paul since she was “sarcastically taunting the men.”<sup>122</sup> She was tearing down what they were building up, and she did this for many days. If Paul had delivered this girl earlier, their missionary work would have been brought to a halt much earlier. Knowing this, Paul allowed her to continue for many days.

Human beings value money more than they value human freedom. The owners would have kept this girl in bondage to the devil. It made no difference to them that “the girl was in deep misery, that she lived in the pits of hell and despair.”<sup>123</sup> Freeing the girl

---

<sup>119</sup>Chance, *Acts*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary, 286.

<sup>120</sup>Parker, “Acts,” *The People’s Bible*, 24:152.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Robert L. Maddox, “Acts,” *Layman’s Bible Book Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 19:96.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid.

“created enemies, and even subjected Paul and Silas to corporal punishment and to imprisonment.”<sup>124</sup>

It is amazing that “a young woman, chained her whole life to the hell of demon possession,”<sup>125</sup> hears no rejoicing at her freedom. Willimon concludes that “religion has somehow gotten mixed up with economics here, and so her owners do what the vested interests always do when their interests are threatened.”<sup>126</sup>

There is an important point to note here. Luke says: καὶ ἐξῆλθεν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ “and it came out the same hour.” Today it sometimes takes a long time to deliver people from demonization. Paul used the same language used today: Παραγγέλλω σοι ἐν ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐξελεῖν ἀπ’ αὐτῆς “I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out from her.” If people in a supernaturalistic culture knew it was as simple as this, few would fear evil spiritual forces. The failure to deliver people quickly from demonization can cause people to discredit the power of God. Also taking a long time delivering someone can bring traumatize the individual.

---

<sup>124</sup> Lange, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, 306.

<sup>125</sup> Willimon, *Acts*, 139.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*



## Handkerchiefs and Aprons (Acts 19:10-12)

The story about handkerchiefs and aprons illustrates God's creativity as He used His power in a place where there was only one preacher. This story takes place at Ephesus, a city situated near the mouth of the Cayster River. It is 5.5 kilometers upstream from the Aegean Sea opposite the island of Samos. It was "an important seaport city of the Roman province of Asia,"<sup>127</sup> and lay on the main road from Rome to the East (the Orient). The city was famous for its economic power and banking system. Its great temple was the center of Artemis or Diana.<sup>128</sup>

Even though Pergamum "was the capital of the province of Asia in Roman times, Ephesus was the largest city in the province, having a population of perhaps 300,000 people."<sup>129</sup> Its theater "seated an estimated 25,000 people."<sup>130</sup> The city itself was the "center of the magic arts in the ancient world. Some citizens considered their books of magic, sacred scripture, and paraphernalia for mediating miraculous power as commonplace."<sup>131</sup> The *Ephesia gramata* were famous magical books.<sup>132</sup> This was the city where the sons of Sceva had tried to use the names of Paul and Jesus.

What is interesting about this story is that the handkerchiefs and aprons were

---

<sup>127</sup>G. L. Borchert, "Ephesus," ISBC, 1982 ed., 2:115.

<sup>128</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary* (1979), s.v. "Ephesus."

<sup>129</sup>*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (1995), s.v. "Ephesus."

<sup>130</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup>Leader E. Keck, "Acts," *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abington Press, 2002), 10:267.

<sup>132</sup>*SDA Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Ephesus."

similar to paraphernalia used locally. God was contextualizing the gospel by using power articles so the Ephesians could understand the gospel better. In Ephesus, “people were condemned for wearing about their necks garlands removed from imperial busts or statues as an apotropaic against fever.”<sup>133</sup>

All these handkerchiefs and aprons referred to were not Paul’s. They were “clothes used to remove perspiration” and “protective coverings that likely were soiled and stained from daily use in the workshop.”<sup>134</sup> “Calvin points out that worthless things were chosen so that the people might not fall into superstition and idolatry.”<sup>135</sup>

Because Paul could not be in all places at one time, people took handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul and placed them on the sick.

Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχούσας ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου, ὥστε καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας ἀποφέρεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια καὶ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τὰς νόσους, τὰ τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκπορεύεσθαι.  
Literally: “And works of power not common wrought God by the hands of Paul, so that even to those being sick were brought from his skin handkerchiefs or aprons, and departed from them the diseases, and the spirits wicked went out from them.” (Acts 19:11-12)

Luke’s way of writing emphasizes the truth that he too was amazed. He was a medical doctor, but the manner in which some diseases were healed left him wondering. Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχούσας “miracles, not the common ones.” Luke uses the negative to accentuate the positive. He uses οὐ instead of μὴ to negate the aorist participle τυχούσας. This shows how extraordinary the nature of the miracles was. Jesus had told

---

<sup>133</sup> Pervo, *Acts*, 472.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 686.

His disciples, “He that believeth on me . . . greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father” (John 14:12). It has been argued that

to recognize these magical concepts on the part of some of Paul’s Ephesian followers at this early stage of their faith is neither to attribute such concepts to Paul or the Christian religion which he preached, nor is it to say that the healings or demon expulsions were occasioned by any power resident in the handkerchiefs or aprons. . . . Nor does Luke state that Paul either ordered or approved the practice. That God may have wrought miracles of healing and demon expulsion in response to the faith of these believers, though not because of, nor through, the handkerchiefs or aprons borne by them, is indeed credible, and such Luke doubtless means.<sup>136</sup>

Lange states that it is to be “carefully observed that Paul himself by no means adopted such a course. . . . [Instead he] healed by imposition of hands.”<sup>137</sup> Ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου. There was “direct healing through the laying on of Paul’s hands.”<sup>138</sup>

Paul used the method used in Israel; the Ephesians used the method used in Ephesus. Both were correct. It is therefore “to be viewed as God’s accommodation to the mind-set of the people of that age.”<sup>139</sup> Some scholars argue that this method was used “apart from Paul’s knowledge and approval.”<sup>140</sup> But Paul would have known what was happening. Therefore, “it need not be thought unnatural that just as Paul met his audience at a point of common ground ideologically in order to lead them on to the Good

---

<sup>136</sup> Carter, “Acts of the Apostles,” 628.

<sup>137</sup> Lange, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, 353.

<sup>138</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, “John-Acts,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: The Zondervan Corporation, 1981), 10:496.

<sup>139</sup> Pohill, “Acts,” 402.

<sup>140</sup> Longenecker, “John-Acts,” 10:496.

News of salvation in Christ, so at Ephesus he acted in the way here depicted.”<sup>141</sup> The power of Jesus Christ dispelled the fear of evil spiritual powers because the indigenous people came to realize that they also had the power and the tools to fight demonic powers. Paul gave them the tools and they used them. They controlled Satan; Satan did not control them any more. They owned the message.

William Neil states that “it is in keeping with the atmosphere of magic which pervades this passage and the reputation of Ephesus as a center of black arts that Christians, in that place at that time were apparently no less credulous than pagans.”<sup>142</sup> But God’s ways are not our ways for there was “the healing hem of Jesus’ garment (Mark 5:27-34; 6:56) and the healing shadow of Peter (Acts 5:15).”<sup>143</sup> Not criticizing the Ephesian method as heathen and anti-Christian “led to the Ephesians’ overcoming their magic and superstition”<sup>144</sup> and their fear of evil powers.

Today some Christians try to duplicate the Ephesian method of healing. Larkin says that “these healings did occur, but to imitate them as some media evangelists have been wont to do with ‘prayer cloths’ or other ‘prayed-over’ trinkets sent through the mail is to reduce miracle to magic, or impersonal manipulation.”<sup>145</sup> If critical contextualization is not used, local cultural “power encounters can sometimes lead to syncretistic

---

<sup>141</sup>Ibid.

<sup>142</sup>William Neil, “The Acts of the Apostles,” *New Century Bible* (London, UK: Oliphants, 1973).

<sup>143</sup> Polhill, “Acts,” 403.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., 402.

<sup>145</sup> Larkin, “Acts,” 276.

responses.”<sup>146</sup> As a matter of fact, “most of us have seen on television or heard on radio the pitches by so-called healers who urge listeners to send in for a certain kind of prayer cloth or amulet which is guaranteed to relieve all manner of bodily and mental distress. In nearly every case the troubled listener is urged to send money along with his request for the minister’s prayer cloth.”<sup>147</sup> In the Ephesian case it is important to note that no money was requested for the work of God, and God’s power is not to be used for personal gain.<sup>148</sup>

### **Implications for Kamba Christians**

There are at least nine major implications one can draw from the New Testament stories dealing with evil spiritual powers. In the story of the demonized son whom Christ finds at the foot of the mountain, a dynamic relationship with Him is necessary if people want to confront evil spiritual powers. No one should approach evil spiritual powers when involved in avariciousness or power struggles. Church elections, church politics, or promotions should not be in one’s mind when confronting the devil. Total dedication to God is paramount. Jesus said the disciples needed to fast and pray. Their problem was that they had lost their relationship with God, so they needed to reestablish that relationship if they were to be used by God to set people free. This applies to all Christians.

A second implication is drawn from the Gadarene demoniac. When Christians

---

<sup>146</sup>Ibid.

<sup>147</sup>Robert L. Maddox, “Acts”, Layman’s Bible Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 114.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid.

hang on to biblically forbidden practices, whether they know it or not, they invite evil spiritual powers to be part of their lifestyle. Keeping pigs, even today, remains a biblically forbidden practice. The fact that the Gadarene demoniac came to Christ for deliverance was enough evidence that he knew who Christ was. It is also evident that he understood that his sins had driven him far from God. In a supernaturalistic surrounding it is easy for people to find themselves under the control of evil powers through inheritance from previous practices. The deliverance of this man and the destruction of the pigs imply that God is ready at any cost to deliver anyone from the powers of Satan. Jesus did not care whether He would be asked to pay for the loss of the pigs. Delivering human life was more important to Him. If there was anything that needed to be destroyed in order to deliver this man, Jesus would have done it. The Scripture declares, “Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb 7:25). The Kamba Christians fear the forces of Satan because they do not understand God and His power and that Christ intercedes for them.

A third implication is found in the story of the demoniac in the synagogue. He showed that he also knew who Christ was. The lesson is that Satan can become an angel of light and mingle with Christians and even go to church. His purpose is to strengthen double allegiance: belief in God but dependence on evil powers. The demon told the truth about Christ. However, the truth from Satan should not be accepted no matter how true it is because Christians should have nothing to do with Satan. Evil spirits are intelligent beings and they know God. This is the reason why they tremble at His presence. Therefore, commanding them to obey the name of Christ is easy.

A fourth implication is found in the story of Simon the sorcerer. He wanted to retain the power from evil spirits in addition to the power of Christ. This means that he had not yet understood the meaning of the power of Jesus Christ. In the Kamba setting, this has also been true for a long time because some denominations, such as the Catholics, withheld the Bible for a long time, so the people did not know biblical truth very well. Other Protestant denominations also preached a message that accommodated the former beliefs of the adherents. For example, the preaching of the immortal soul allowed a continuing belief in spirits and ancestors. This allowed many people to maintain belief in the two powers because the new Bible-shaped knowledge did not challenge the old one. A wholly Bible-shaped message will always challenge the old worldview the same way Peter challenged Simon the sorcerer.

A fifth implication is seen in the story of the sons of Sceva. They also wanted to benefit from two powers. Like Simon the sorcerer, they wanted power because there was money involved. Having both powers would have earned them more fame and wealth since power was highly regarded by the heathen. They wanted the power, not the Christ. This led to the sin of presumption. Kamba Christians often want to continue to use evil power to protect themselves while also wanting the power of Christ to save them in His everlasting kingdom. One cannot have both. People will lose eternal life by wanting to cleave to both powers. It is even more evil to crave both powers than to crave for one.

A sixth implication is seen in the story about the shadow of Peter. The Kamba Muslims may be hostile to family members who embrace Christianity. They may not allow Christians to evangelize their family members. God, therefore, can create new

methods of evangelism. Like Peter and John who were commanded not to evangelize in Jerusalem, but whose shadows did a lot of evangelism, Kamba Christians can evangelize their fellow Muslims in more ways than one. A second point in this story is that God can use shadows, handkerchiefs, and oil, just as He can use simple prayer. Whatever tools a local community has, as long as they do not go against biblical principles, can be used for God's ministry.

A seventh implication can be drawn from the story of Elymas the magician. This is one of the best stories in the Bible to illustrate what happens when God's power is used as a part of evangelization. God's word gives clear information about the two powers, so there is no excuse for anybody to confuse the two. The person being witnessed to was the Proconsul. He had not made a decision about which power to follow. He listened to both Paul and Elymas closely. When Elymas could not undo his blindness that Paul had brought against him, the Proconsul saw who was most powerful and made a decision. Kamba Christians need this kind of example as evidence of God's power.

A second point of this event was the change of names. Saul became Paul. (Acts 13:9) By adopting a local name from the Proconsul's culture, Paul closely identified with him. In the same way, Kamba people also should be allowed to keep their names. They should drop the use of European names because there is nothing Christian in European names. When baptized, converts are asked to choose a Christian name. We do not see this in Paul's case. He does not give the converts Jewish names, instead he takes one of their names. Baptismal names are therefore not a biblical requirement. A Bible-shaped worldview has power when integrated with the local culture. Imported worldviews, imported cultural practices, and imported names deny the power of the gospel to change



each and every culture.

An eighth implication is drawn from the story of the demonized damsel. People seek to live with evil powers because they value wealth more than human life. The local people did not care that Paul delivered a damsel from the evil powers. Paul was chastised for setting her free. All the miracles and good works were not remembered. Kamba Christians often seek to protect their wealth and their families by using evil spiritual powers irrespective of the fact that they have been given everlasting life. They do not value their lives or the life of the One who died for them when they do this. This story shows that Satan should be cast out at any cost. Paul knew the people would probably turn against him, but he took that chance in order to set the girl free.

A ninth and final implication is drawn from the story of Paul's "handkerchiefs and aprons." Paul did not instruct his disciples to use this method. But, having grown up in the local culture, the disciples did what was natural in their culture. They carried an object that had touched the body of the master and placed it on the sick. It worked. Kamba Christians had many herbs they used for healing, but the Christian preachers condemned these as heathen; as a result Kamba Christians were forced to use the herbal medicine secretly in order to remain in the church. This has continued for nearly a century now. Where one cannot afford a hospital, one can safely use the local herbs for treatment, as long as the herbs are not administered by a diviner or witch doctor. Kamba Christians need to be taught to use critical contextualization and to learn how to apply biblical principles to each cultural issue. Things that are not biblical should be discarded, but many old methods of treatment can still be used if not mixed with evil spiritual powers.

There seems to be some growth in the New Testament from the Old Testament in the way the New Testament seems to have handled evil spiritual powers. In the next chapter, the writer is going to write on the writings of Ellen G. White's views on evil spiritual powers and how she handled the subject.

## CHAPTER VI

### ELLEN G. WHITE'S WRITINGS CONCERNING EVIL SPIRITUAL FORCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR KAMBA CHRISTIANS

#### **Introduction**

This chapter looks at what Ellen G. White says concerning Satan's methods in contemporary society. Some believe that "heathen superstitions have disappeared before the civilization of the twentieth century. But the word of God and the stern testimony of facts declare that sorcery is practiced in this age as verily as in the days of the old-time magicians."<sup>1</sup> One of Satan's methods is to promote fear that plays on cultural beliefs. In each culture "there are evil angels at work . . . but because we do not discern their presence with our natural vision we do not consider as we should the reality of their existence."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of these evil angels is to use any available means to keep Christians busy accusing each other and to create an environment of fear. Evil spirits attack, and because people do not see what is attacking them, they become fearful and seek protection.

God's people are given every needed protection in the Bible to help them know

---

<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 289.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 5:533.

that there is nothing to fear, but fear can return if they depart from God's commandments. When the commandments are broken, God seems to withdraw. In the past, "God withdrew His protection from them [Jewish people forty years after Christ's death] and removed His restraining power from Satan and his angels. . . . Satan was at the head of the nation, and the highest civil and religious authorities were under his sway."<sup>3</sup> It seems that when people disregard the commandments of God, Satan stirs up fear among God's people. Where Satan is in control there is "suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder. . . . Friends and kindred betrayed one another."<sup>4</sup> When Satan controls a community he makes sure that people are suspicious of each other.

### **How Satan Attacks Christians and Causes Fear**

#### Agents

White records that "he who in Eden used Eve to tempt Adam, uses men in this age to tempt their fellow men."<sup>5</sup> Satan uses agents to accomplish his designs. Through these human agents, "he works according to a definite plan, and his agents act in concert."<sup>6</sup> Evil angels tremble at the name of Jesus Christ, but human agents do not, especially when they have never been brought to a full knowledge of Christ. White asserts, "The men whom he makes his instruments in doing this work are blinded and do not see what they

---

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950), 28.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, "A Present Help in Every Time of Trouble," *Review and Herald*, 16 July 1901, 318.

<sup>6</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:294–295.

are doing until they are so deeply involved in guilt that they think it would be useless to try to recover themselves, and they risk all and continue in their course of transgression to the bitter end.”<sup>7</sup> One should not underestimate the power of these agents because if Satan and his “followers did not come in and oppose it [the message] by every means in their power, where there are now ten who take hold of it, there would be thousands.”<sup>8</sup> That means Satan’s agents have tremendous success. White seems to suggest that these agents together with Satan and his evil angels are very successful. She states, “He is seeking to allure souls from Christ, and those who are not established upon the truth will surely be taken in his snare.”<sup>9</sup>

Satan sends some of his most successful agents right into the church, for “his most effective agents for this work are those whose names are on the church records but who fail of a record in ‘the Lamb’s book of life.’”<sup>10</sup> In selecting agents Satan makes sure that he chooses those who will not be noticed until he is done using them, as was Judas. “The angelic host who watched the scenes in the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ, knew that it was Satan who entered into Judas and led him to betray Christ.”<sup>11</sup> Although this should not cause Christians to be suspicious of others, Christians need to know that “the greatest sins are brought in through those who profess to be sanctified and claim that they

---

<sup>7</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:295.

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, “Government of God,” *Review and Herald*, 9 March 1886, 145.

<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:295.

<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, “God’s Means for Diffusing Light,” *Review and Herald*, 26 December 1912, 3-4.

<sup>11</sup>White, “Government of God,” *Review and Herald*, 9 March 1886, 145.

cannot sin.”<sup>12</sup> Self-righteousness is often used to conceal those who are a tool of Satan.

In Kenya, killing through remote control and witchcraft is widespread and causes a lot of fear. White seems to understand the remote control part when she says, “Through deceptive means and unseen channels, Satan is working to strengthen his authority and to place obstacles in the way of God’s people, that souls may not be freed from his power and gathered under the banner of Christ.”<sup>13</sup> It is clear that Satan’s method of unseen channels does succeed in trapping even Christians. Accusing and suspecting others and acting on fear by looking for protection is a major way Christians try to keep themselves from being bewitched. Carrying protective devices in one’s pocket in a way is idolatry because it replaces God’s power with evil spiritual power.

Many may not view carrying charms as idolatry but White asserts, “Satan is ever on the alert that he may lead men into idolatry, that those who profess to love Christ may bow down to rivals of the Lord of heaven.”<sup>14</sup> Satan knows that through the law “our characters may be molded in accordance with the law of God. And by willing obedience to this law our characters are formed to the character of God.”<sup>15</sup> Satan’s purpose is to see that idolatry is introduced, so instead of walking side by side with the angels of God, one walks with evil angels.

The protective device in the pocket is backed by evil spiritual power, and by

---

<sup>12</sup>White, “Government of God,” *Review and Herald*, 9 March 1886, 145.

<sup>13</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:295.

<sup>14</sup>White, “God’s Means for Diffusing Light,” *Review and Herald*, 26 December 1912, 3-4.

<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, “God’s Standard of Character,” *Review and Herald*, 3 May 1898, 565.

carrying such devices Christians are inviting Satan to live in them. This kind of Christian is simply an agent of Satan. Satan's "agencies are united with human agencies in an effort to make void the law of God, and to teach for doctrines the commandments of men."<sup>16</sup> Members may think that they are being used by God in accomplishing spiritual matters, but if they carry protective devices they are controlled by another power. White saw that "while they were preaching, or praying some would fall prostrate and helpless; not by the power of the Holy Ghost, no, no; but by the power of Satan breathed upon these agents and through them to the people."<sup>17</sup>

Church members need to understand the issues of the battle between Christ and Satan. Does a Christian need extra power in his pocket? If so, whose power? Christians are reminded that "as the coming of Christ draws nigh, he [Satan] will be more determined and decisive in his efforts to overthrow them."<sup>18</sup> While Christians are busy accusing each other of bewitchment, "the agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating."<sup>19</sup> They use Christians to suspect and accuse each other and to divert their attention from the fact that the doors of probation are fast closing.

Satan is standing ready, burning with zeal to inspire the whole confederacy of satanic agencies, that he may cause them to unite with evil men and bring upon the believers of truth speedy and severe suffering. Every unwise word that is uttered through our brethren will be treasured up by the prince of darkness.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Ellen G. White, "God's Standard of Character," *Review and Herald*, 3 May 1898, 565.

<sup>17</sup>Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Review and Herald*, 1 August 1849, 9.

<sup>18</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:295.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 9:11.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 242.

Accusations and suspicions are effective tools, for “the powers of Satan are at work to keep minds diverted from eternal realities. The enemy has arranged matters to suit his own purposes.”<sup>21</sup> In the Western “world, filled with violence, reveling, and drunkenness, [Satan] is converting the Church.”<sup>22</sup> In supernaturalistic societies where fear of evil spiritual forces is greater than the fear of God, Satan uses other methods. Africa is one of the places where Christianity is growing very fast. The devil does not want to lose any of his captives.

Terrible is the struggle that takes place between the forces of good and of evil in important centers where the messengers of truth are called upon to labor. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood,” declares Paul, “but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world” Ephesians 6:12. Till the close of time there will be a conflict between the Church of God and those who are under the control of evil angels.<sup>23</sup>

White asks, “Who can doubt that satanic agencies are at work among men with increasing activity to distract and corrupt the mind, and defile and destroy the body?”<sup>24</sup> The defiling and destroying of the body is what causes so much fear and what leads Christians to go to other satanic agencies to seek protection from the work of the devil. Who can doubt that these agencies work especially hard among church members. White asserts, “Satan holds under his control not a few who pass as friends, and through them he works against its advancement. He employs them to sow tares among the people of God.

---

<sup>21</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:43.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 43–44.

<sup>23</sup>White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 219.

<sup>24</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1905), 143.



Thus when danger was not suspected, great evils have existed among us.”<sup>25</sup> Christians need to know that “the agents of Satan are formidable; we shall meet them and must combat them.”<sup>26</sup> Emmanuel Eni says no matter how we fight them using the Word of God, Satan does not give up. Eni avers, “The trouble is, the devil does not give up. His thoughts are always ‘I may succeed’ but he never does.”<sup>27</sup> Eni concluded his description of the devil’s work with a classic statement saying, “As long as the Christian walks within God’s love and remains in him and does not get entangled with the affairs of this life, the devil can never succeed, no matter how hard he tries.”<sup>28</sup> This particular point is what born-again Christians need to carry with them always.

The Christians who carry devices to ward off evil spiritual powers may very well be agents of Satan in the church sent there for the purpose of leading others to do the same. One will “expect a readiness on the part of bad men to act as Satan suggests; but while our minds are unguarded against Satan’s invisible agents, they will assume new ground, and will work marvels and miracles in our sight.”<sup>29</sup> These miracles, or acts of power, are often meant to create fear or to ward off the devil’s own evil spiritual powers.

The church needs to intentionally teach about the devices Satan uses to trap and ruin people. He “is constantly seeking the ruin of those who are ignorant concerning his

---

<sup>25</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:594.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 5:406.

<sup>27</sup>Eni, *Delivered from Powers of Darkness*, 31.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1930), 61.

devices.”<sup>30</sup> One way Satan does this is to find “willing instruments to do his work.” He purposely selects “ignorant youth [who] play themselves into the hands of Satan for him to use as instruments to lead souls to ruin.”<sup>31</sup> However, “they gain no happiness thereby. They are never contented or at rest. They are dissatisfied, querulous and irritable, unthankful and rebellious.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, church programs should be designed to help young people to say, “I will not turn traitor when God will be most glorified and most honored by my loyalty.”<sup>33</sup>

Satan has agents everywhere, and “these agents he faithfully educates to so disguise sin that he can more successfully destroy souls.”<sup>34</sup> I often wondered how Satan “educates” agents until I came across Emmanuel Eni, who was once involved in witchcraft and that on arriving he “learned of our having a conference with Lucifer-Satan. In this meeting he gave us the following instructions: To fight the believers and not the unbelievers.”<sup>35</sup> So it seems Satan’s agents are especially instructed to cause havoc among Christians. One of the deceptions he uses in my culture is the belief that if nothing evil is happening to non-Christians it is because they carry protective devices, the conclusion being that Christians would be safe if they too carried charms.

---

<sup>30</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:207.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>“White Comments–Revelation,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 981.

<sup>34</sup>White, *Testimonies to the Church*, 5:137.

<sup>35</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 21.

## Double Standards

Satan has also used the policy of double standards with success. “How often is the same policy still employed by the archenemy! He moves upon some unconsecrated heart to kindle envy and strife in the church, and then, taking advantage of the divided condition of God’s people, he stirs up agents to work their ruin.”<sup>36</sup> This again suggests that Satan is the instigator of trouble, and this also harmonizes with the African worldview that attests that when things are falling apart, it is because a human agent is behind it.

## Most Responsible People

Satan’s attacks work best when he begins with the most responsible people in society. For this reason, “the more responsible the position they occupy, the more fierce will be Satan’s attacks; for he knows that if he can move them to take an objectionable course, others will follow their example.”<sup>37</sup> When Christians break Satan’s power and set his captives free, the prince of evil is aroused to contend for the supremacy of his kingdom. This is what happened to Christ. “Satan summoned all his forces, and at every step contested the work of Christ.”<sup>38</sup> Ellen White was also often attacked as Satan caused a lot of pain in her life. Because of these trials, White “looked to the grave as a sweet resting place.”<sup>39</sup> She had enquired why she had been “left to suffer such perplexity of

---

<sup>36</sup>White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 675.

<sup>37</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:426.

<sup>38</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 257.

<sup>39</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:346.

mind.”<sup>40</sup> If a woman of prayer could wish she were in the grave, what about new-born Christians who have just left the ranks of Satan, for Satan will do whatever he can do to get them back.

### Disbelief in a Real Devil

Another method Satan uses is to work “under a disguise.”<sup>41</sup> The “most successful scheme in deceiving man has been to conceal his real purposes . . . by representing himself as a man’s friend and a benefactor.”<sup>42</sup> When Satan “makes another advance move, they will not recognize him as their enemy . . . but they will consider him a friend, one who is doing a good work.”<sup>43</sup> White states: “The enemy is preparing for his last campaign against the church. He has so concealed himself from view that many can hardly believe that he exists, much less can they be convinced of his amazing activity and power.”<sup>44</sup> New Christians are often attacked by Satan and then blame their neighbors for it. To protect themselves from their neighbor’s attacks they seek out protective devices to carry on their bodies.

Satan teaches people “that the existence of a personal devil is all a fiction.”<sup>45</sup> Eni, a recent convert who had served Satan for years, made the same observation when he stated that “the devil would either encourage you to believe that he is a myth or simply

---

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:346.

<sup>42</sup>Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 270.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:294.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

evil thoughts, or would make you see more of his powers and less of the power of God.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, “it is because he has masked himself with consummate skill that it is so widely asked: ‘Does such a being really exist?’”<sup>47</sup> By encouraging people to not believe in a real devil, Satan can control many more people without them even being aware of it. His best disguise is to get Christians blaming their neighbors or other Christians for their day-to-day woes. If he is a myth, then a neighbor must be responsible for the evil that is happening. Ministers of the gospel need to quit teaching that Christians should not believe in the powers of Satan, but they should teach Christians to open “their eyes that they may . . . discern the working of Satan.”<sup>48</sup> The teaching that witchcraft is a myth only strengthens Satan’s devices because it maintains his deceptive disguise and helps him in his work instead of helping Christ.

#### Occult Physicians

Sometimes Christians consult and are treated by occult physicians when they go to a clinic or hospitals. These physicians pretend “to read the life-history and to understand all the difficulties and afflictions of those who resort to him. . . . Pretending great interest in their welfare he casts a spell over his unsuspecting victims, charming them as the serpent charms the trembling bird.”<sup>49</sup> This shows the importance for Christians to know their doctors, for Satan can work through them to cause even more problems.

---

<sup>46</sup>Eni, *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*, 48.

<sup>47</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 517.

<sup>48</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 3:196.

<sup>49</sup>White, *Evangelism*, 607–608.

## **Satan Specializes in Attacking Born-Again Christians**

Satan pays special and primary interest in born-again Christians. White was “shown that Satan’s power is especially exercised upon the people of God.”<sup>50</sup> When African Christians see a lot of evil happening around them, they became afraid. When they see “thousands of poor mortals with deformed, sickly bodies, shattered nerves, and gloomy minds . . . dragging out a miserable existence”<sup>51</sup> they look for the cause, which they believe to be their neighbor, but it is Satan who focuses special attention on them. They say so-and-so has been bewitching so-and-so, not knowing that “Satan is working on the right hand and on the left to obtain vantage ground. He rests not. He is persevering. He is vigilant and crafty to take advantage of every circumstance and turn it to his account in his warfare against the truth and the interests of the kingdom of God.”<sup>52</sup>

Satan often successfully pits neighbor against neighbor, relative against relative, family against family, Christian against Christian. This is one way Satan gains an advantage. The commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves is thrown away. The more Christians suspect and accuse each other, the more successful are Satan’s attacks because the attention, suspicion, and accusations are diverted from Satan to friends, neighbors, and family. Africans, because of their worldview, are quick to blame and accuse each other of what Satan is doing to them. Africans often consider their neighbors as their enemies because their worldview interprets it that way. Satan therefore succeeds, for people who are afraid will go to him through his agents to get protective devices to

---

<sup>50</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:304.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 3:196.

protect themselves from their neighbors. When most Christians are given the opportunity to serve Christ only, they decline and “make a compromise with the powers of darkness.”<sup>53</sup> Instead of watching and praying, Christians relax, but “if our eyes could be opened to discern the fallen angels at work with those who feel at ease and consider themselves safe, we would not feel so secure.”<sup>54</sup> Africans suspect each other of witchcraft and accuse each other for what these angels are doing, for “evil angels are upon our track every moment.”<sup>55</sup>

To move beyond the cultural ways, Christians need to be active in prayer at every opportunity. The day White wrote “Satan is upon our track,”<sup>56</sup> January 3, 1875, she was just getting up from a hospital sickbed. “She had been sick with severe influenza, and confined to her room and bed for one week, till the physicians at the Health Institute had become anxious in her case.”<sup>57</sup> If White had been a Kamba, family members would have been out looking for the person who caused the influenza. In addition, the native healers would have been making money by preparing a protective device for her to carry in her pocket until she died in the hands of Satan. This is what Satan does to born-again Christians, for when Satan is not mentioned as people look for the cause of their problems, some innocent nearby person is accused.

While people are busy accusing each other, Satan’s agents are busy attacking

---

<sup>53</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 3:196.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 1:302.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 3:570.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

those people because the accusations open doors for Satan to enter into their lives. If Satan is not present at the moment, his agents are. It is clear that “the work of Satan will be carried out through agents.”<sup>58</sup> Satan “would bring reproach upon the work of God by setting brother against brother, and bringing in the elements of suspicion and evil surmising.”<sup>59</sup>

“Satan himself is converted, after the order of things,” and “as spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare.”<sup>60</sup> Through the “immortality of the soul . . . Satan will bring the people under his deceptions.”<sup>61</sup> This is another problem area for Kamba Christians, for it is common for a Kamba to go to church in the morning and if a need arises to communicate with a dead relative or visit a medium. This is not believed to be a sin since many denominations teach the immortality of the soul. One sin leads to the next, with too many victims returning home with protective devices in their pockets. This dual allegiance is widespread as people serve two masters.

### **Evil Angels at Work**

The enemies of Daniel believed that being thrown into the lions’ den would create the most fear and force Daniel to compromise his faith. Daniel’s enemies and perhaps even Daniel himself did not see who was behind the whole scheme. “In the conspiracy

---

<sup>58</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 3:571.

<sup>59</sup>Ellen G. White, “A Letter,” *Pacific Union Recorder*, 6 May 1909, 260.

<sup>60</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 588.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.



thus formed, Satan had played an important part.”<sup>62</sup> People might have reasons to be suspicious of their neighbors yet completely overlook the fact that they are only agents of Satan. Evil angels were the originators of the scheme to put Daniel in the lions’ den. “Evil angels feared that his [Daniel’s] influence would weaken their control over its rulers. It was these satanic agencies who had stirred the princes to envy and jealousy; it was they who had inspired the plan for Daniels’ destruction; and the princes, yielding themselves as instruments of evil, carried it into effect.”<sup>63</sup>

Africans are correct in suspecting family members and neighbors for their misfortunes, but to react by accusing neighbors reveals a tragic ignorance of the work of evil spirits. Behind the neighbors, evil spiritual forces are at work. When Satan works from behind the scenes and pushes human agents forward to accomplish evil, the sad part is that Christians who are under attack will go to other agents of Satan to receive protection. An African Christian in Daniel’s place would have gone to the Babylonian magicians to look for solutions.

It has been said all over Africa, “Satan has got no free lunch.” The Bible says, “And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces whenever they came at the bottom of the den” (Dan 6:24).

These agents had spread the rumor that Daniel was untouched by the lions because they were so full that they did not eat him. Perhaps the king wanted to test their

---

<sup>62</sup>White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings*, 540.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

theory, so he threw the princes, their wives, and children into the lions' den. In total, four hundred lives were torn into shreds and eaten that day.

### **Satan Uses Christians of Great Integrity**

Satan fears to see people of spiritual power and integrity placed in positions of power because of the great positive influence they wield over others. He fears their ability to evangelize others. Satan's agencies "are especially active when the truth is proclaimed before men of repute and sterling integrity."<sup>64</sup> Therefore, Satan seeks to recruit highly placed, professional Christians as his agents. He "is most successful when he can use professed Christians for his Satanic work. And the greater their influence, the more elevated their position, the more knowledge they profess of God and His service, the more successfully can he use them."<sup>65</sup> This is the method that he loves the most because of its assured success. Can Christians be agents of Satan, and even sorcerers? The answer unfortunately is Yes. Satan often employs Christians who are poor examples in order to lead people back to him and to bring others with them.

When Satan attacks, Christians are advised to fight against Satan, not their fellow Christians and neighbors. This is because Satan himself is "working in every Church to spoil the flock of God. He seeks to lead brother to think evil of brother and in this way he causes a great deal of grief and pain."<sup>66</sup> Setting brother against brother and sister against sister has worked best for Satan, so it is doubtful he will abandon this method until

---

<sup>64</sup>White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 167.

<sup>65</sup>White, *Testimonies to the Church*, 3:137.

<sup>66</sup>White, "A Letter," *Pacific Union Recorder*, 6 May 1909, 260.

human beings really understand his approach. He is now “rallying his forces to contend with the advancing work. He would bring reproach upon the work of God by setting brother against brother, and bringing in the elements of suspicion and evil surmising.”<sup>67</sup> Suspecting others of witchcraft works well in African villages. Christian converts often experience difficulties from every side. They wonder why things started falling apart in their lives when they became Christians when before nothing was happening. They begin to suspect neighbors, they mention names, private accusations begin to take root. Even though their suspicions may be correct, yet the methods they use to diagnose their problems are wrong. If they could concentrate on knowing God’s ways, they would realize that “no man [or woman] can serve God without uniting against himself evil men [and women] and evil angels,”<sup>68</sup> and they would know that “evil spirits will be put upon the track of every soul that seeks to join the ranks of Christ, for Satan wishes to recover the prey taken from his grasp.”<sup>69</sup> Christians need to realize that what Satan has put in their way comes with the territory when they join Christ’s side. Understanding that they are in a battle would keep them from seeking other means of protection.

Bad things happen to Christians that cause fear to those who are watching. Satan and his angels are busy working to make it to look like Christians are harming each other, because Satan uses their belief system. He “is at work even among the people of God, to

---

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:595.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

cause disunion.”<sup>70</sup> Satan knows that God’s people have more power over him when they are united. Suspecting and accusing each other is one of Satan’s principal ways to break their unity. White exclaimed, “Oh, that this blindness might pass away, and men and women understand the work that Satan is accomplishing.

### **Mediums in the Church**

Less prayerful and none committed Christians, like Saul, sometimes consult mediums when they are in distress. The role mediums played in Ukambani before Christianity came is not the same role they play today. Before Christianity came, they were “spiritual guides.” These days their purpose is to keep Christians detached from Christ. The best way they do this is to reveal events of the past and accurately predict the future. This causes fear among Christians and increases respect for mediums. A primary purpose of mediums is to oppose Christ.

Those who have bitterly opposed the truth of God, Satan uses as his mediums. To such he will appear in the assumed person and garb of another, it may be a friend of the medium. He will increase their faith by using the words of their friend and relating circumstances which are about to take place or which have really taken place and of which the medium knew nothing. Sometimes previous to a death or an accident he gives a dream or, personating another, converses with the medium, even imparting knowledge by means of his suggestions.<sup>71</sup>

When a medium gives information about an impending death and it happens as predicted, that information causes a lot of fear in a community that then advertises the medium’s accuracy. This kind of accuracy also creates questions among Christians, and “some of these professed Christians have yielded themselves into the hands of Satan and

---

<sup>70</sup>Ellen G. White, “Come Out from Among them, And Be Ye Separate,” *Review and Herald*, 2 January 1900, 138.

<sup>71</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 2:172.

have become his instruments.”<sup>72</sup> The medium works in a way that “unbelief creeps in and fastens its grasp upon minds that would have wholly accepted the truth.”<sup>73</sup> In places where these mediums are at work it becomes a “special purpose of Satan to pour upon and around the servants of God’s choice, troubles, perplexities, and opposition, so that they will be hindered in their work and if possible, discouraged.”<sup>74</sup> The end result is that even some of God’s servants end up consulting mediums. White states, “Satan urges men into places where God does not require them to go, and presents Scripture to justify his suggestions.”<sup>75</sup> These people in turn influence others who often focus on born-again Christians because this is the primary target of Satan. Satan’s agents “will come to men who have the truth as Satan came to Christ, tempting them to manifest their power and work miracles, and give evidence of their being favored of God, and of being the people who have the truth.”<sup>76</sup> When people face extreme difficulties, Satan himself comes in a form of a human being.

He [Satan] sometimes comes in the form of a lovely young person, or a beautiful shadow. He works cures, and is worshiped by deceived mortals as a benefactor of our race. . . . Thousands are conversing with, and receiving instructions from this demon-god, and acting according to his teachings. The world, which is supposed to be benefitted so much by phrenology and animal magnetism, never was so corrupt. Satan uses these very things to destroy virtue and lay the foundation of spiritualism.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:203.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 3:343.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 3:482.

<sup>76</sup>Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), 604.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

The Christians in Ephesus were right in burning their magic books, although their action shows that they were probably Christian witches and that they practiced dual allegiance. They went to church on Sabbath but at home they had books on magic and perhaps even practiced magic itself. They were christo-pagans similar to Christian preachers and laymen today who engage in syncretistic practices. In Ephesus they burned their magic books and made an open change:

Facts which had previously been concealed were now brought to light. In accepting Christianity, some of the believers had not fully renounced their superstition. To some extent they still continued the practice of magic. . . . By burning their books on magic, the Ephesian converts showed that the things in which they once delighted they now abhorred. It was by and through magic that they had especially offended God and imperiled their souls; and it was against magic that they showed such indignation. Thus they gave evidence of true conversion.<sup>78</sup>

White shows that Paul ended his preaching in Ephesus by stressing that dualism was totally unacceptable before God. God, therefore, condemns dualism. “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph 5:11).

However, this does not mean that there are no people in the church who still continue to practice dualism. Satan “continued to present to men, as he presented to the angels, his false representation of Christ and of God, and he has won the world to his side. Even the professedly Christian churches have taken sides with the first great apostate.”<sup>79</sup> The main reason Satan works through churches is because he has a following there and it is there he is “determined to spare no pains to destroy as many as possible of the creatures whom God had . . . manifested . . . such forgiving love and pity.”<sup>80</sup> It is in

---

<sup>78</sup>White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 288.

<sup>79</sup>“White Comments–Revelation,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:973.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 7:974.

the church where Satan uses “every species of deception by which he [man] might be lost,” and for this reason he is pursuing people with determination “because of his own hopeless condition.”<sup>81</sup>

Sometimes one wonders if the Kamba born-again Christian is not his own worst enemy. Satan succeeds in getting people to believe something, then after that he takes over. White suggests that “sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here.”<sup>82</sup> When individual are sick, all they know is to take drugs and to blame their neighbors for the sickness. They fail to understand that “Satan is the originator of disease; and the physician is warring against his work and power.”<sup>83</sup> So the place to begin the healing process by defeating Satan is through prayer in Christ.

### **Traitor**

A person carrying a protective device while claiming to be a Christian can be classified as a traitor. Ministers, church elders, deacons, and deaconesses carry them. White used the correct language by stating that “when a man who is counted worthy to fill a position of trust in one of our institutions or in a mission, betrays his trust and gives himself into the hands of Satan as an instrument of unrighteousness, to sow the seeds of evil, he is a traitor of the worst type.”<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup>“White Comments–Revelation,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:973.

<sup>82</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:444.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, 5:443–444.

<sup>84</sup>Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 365–366.

A few members can mislead and cause unbelief and unnecessary fear. These traitors furnish “the Lord’s enemies with material to use in their warfare upon His people.”<sup>85</sup> One traitor in a position of leadership can sway an amazingly large number of people. White makes this point clear when she asserts that “the traitors had done their work. If only the two men had brought the evil report, and all the ten had encouraged them to possess the land in the name of the Lord, they would still have taken the advice of the two in preference to the ten, because of their wicked unbelief.”<sup>86</sup> This means that in matters of faith, all church members should speak with one voice in their commitment to biblical truth.

By not speaking with one voice it only takes one leading family to use protective devices and many families follow suit. Giving in to evil while one is a church member is enmity with God. “The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas 4:4). Thus, Christians can be church members while at the same time continuing to be the worst enemies of God.

In Israel it was these “traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan.”<sup>87</sup> Some of the traitors receive instructions directly from Satan, and some do not even know that they are serving Satan. Both categories achieve the same end.

Most of the fear of evil spiritual forces in churches is caused by Christians who have refused the whole truth from God. Some Seventh-day Adventists are in this

---

<sup>85</sup>White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings*, 675.

<sup>86</sup>White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 390.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 459.



category. Working for God while purposely carrying the powers of evil in their pockets may produce results, but the results are not from God but from Satan. White was shown that

some of the professed Adventists who had rejected the present truth, while preaching, praying, or in conversation used mesmerism to gain adherents, and the people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost. And even some that used it, were so far in the darkness and the deception of the devil, that they thought it was the power of God given them to exercise.<sup>88</sup>

Their activities were to some degree “affecting the bodies of some of the saints; those that they could not deceive and draw away from the truth by a satanic influence.”<sup>89</sup> Christians who fear God are affected and influenced by those Christians who do not fear God. Christians who do not carry protective devices are often, in one way or another, affected by those who carry them.

Ministers of the gospel become traitors, fully aware of what they are doing. Those who carry devices are known, although they think that no one knows. Christ asserted, “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house tops” (Luke 12:2-3). White also avers, “Unless they are sanctified by the truth they proclaim to believe, they will raise their converts no higher than their own standard. It is seldom that a people rise higher than their minister.”<sup>90</sup> Ministers who have fallen into the tragedy of

---

<sup>88</sup>Ellen G. White, “Dear Brethren and Sisters,” *Review and Herald*, 1 August 1849, 9.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

<sup>90</sup>Ellen G. White, “Co-Workers with Christ,” *Review and Herald*, 30 July 1901, 321.

carrying devices, and still continue to do Christ's ministry, are used directly by Satan as agents. White saw that Satan "was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth, and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that they might be damned."<sup>91</sup>

### **Arguments and Discussions**

People wonder why so many are easily tempted to visit and to commune with agents of evil powers when the Scripture is so plain on these matters. Talking with these agents and traitors may result in the Christian being lost to Satanism. White suggests that it is because Christians venture to argue with Satan that causes them to be tempted. She advises, "Bear in mind that it is none but God that can hold an argument with Satan."<sup>92</sup> A new convert is always a target of evil spiritual powers as Satan seeks to claim that soul back. White admonishes Christians to avoid any type of secret conversation with Satanic powers. "Always keep aloof from secret science. If the mind is once open to this evil, Satan has the mastery. . . . Flee from this unequal conflict. Let it ever be our individual care to keep clear of Satan's mysterious devisings. . . . [Because], human infirmity, I am instructed, will not be able to resist the devil."<sup>93</sup> Thus any contact or argument with those whom Satan uses, secretly or openly, may damage a born-again Christian.

It seems it is easy for born-again Christians to carry protective devices on their body after engaging in an argument with Satan's agents or traitors. The reason behind

---

<sup>91</sup>Ellen G. White, "Dear Brothers and Sisters," *Review and Herald*, 1 August 1849, 9.

<sup>92</sup>Ellen G. White, "Correct Views Concerning the Testimonies: A Reply to an Inquirer," *Review and Herald*, 6 September 1906, 271.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

this is that Satan himself is interested in subverting Christians. He and his angels make sure that they are present to give thoughts and practical ideas to their agents to make sure that Christians give in to their temptations. Writing about a certain Mr. Hull who went to argue the truth with evil spirits, a man the Satanists feared and was causing damage to Satan's kingdom, she wrote, "Already I saw a cloud of evil angels surrounding you, and you at perfect ease among them. Satan has been telling you a pleasing story about an easier way than to be in constant warfare with conflicting spirits; but choose that way, and in the end you will find that you will have a heavy and fearful toll to pay."<sup>94</sup>

To evangelize agents of Satan is safer for a group than for an individual. Any arguments with Satanists should be avoided. Mr. Hull thought that he was prepared to take them on even without the necessary preparation. White admonished:

Satan has looked on and witnessed the heavy blow Bro. Hull has dealt to Spiritualism in Battle Creek. Spiritualists have understood his organization, and felt assured it would not be in vain to make a determined effort to overthrow him who injured their cause so much. In discussing with Spiritualists you have not merely to meet the man and his arguments, but Satan and his angels. . . . If the cause of God really demands that Satan and his host be confronted through a spirit medium, if enough is at stake to call for such a discussion, then one should never go forth alone, but several together, that with prayer and faith the host of darkness may be driven back, and the speaker shielded by angels that excel in strength.<sup>95</sup>

Satan and his host of evil angels rejoice when people play into their hands, thinking that they can rely on Bible-based arguments to win. Like Balaam, instead of converting, he was converted to their cause. When born-again Christians argue with Satan, a huge host appear "to remove from . . . [them] everything of a spiritual nature, and

---

<sup>94</sup>Ellen G. White, "Communications to Elder M. Hull," *Review and Herald*, 19 January 1864, 63.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, 63.

in the place of the precious graces of Christ to crowd . . . [their] hearts with evil traits of the carnal nature.”<sup>96</sup> White’s advice on this point is that Christians should not “get into controversy with those who are adept at warfare of this kind.”<sup>97</sup> Born-again Christians will find Satan right inside the church. While suspicion is to be avoided, Christians need to note that “the members of the church will have to meet the seducing arts of the enemy. [And] they will be assailed by the representatives of Satan.”<sup>98</sup>

Doubts play a major role in inviting Satan into one’s life. White was clear about this point when she asserted that “by indulging in doubts and unbelief, [you] have attracted evil angels around you, and driven from you the holy and pure angels of God.”<sup>99</sup> Satan has used this principle for centuries. He observes carefully the kind of vice one is interested in. Then he begins his work slowly until the person is trapped. With Judas, “the love of mammon overbalanced his love for Christ. Through becoming the slave of one vice he gave himself to Satan, to be driven to any lengths in sin.”<sup>100</sup> When Satan saw Judas’s doubts and unbelief, he “entered . . . into Judas’s surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them” (Luke 22:3-4).

When people carry protective paraphernalia into the church sanctuary, it is a sign

---

<sup>96</sup>White, “Come Out from Among Them, and Be Ye Separate,” 137.

<sup>97</sup>Ellen G. White, “A Sin-Pardoning Savior,” *Pacific Union Recorder*, 8 December 1904, 159.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>White, “Communications to Elder M. Hull,” 63.

<sup>100</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 716.

that Satan has entered them. The angels of God are limited in what they can do among those who have opened themselves up for destruction by Satan. It is never too late for such people to turn back to Christ. White says such people “are in Satan’s easy chair, and do not see . . . [their] fearful condition and make an effort. If you do not arouse, and recover yourself from the snare of the Devil, you must perish.”<sup>101</sup> Christians who carry paraphernalia open themselves to spiritual warfare. The good angels want to come back and provide company and security, while Satan and his angels move in and prepare to dominate the victim. Ellen G. White says,

I saw that angels of God were looking sorrowfully toward you. They had left your side, and were turning mournfully away, while Satan and his angels were grinning in exultation over you. If you had battled with your doubts yourself, and not encouraged the Devil to tempt you, by talking out your unbelief, and loving to dwell upon it, you would not have attracted the fallen angels about you in such numbers.<sup>102</sup>

A person who has no protection from angels is at the mercy of Satan. Should Satan and his evil angels strike this person with a disaster, the Kamba worldview would set in. The person would believe that someone in the village was responsible and would have to pay for it. Somebody had bewitched him. And if the whole family started to have problems, then they would most likely all seek protection from the devil through a witch doctor. The question is, Does the paraphernalia from Satan and his angels received through a witch doctor protect individuals from Satan and his angels? Do evil powers protect individuals from evil powers? The answer is an obvious, no. The very evil powers that people go to for protection are the same evil powers that lead people to destroy themselves.

---

<sup>101</sup>White, “Communications to Elder M. Hull,” 65.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

## God's Antidote to Fear

Christians wonder why things fall apart in their lives. They are perplexed at unusual happenings around them. The thoughts of protecting themselves from witches creep in. Consultation with friends will usually lead to the suggestion that they need devices for protection. White narrates what is happening around a Christian:

I saw evil angels contending for souls, and angels of God resisting them. The conflict was severe. Evil angels were corrupting the atmosphere with their poisonous influence, and crowding about these souls to stupefy their sensibilities. Holy angels were anxiously watching and waiting to drive back Satan's host. But it is not the work of good angels to control the minds of men against their will. If they yield to the enemy, and make no effort to resist him, then the angels of God can do but little more than hold in check the host of Satan, that they shall not destroy, until further light be given to those in peril, to move them to arouse and look to heaven for help. Jesus will not commission holy angels to extricate those who make no effort to help themselves. . . . And when the individual is aroused to his danger, and, with distress and fervor, looks to Jesus for strength, Satan fears that he will lose a captive, and he calls a reinforcement of his angels to hedge in the poor soul, and form a wall of darkness around him, that heaven's light may not reach him. But if the one in danger perseveres, and in his helplessness casts himself upon the merits of the blood of Christ, our Savior listens to the earnest prayer of faith, and sends a reinforcement of those angels that excel in strength to deliver him. Satan cannot endure to have his powerful rival appealed to. . . . He continues to call legions of evil angels to accomplish his object.<sup>103</sup>

Ellen White says the battle with Satan does not end, it is constant. While the battle is going on, some type of damage may be done. The imprints of Satan might be remarkably visible after his legions are done with the victim. The Bible makes it clear that "he that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (Eccl 10:8). "Digging a pit" may be creating an atmosphere for temptation and "breaking an hedge" may be the sin itself, and the serpent is Satan and his legions. A careless Christian yielding to temptations to sin may be damaged by Satan and his legions

---

<sup>103</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:345–346.

in such a way that neighbors will start seeking protection from bewitchment, thinking that so-and-so bewitched so-and-so. This is when most Christians seek protection from evil spiritual forces. Seeking protection means that a Christian is protecting himself from Satan using Satan's tools. This is a sure way for Satan to win the battle and to ultimately destroy the victim.

People do not realize that the reason things fall apart is because they love God, so Satan attacks to try to win them back to his side. Satan does not wage war on his people the way he wages war on God's people. With God's people, the attacks are planned in an organized way and are constant. However, at the resurrection of Jesus, Satan "was bitterly angry when his angels fled at the approach of the heavenly messenger."<sup>104</sup> If Satan's angels flee after seeing the angels of God, then why would Christians not know this and be content with God as their protector. This is the problem with too many Kamba Christians: They do not realize how powerful God's protection and care is.

The Scripture states, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers. . . . And who is he that will harm them, if ye be followers of that which is good" (1 Pet 3:12-13). God's people do not have to be aware of what the devil is doing "so long as they continued in obedience to His law, no power in earth or hell could prevail against them."<sup>105</sup> "The followers of Christ know little of the plots which Satan and his hosts are forming against them."<sup>106</sup> They may not need to know because

---

<sup>104</sup>White, *The Desire of Ages*, 782.

<sup>105</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 529.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 528.

“angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about them.”<sup>107</sup> When the devil rages one needs to remember that “the Lord is a refuge for all who put their trust in him. He bids them hide in Him for a little moment, until the indignation shall be over.”<sup>108</sup> Therefore, the fear of evil spiritual forces should have no standing among God’s people.

White was confronted by a physician who practiced mesmerism or hypnotism.

Her experience should be an encouragement to those who trust in God.

A physician, who was a celebrated mesmerizer, told me that my views were mesmerism, and that I was a very easy subject, and that he could mesmerize me and give me a vision. I told him that the Lord had shown me in a vision that mesmerism was from the devil, from the bottomless pit, and that it would soon go there, with those who continued to use it. I then gave him liberty to mesmerize me if he could. He tried for more than half an hour, resorting to different operations, and then gave it up.<sup>109</sup>

This is one contemporary illustration that shows that no matter how the devil tries, he will find that God’s people are not subject to his evil manipulations. On the other hand, playing with evil powers removes one from God’s protection. Especially when one has been a Christian for a long time.

---

<sup>107</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 517.

<sup>108</sup>“White Comments–Revelation,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:967.

<sup>109</sup>Ellen G. White, “Experience and Views,” *Review and Herald*, 21 July 1851, 13.



## Ellen White's Suggestions on Dealing with Fear

Those who shun evil “may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our redeemer.”<sup>110</sup> However, White warns that “there must be a living connection with God, that we may have spiritual eyesight to discern the wickedness which is in a most artful and secret manner creeping into our midst through those who make a profession of our faith.”<sup>111</sup> It is not that most people do not know the difference between the power of God and the power of Satan. Too many only harden their hearts because they want to maintain a connection with both powers because of the perceived benefits they think they can receive from both. Saul, who stands as an example for many born-again Christians, knew he was on dangerous ground. “Saul knew that in this last act of consulting the witch of Endor, he cut the last shred which held him to God. He knew that if he had not before willfully separated himself from God, this act sealed that separation, and made it final. He had made an agreement with death, and a covenant with hell.”<sup>112</sup> Satan has one objective, “that they may, in their rebellion against God, learn of him, and by thus doing, sever the last link which would hold them to God.”<sup>113</sup> People are protected while in the presence of God, but, when they leave God and begin to seek help from Satan, they know what they have done. Satan will protect a soul against Satanic forces until the time when he is sure that soul cannot go back to God, then he plans its destruction. However, when

---

<sup>110</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 517.

<sup>111</sup>White, *Testimony Treasures*, 33.

<sup>112</sup>“White, Comments—1 Samuel,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:1022.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*

the soul makes it its habit at any time to go back and commune with God, “the power of the evil one is broken; for Satan cannot abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God.”<sup>114</sup>

Christians need to be assured that “angels are belting the world, refusing Satan his claims to supremacy, made because of the vast multitude of his adherents.”<sup>115</sup> Belting the world means angels are protecting God’s people. “We hear not the voices, we see not with the natural sight the work of these angels, but their hands are linked about the world, and with sleepless vigilance they are keeping the armies of Satan at bay till the sealing of God’s people shall be accomplished.”<sup>116</sup> Fearing Satan and his evil forces is therefore a way of rejecting God and His protection. Those who come to church wearing devices because they fear Satan need to be condemned, because “the Church of God is a living witness, a continual testimony, to convince men if accepted, to condemn them if resisted and rejected.”<sup>117</sup> However, before giving the condemning part of the message there needs to be a new emphasis on God’s protection and care. A person is more inclined to follow Satan because he has been his “captive and is naturally inclined to follow his suggestions and to do his bidding.”<sup>118</sup> Like the Ephesians who burned their books after Paul re-presented the message with power, God’s true power ministry needs to be presented to church members and particularly to African Christians.

---

<sup>114</sup>“White Comments–James,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:937.

<sup>115</sup>“White Comments–Revelation,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:967.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:294.

Marrying a person from a denomination that adheres to the teaching of the immortality of the soul sets up a born-again Christian for temptations. “It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell.”<sup>119</sup> A Christian associating with wrong company “will only constantly sink lower and lower.”<sup>120</sup> “Satan studies every indication of the frailty of human nature, he marks the sins which each individual is inclined to commit, and then he takes care that opportunities shall not be wanting to gratify the tendency to evil.”<sup>121</sup> Since many Africans in all walks of life are scared of witchcraft, Satan makes sure that opportunities for protection are available and by so doing causes many Christians to fall. White suggests that associations which create avenues to the soul should be blocked.

Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random on every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest . . . or all evils without, will awaken all evils within, and the soul will wonder in darkness.<sup>122</sup>

Speaking about one’s problems out loud is what Satan likes to hear. He plants his evil angels around Christians to hear what they say. Then those words are taken by Satan and used against the Christian. “Satan has his evil angels around us; and though they cannot read men’s thoughts, they closely watch their words and actions. Satan takes

---

<sup>119</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 555.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

<sup>122</sup>White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 518.

advantage of the weaknesses and defects of character that are thus revealed, and presses his temptations where there is least power of resistance.”<sup>123</sup> Since Satan knows that Africans fear witchcraft more than they fear God, he has made this his primary tool by providing his solutions to their fears. The agencies of Satan who are often family members or church members are the ones who urge compromise. Satan knows that “association with worldly-minded men and women dims the spiritual perception.”<sup>124</sup>

Accusations and counter accusations occur among Kamba Christians suspecting each other of bewitchment when something evil happens to a neighbor. White advises, “Do not devise evil one against another. . . . Do not harbor suspicion against your brethren and sisters. This is one of the most successful ways in which Satan works to alienate the hearts of those who should be doing God’s service.”<sup>125</sup> Satan loves to see suspicion in the church where he himself “pretends to be very religious. He finds this the most effective way of carrying on the work he began in heaven.”<sup>126</sup> When Satan plays this game for the souls of born-again Christians “he is succeeding in a way surprising even to himself.”<sup>127</sup> This in part is due to failure by Christians to part with their non-biblical worldview in order to embrace a new biblically shaped worldview. White

---

<sup>123</sup>Ellen G. White, “Humility and Faithfulness in Labors,” *Review and Herald*, 8 April 1884, 227-228.

<sup>124</sup>Ellen G. White, “Be Separate (Concluded),” *Review and Herald*, 27 November 1894, 737.

<sup>125</sup>Ellen G. White, “A Letter,” *Pacific Union Recorder*, 6 May 1909, 260.

<sup>126</sup>Ellen G. White, “A Present Help in Every Time of Trouble,” *Review and Herald*, 16 July 1901, 451.

<sup>127</sup>*Ibid.*

asserts, “The wrong customs, practices, and theories of the world are to find no recognition in the life of the one who has chosen to be on the Lord’s side.”<sup>128</sup> When African Christians continue to hold on to their old cultural ways, they “have engaged in lines of work that have corrupted their sense of honor.”<sup>129</sup>

### **Implications for Kamba Christians**

White’s writings give excellent advice for dealing with the fear of evil spiritual forces in a supernaturalistic world. She challenges the fear in the most practical ways possible.

First, she writes about the angels who excel in strength ready to defend a single Christian. The Christian is not allowed by God to see the battle in progress, he or she is only allowed to believe. In the case of a backslider, the angels watch the individual being defeated by the angels of Satan, while waiting for him to make a decision to repent so that they can defend him. Meanwhile while waiting for the person to repent, great damage may be caused by these evil angels.

Second, a true born-again Christian does not need to fear any evil power because these angels who excel in strength do not leave his or her side while the person is walking with God. This knowledge of protection by God’s angels is what is lacking in many Christians. If born-again Christians could be assured of this, they would not need to seek protection from elsewhere. They would let the old worldview source of protection die

---

<sup>128</sup>Ellen G. White, “An Example of Faithfulness–No. 2,” *Review and Herald* 9 May 1899, 289.

<sup>129</sup>White, “An Example of Faithfulness-No. 2,” 288-289.

out.

Third, it is now clear that Satan has his agents and traitors right in the church. It is also easy to start pointing fingers and accusing people. False accusations should be avoided, although it does not take long before peoples' actions and sins are known. People are known by their fruits. Spiritual things are spiritually known; for this reason it may not take long before an agent/traitor is discovered.

Fourth, White clearly brings out one point when she says that a mesmerizer may not succeed in mesmerizing a born-again Christian. She told one to try it on her and he failed. This may lead to the next point that it is not that easy to curse, bewitch, or use evil powers on a Christian. If a born-again Christian is bewitched, then there very likely is something spiritually wrong with that born-again Christian. There is no reason for God to permit evil powers to be practiced on a born-again Christian unless the Christian gives some invitation. In such a situation God allows Satan to try.

Fifth, arguments with mediums, witch doctors, soothsayers, and spiritists will only damage a Christian. White suggests that if such is to be done it has to be done by a group and after much prayer. The example she gave of the man who became a medium instead is not a new one. Balaam did the same thing. Consultation with witch doctors by born-again Christians produces "born-again witches." Like Balaam, they become terrible agents of the devil in the church. Among the Kamba, people associate a lot due to the nature of their culture. For this reason a Kamba Christian must learn to defend Christ without involving himself/herself in an argument.

Sixth, due to the nature of the Kamba worldview, all Christians must believe and preach about the existence of a real devil and expose his methods of work. It has been

preached for a long time that Christians should not believe in the devil, allowing his methods to work to remain hidden. He likes Christians to believe that he is a fictitious character. White makes this point clear that the fiction part is what has allowed the devil to succeed for a long time. Africans have taught for many years that talking about the devil from the pulpit is giving Satan glory. White advocates that this worldview should be reversed. We should preach that Satan specializes in attacking Christians.

Seventh, Kamba Christians must stop suspecting each other, thereby forcing Satan to reduce his attacks on them. White states that while these accusations are going on, Satan and his agents go to work with success because when Christians blame each other they are uncovered and unprotected.

Eighth, Christians need to stick to the Bible only. The belief in the immortality of the soul has been preached in Kamba churches for a long time. This belief did not oppose the Kamba worldview. Many Christians do not see anything wrong with such a worldview, and so, like the Ephesians, they have continued in their old worldview. A worldview may not be burned, like the Ephesians burned their books, but ways need to be found through the Scriptures to change those aspects of the Kamba worldview that go against biblical principles.

Ninth, White makes her point that Christians have nothing to fear unless they have opened the door of attack through sin. A sinning Christian has no protection from God. In fact, White quotes Scripture saying, "He that diggeth a pit shall fall in to it; and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (Eccl 10:8). While in the process of obeying God and repenting, Satan cannot touch a Christian.

The tenth point touches on the contemporary Pentecostal worldview. While we

cannot hear angels' voices, or see them with our natural eyes, the angels of God keep a "sleepless vigilance" linked together to protect all God-fearing Christians. This is how they keep the "armies of Satan at bay."

Lastly, White warns against hearing from or associating with the ungodly. The mind will constantly sink lower and lower by listening to un-biblical stories from reputable people in society. Marrying outside one's faith is a good example. Watching and listening to successful motivational stories of how people protect themselves from Satan is another way. Unconverted parents who wish to protect their children with satanic devices is another way one may be defiled.

The next chapter will be the conclusion of all the chapters and then recommendations on how to handle and confront evil spiritual powers.



## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Conclusion**

This research aimed to find whether there is cause for fear of evil spiritual forces. As was pointed out, luke-warm Christians or Christians who live compromised lives by acting like a Christian while continuing to seek protection from non-biblical sources do have reason to fear. However, committed Christians have no reason to be afraid of any evil beings or forces. A Christian is fully covered with the whole armor of God. The material did not support the idea that all Christians are protected. A non-prayerful Christian is open to attacks from Satanic powers while a prayerful Christian is covered by a white robe of righteousness.

Throughout the whole dissertation there was one common element or requirement for God's people: obedience to the Word of God. "And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochin, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt and have brought you unto the land. . . . And ye make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?" (Judg 2:1-4). God seems to be saying that if his people obey what He tells them He will take care of those things which bother them. However, few seem to heed His Word. Therefore, He distances Himself.

When God's people sin by worshiping evil spiritual powers, which is contrary to the Word of God, that type of sin may not be forgiven. The sin of Manasseh of introducing sorcerers, wizards, and witches for consultation led Israel so deep into sin that no reformation could eradicate the wrath of God. Association with evil powers to the extent of worshiping them can lead to a point of no return. Even though Josiah introduced reformation in the nation, that did not change God's heart.

The above point leads me to conclude that once God's people have become involved in the worship of evil spiritual powers, changing back to worship the true God becomes almost impossible no matter how much evidence is available. Moses demonstrated through the plagues that God was a powerful God. The magicians gave up the competition but refused to turn to the true God. Pharaoh refused to be converted to the Supreme God.

In the New Testament, another good example is given on the importance of complete commitment to Jesus Christ. Nine apostles failed to deliver a young lad from demonic possession simply because they had lost their focus. Instead of focusing on Christ and the ministry, they focused on jealousy. Jesus had taken three disciples to the mountain with Him, leaving the others behind. The question of who was the greatest was bothering them. With their spiritual life out of focus, they engaged in a battle with Satan and failed. Thus, when God's people battle with evil spiritual forces they need focus and preparation.

The writings of Ellen G. White also provide deep insights into the current activities of both evil and good angels. If Mrs. White's writings on the subject were available to church members, the fear of evil spiritual forces would lessen. She agrees

that Satan tempts people as he did Adam and Eve. However, throughout her writings she makes a very strong point: A God-fearing person cannot be touched by demonic powers. Such a person is fully protected from evil powers. God's angels protect from the attacks of evil angels and demons. The devil knows that the only way to attack a Christian is to get him or her involved in breaking the ten commandments.

Evil spiritual powers have used suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, and division among believers to allow the agents of Satan to do their work.

The fear that Kamba people have of evil spiritual powers is based on the Kamba worldview that when a disaster strikes, a neighbor or someone else must have used evil spiritual powers to cause the problem. This worldview value is a part of the Kamba culture and, unfortunately, both Christians and non-Christians still believe this way. A major cause for this fear is that the biblical teachings did not challenge that fear because both Protestants and Catholics taught the immortality of the soul. According to the Kamba worldview, one's ancestors (dead people) can come back at any time to avenge the wrongs done to others or to them when they were alive. This also means that evil people could use the dead to do evil to others.

By not talking about this belief or by not offering biblical solutions, Satan has continued to create fear in the hearts of people. Another factor that impacts Kamba people is that Christians have taught that witchcraft is not real and that Christians should not believe in witchcraft. This has caused the fear and the activities attached to it to go unchallenged. Denial of witchcraft has forced many to hide their fears and seek protection in non-biblical ways.

It seems that witchcraft is feared more than God Himself, so most Christians would do whatever it takes to avert this fear. There is no limit to what they can do. At the same time, they love God so much that they will do whatever it takes to be in church. They seek to fulfill all the requirements to qualify for heaven, but behind it all is a terrifying fear. They do not know how to deal with the fear because it is still an integrated part of their worldview. This type of dualism has been forced on them by fear. Darkness and light live side by side. Many Christians live with this kind of dualism all their lives.

But there is a biblical solution. John asserts that “ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (John 4:4). Christians do not need to seek protection from satanic sources because they are already protected from inside. The Holy Spirit lives within. Paul also offered advice:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (2 Cor 6:14-18)

This also can mean that God’s people should not be unequally yoked in worldview. Even though the Bible does not show how to deal with worldviews, God’s people need to compare their worldview and the biblical worldview in order to make the needed changes. Each individual should also consider the words of Jesus Christ.

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. . . . And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell. . . . And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to

be cast into hell fire. (Mark 9:43-47)

As serious as the above statement sounds, a Christian must do away with dualism and non-biblical worldview values. Christians must shape their worldview concerning fear of evil spiritual powers by following biblical principles. This should put an end to fear.

### **Recommendations**

After studying the Kamba situation for many years and seeking to better understand the fear Kamba people have of evil spiritual powers, I conclude this dissertation with several recommendations to church leaders, Kamba Christians, and those who educate future ministers.

#### **For Church Leaders**

1. Division or union leaders need to hold seminars for local conference leaders on how to approach this issue of fear of evil spiritual powers. Many of these local leaders have never received any training in this area.

2. Seminars need to be held frequently by the conference leaders which will deal with the fear of evil spiritual powers. Areas of worldviews that cause fear need to be dealt with adequately by correctly replacing old cultural values with biblical ones. A manual needs be developed that can be used by conference leaders to deal with the fear of evil spiritual forces. The manual should deal first with the false beliefs concerning the existence and appearances of dead ancestors by emphasizing the biblical message on the state of the dead. The manual also should deal with how witches operate and how the power of God protects His people. Incorporating suggestions from Ellen G. White's

writings on this topic will enhance the manual because she writes like an African who knows how evil powers work and how God prevents them from accomplishing their plans.

3. Church leaders need to abandon the practice of not mentioning Satan and his powers from the pulpit. Church members need to hear from their ministers how Satan is defeated, how he can be defeated in their daily lives, and how ordinary church members can defeat Satan, witches, sorcerers, wizards, local magicians, and evil spirits. Christians should believe that these powers exist, but should be given tools to defeat them. I have never heard a sermon from the pulpit of a Seventh-day Adventist church about witchcraft and how to defeat such powers, but I have heard such sermons by many Pentecostal preachers.

4. Church leaders need to publish articles and books on this subject in order to make material widely available to Adventist members.

#### For Theological Educators

1. Theological educators need to use more theological books written by African theologians on the subject of evil powers and how they operate and how they are easily defeated. Africans have used books written outside the continent by writers who do not share the worldview. Therefore much of the teaching does not meet the needs of African people.

2. Theological educators should also emphasize to their students, who will consequently train church members, that not all illnesses are sent by the devil. Much sickness is caused by other factors. Diseases like malaria, bubonic plague, chickenpox,

cholera, diphtheria, ebola, gonorrhoea, influenza, hepatitis, leprosy, measles, meningitis, monkeypox, mumps, pneumonia, plagues, rabies, rubella, smallpox, syphilis, tetanus, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, West Nile fever, yellow fever, and AIDS all can be contracted because of reasons other than direct demonic causes. Pastors need a good understanding of the various possible causes for disease.

#### For Kamba Christians

1. There are many methods for dealing with fear of evil forces often recommended in the Bible, but Christians do not take them literally. Christians need to believe that they are wearing spiritual clothes every day even when they cannot see them. The servants of Satan see them and they can tell who is naked and who is not. Once Christians understand what it means to wear Christ's robe of righteousness, they will need to believe this fact as something tangible. This will begin to eliminate the fear they have.

2. The Bible recommends putting on the whole armour of God. We do not see this kind of armour, but those who have been delivered from serving Satan say that when a Christian prays and is covered by the blood of Jesus Christ they are protected. The Christian should claim the protecting covering of the blood of Jesus on a daily basis.

3. Fasting is another way to defeat the evil one. Many people who have been delivered from serving Satan have a message for Christians. They say that has an enormous impact on the kingdom of darkness and that the prayers of a fasting person scare them more than the prayers of a non-fasting person. Their observation is that they are not able to operate near a fasting person and that their attacks are unsuccessful. They

suggest that fasting provides a lot of God's power to the fasting Christian.

4. Another important factor is the frequency of prayer. A Christian who prays frequently is a threat to the kingdom of darkness. When the wizards, witches, and sorcerers approach a Christian who has a regular prayer life, they lose their power.

5. Kamba Christians should not think that just because they are God's people that they will not face adverse challenges. The apostle Paul is a good example. The enemy was allowed to attack him by a thorn in his flesh. Paul had brought healing to many others, but he was not healed. The important thing to note is that the grace of God was sufficient. Paul did not go out and look for an alternative source of healing. The story of Job is another example that bad things happen to good people. Like Job, Christians should say, Though He slay me, yet will I serve him.

6. Kamba Christians also should accept that every day they face a spiritual battle. This realization should help them to know that when things start to fall apart, it is not because a neighbor did anything but that they are facing the reality of the Great Controversy. Ellen G. White makes a point that should be understood by all Christians. She suggests that even though God's people cannot see the battle, yet it is very real.

It is my hope that this dissertation will help Kamba Christians to find biblical answers to their fear of evil spiritual powers and that God can use them to bring freedom from fear to the rest of the Kamba people..



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Achebe, Chinua. *No Longer at Ease*. Nairobi, Kenya: Heinemann, 1960.
- Ackroyd, Peter R. "1 Samuel." *The Cambridge Bible Commentary*. Edited by P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. C. Leaney, and J. W. Packer. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971.
- "Acts–Ephesians." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1956. 6:282–386.
- "Acts–Romans I–VIII." *The Great Texts of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 130:121–234.
- Ahirka, Edwin A. "Contextualization of Ephesians 6:12: Liberation of African Christians from the Fear of Principalities." *Sevartham* 25 (2000): 65-69.
- Akrong, Abraham. "A Phenomenology of Witchcraft in Ghana." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie Ter Haar, 49-55. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.
- Ariyo, Ade David. *Triumph Over Witchcraft*. Lagos, Nigeria: The Trumpeter, 1999.
- Ashforth, Adam. *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Augsburger, Myron S. *Matthew*. The Commentator's Commentary. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1982.
- Baldwin, Joyce G. *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*. Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1978.
- Baker, David W. and Gordon J. Wenham, "Daniel." *Apollo's Old Testament Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Barker, P. C. "1 and 2 Kings." *The Pulpit Commentary*. Edited by H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950.
- Barnes, William Emery. *The First Book of the Kings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1932.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Second Book of Kings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1932.
- Barlow, George. "Exodus." *The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Books of Kings*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1885.
- Barret, C. K. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T and T Clark, 1994.
- Basse, Mutahi. "Census: Kenya Has 3.6M People." *Daily Nation*, August 31, 2010. [www.nation.co.ke/news/-/1056/1000340/-/](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/-/1056/1000340/-/) (assessed October 20, 2010).
- Biblical Theological and Ecclesiastical Cyclopaedia*. 1873 ed. S.v. "Ephesus."
- Boles, Leo H. A. *Commentary on Acts of the Apostles*. Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate, 1976.
- Burns, Rita J. *Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers: With Excursuses on Feasts/Ritual and Typology*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Luke*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.
- Borchert, G. L. "Ephesus." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990. 115-117.
- Brown, Rebecca. *He Came to Set the Captives Free*. New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1986.
- Carter, Charles W. "The Acts of the Apostles." *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Cate, Robert L. "Exodus." *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*. Edited by Robert L. Cate. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979.
- Catkins, Raymond. "II Kings." *The Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by George Arthur Buttrick. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1954. 3:235.
- Chance, J. Bradley. *Acts*. Smyth and Helwys Commentary. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2007.
- Chouinard, Larry. "Matthew." *The College Press NIV Commentary*. Joplin, MS: College Press, 1997.
- Clarke, Adam. *The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1988.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments*. New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1998.
- Clarke, Peter B., ed. *New Trends and Developments in African Religions*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998.
- Clements, Ronald E. *Exodus*. The Cambridge Bible Commentary. Edited by P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. C. Leaney, and J. W. Packer. Cambridge, UK: The Cambridge Press, 1972.
- Cogan, Mordechai, et al. *II Kings*. Anchor Bible 3. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1975.
- Coggins, J. *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Cole, R. Alan. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Comay, Joan. *World's Greatest Story*. London, UK: George Weidefeld and Nicolson, 1978.
- Cooper, Rod. "Mark." *Holman New Testament Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2000.
- "Daniel." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- "Daniel." *Old Testament Message: A Biblical–Theological Commentary*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1981.
- Davies, Gordon F. *Ezra and Nehemiah*. Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 1999.
- Deane, William John, and Thomas Kirk. *Studies in the First Book of Samuel*. Minneapolis, MN: Klock and Klock, 1983.
- Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by William Smith. London, UK: Walton and Maberly, 1863. S.v. "Ephesus."
- Dovlo, Elom. "Witchcraft in Contemporary Ghana." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie Ter Haar, 70-80. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.
- Earle, Ralph, et al. "Matthew-Mark-Luke-John-Acts." *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*. Edited by Charles W. Carter. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Eni, Emanuel. *Delivered from the Powers of Darkness*. Ibadan, Nigeria: Afolabi Printing Press, 1988.

- Ellison, H. L. "Exodus." *The Daily Study Bible*. Edited by John C. L. Gibson. Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1982.
- "Ellen G. White Comments—1 Samuel." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953–57. 2:1022.
- "Ellen G. White Comments—James." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953–57. 7:937.
- "Ellen G. White Comments—Acts." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953–57. 6:1065.
- "Ellen G. White Comments—Revelation." *Seventh-day Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- Exell, Joseph S.. *Biblical Illustrator*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1955.
- "Exodus." *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*. Edited by John N. Oswalt. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008.
- "Exodus." *SDA Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953–57.
- "Ezra." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- Filson, V. Floyd. "John." *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979. 19:114.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985.
- Ford, William A. *God, Pharaoh and Moses*. Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006.
- Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. "The Acts of the Apostles." *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.
- Geschiere, Peter. *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1995.
- Gilliland, Dean. "Contextualization." *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Edited by A. Scott Moreau. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000.
- Gispen, H. *Bible Student's Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982.

Haar, Gerrie ter, ed. *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Ghanaian Witchcraft Beliefs: A View from the Netherlands." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 104-109. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.

Harrington, Wilfrid. *Mark*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979.

Hastings, James. "The Acts of the Apostles." *The Speaker's Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1971. 1:1-236.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Acts-Romans I-VIII." *The Great Texts of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958. 130:121-234.

Hartfield, Lawson. "Balaam." *Holman Bible Dictionary*. Edited by Trent C. Butler. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991. 146-147.

Healey, Joseph, and Donald Sybertz. *Towards an African Narrative Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996.

Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew*. New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995.

Hiebert, Paul G. *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Cultural Differences and the Communication of the Gospel," In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, edited by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 373-383. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999. 373-383.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle." In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, edited by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 414-421. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999.

Hinfelaar, Hugo F. "Witch-Hunting in Zambia and International Illegal Trade." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 233-254. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.

Hobley, C.B. *Bantu Beliefs and Magic: With Particular Reference to the Kikuyu and Kamba Tribes of Kenya Colony Together with Some Reflections on East Africa after the War*. London, UK: Frank Cass and Company, 1922.

*Holy Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. C. Cook. London, UK: John Murray, 1899.

- Hoppe, Leslie. *Joshua, Judges*. Old Testament Message: A Biblical-Theological Commentary. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982.
- Honeycutt, Roy L. "Exodus." *Broadman Bible Commentary*. Edited by C. J. Allen. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1969.
- Horn, Siegfried H. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979.
- Howley, G. C. D. *Bible Commentary for Today*. London, UK: Pickering & Inglis, 1979.
- Hunter, S. F. "Bar-Jesus." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979. 431.
- Hyatt, Philip J. *Exodus*. New Century Bible. Edited by J. Philip Hyatt. London: Purnell and Sons, 1971.
- Idowu, E. Bolaji. *African Traditional Religion*. London, UK: SCM Press, 1973.
- Igenoza, O. "African Wetanshuun and Exorcism: The Quest for the Contextualization of the Kerygma." *African Theology Journal* 14 (1985): 184-189.
- Jellie, Harvey W. *Exodus*. The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Old Testament. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1943.
- "Judges." *SDA Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- Kaburegyere, T., and J. Mbula. *A Case for the Akamba of Eastern Kenya*. Canberra: Australian National University, 1979.
- Kaniaki, D. D., et al. *Snatched from Satan's Claws: An Amazing Deliverance by Christ*. Nairobi, Kenya: Kenya Litho, 1991.
- Karanja, John K. *Founding of an African Faith: Kikuyu African Christianity 1900-1945*. Nairobi, Kenya: Uzima Press, 1999.
- Keener, Craig S. *Matthew*. The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
- Keck, E. Leader, et al. "Acts." *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002.
- "1 Kings." *SDA Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.

- “2 Kings.” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- Kistemaker, Simon J. “Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles.” *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 1995.
- Kgatla, Salaelo Thias. “Containment of Witchcraft Accusations in South Africa: A Search for a Transformational Approach to Curb the Problem.” In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 269-292. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.
- Kraft, Charles H. *Anthropology for Christian Witness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Culture, Worldview, and Conceptualization.” In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, edited by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 390. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999.
- Kraft, Charles H., and Marguerite G. Kraft. “Communicating and Ministering the Power of the Gospel Cross-Culturally: The Power of God for Christians Who Ride Two Horses.” In *The Kingdom and the Power*, edited by Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer, 349. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993.
- Lange, John Peter. *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1915.
- Larby, Norman. *The Kamba*. Nairobi, Kenya: W. Boyd and Co., 1944.
- Larkin, William J. *Acts*. The IPV New Testament Series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995. 5:189–276.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Acts.” *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2004. 12:560.
- Lindblom, Gerhard. *The Akamba in British East Africa: An Ethnological Monograph*. New York: Negro University Press, 1920.
- Longenecker, Richard N. “John–Acts.” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981. 10:496.
- Lumby, J. Rawson. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1934.

- Maclaren, Alexander. "Acts 13–28." *Expositions of Holy Scriptures*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Expositions of Holy Scriptures: The Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Exposition of Holy Scripture: John 15-21, Acts 1-12*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977.
- Maddox, Robert L. "Acts." *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.
- Martin, Francis. "Acts." *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006. 5:235.
- Mangan, C'eline. *1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982.
- Mbambo, Samuel K. "The Mbambi Brought the Message: *Shitera*, Witchcraft of Revenge." In *Imagining Evil*, edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 185-204. Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2007.
- Mbiti, John S. *African Religions and Philosophy*. Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Educational Publishers, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Introduction to African Religion*. Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Educational Publishers, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background: A Study of the Encounter Between New Testament Theology and African Traditional Concepts*. London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Mbula, Judith. "Penetration of Christianity into the Akamba Traditional Family." M.A. thesis, Nairobi University, 1974.
- McElhanon, Ken A. "Worldview." *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Edited by A. Scott Moreau. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000.
- Meier, John P. *Matthew*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980.
- Miller, Maxwell J. "Joshua." *The Cambridge Bible Commentary*. Edited by P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. Leaney, and J. W. Packer. London, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1974.



- Moreau, Scott A. "Syncretism." *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Edited by A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002. 925-926.
- Munro, Forbes. *Colonial Rule and the Kambas: Social Change in the Kenyan Highlands 1889-1939*. London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Namoombe, Cletus. "Witchcraft Among the Kamba." In *African Cultures and Religion*, edited by Nairobi University African Studies Staff, 25-30. Nairobi, Kenya: Maryknoll Institute, 1999.
- Ncube, Zebron Masukume. "Ancestral Beliefs and Practices: A Program for Developing Christian Faith among Adventists in Zimbabwe." D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1988.
- Ndeti, Kivuto. "Elements of Akamba Life." Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1967.
- Neckebrouck, Valeer. *Resistant Peoples: The Case of the Pastoral Maasai of East Africa*. Rome, Italy: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1993.
- Neil, William. *The Acts of the Apostles*. New Century Bible. London, UK: Oliphants, 1973.
- Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Edited by Ronald F. Youngblood. Atlanta, GA: Thomas Nelson, 1995. S.v. "Ephesus."
- The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. Edited by Adam Clarke. New York: Abingdon Press. 5:782.
- Nicholson, Sarah. *The Three Faces of Saul: An Intertextual Approach to Biblical Tragedy*. London, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- Nottingham, J. C. "Sorcery among the Akamba of Kenya." *Journal of African Administration* 11 (1959): 5-9.
- Ntloedibe-Kuswani, Gomang Seratwa. "Witchcraft as a Challenge to Botswana Ideas of Community and Relationships." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 204-209. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.

- Nyaga, Stephen Nyoka. "The Impact of Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices on the Socio-Economic Development of the Akwaya in Musoma-Rural District, Tanzania." In *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*. Edited by Gerrie ter Haar, 255-259. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007.
- Ogot, B. A. *Kenya before 1900*. Nairobi, Kenya: East Africa Publishing House, 1976.
- O'Leary, Michael F. *The Kitui Akamba: Economic and Social Change in Semi-Arid Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya: Heineman, 1984.
- Olukoya, D. K. *Overpowering Witchcraft*. Lagos, Nigeria: Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, 1999.
- Oswalt, John S. "Exodus." *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2008.
- Packer, J. W. *Acts of the Apostles*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- Parker, Joseph. "Acts XII–XIX." *The People's Bible*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1950. 24:1–353.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The People's Bible: Discourse Upon Holy Scriptures*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1950.
- Parkin, David. "Entitling Evil: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Coastal Kenya." In *The Anthropology of Evil*, 48. Southampton, UK: Camelot Press, 1985.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. "Acts." *Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005.
- Pervo, Richard I. *Acts*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
- Philbeck, Ben F. "1 Samuel-Nehemiah." *Broadman Bible Commentary*. Edited by C. J. Allen. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1969.
- Polhill, John B. *Acts*. The New American Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992.
- Propp, William H. C. *Exodus 1–18*. The Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
- Ratzinger, Joseph Cardinal, ed. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. New Hope, KY: Urbi et Orbi Communications, 1994.

- “1 Samuel.” *SDA Bible Commentary*. Edited by F. D. Nichol. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976.
- Shea, William H. *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier: Daniel 1–7*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1996.
- Sirleaf, Ellen Johnson. *This Child Will Be Great*. New York: HarperCollins, 2009.
- Smith, T. C. “Acts–1 Corinthians.” *The Broadman Bible Commentaries*. Edited by Clifton J. Allen. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1970. 10:109–111.
- Spence, H. D. M. “Acts–Romans.” *The Pulpit Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950. 18:114–116.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern. *Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Gossip*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Stokes, G. T. *Acts of the Apostles*. *The Expositor’s Bible*. Edited by W. Robertson Nicol. London, UK: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1908. 18:188–356.
- Sundler, Bengt, and Christopher Steed. *A History of the Church in Africa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Sweeney, Marvin A. *I & II Kings: A Commentary*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.
- Timmons, Jonathan Philip. *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom*. Austin, TX: CCI Publishing, 1991.
- Traylor, John H. “2 Kings.” *Layman’s Bible Book Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1981.
- Ueda, Hitoshi. *Witchcraft and Sorcery in Kitui of Kamba Tribe* (Discussion paper No. 25). Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi, Institute of African Studies, 1971.
- Unger, Merrill F. *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1981.
- Wan-Tatah, Victor. “Pseudo-Conversion and African Independent Churches.” In *New Trends and Developments in African Religions*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998.
- White, Ellen G. “A Letter.” *Pacific Union Recorder*, May 6, 1909, 159-261.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Present Help in Every Time of Trouble." *Review and Herald*, 16 July 1901, 451-452.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1911.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Be Separate (Concluded)." *Review and Herald*, 27 November 1894, 737-738.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Co-Workers with Christ." *Review and Herald*, 30 July 1901, 321-324.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Come Out from Among Them, And Be Ye Separate." *Review and Herald*, 2 January 1900, 137-138.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Communications to Elder M. Hull." *Review and Herald*, 19 January 1864, 62-63.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Correct Views Concerning the Testimonies (A Reply to an Inquirer)." *Review and Herald*, 6 September 1906, 271-280.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Dear Brethren and Sisters." *Review and Herald*, 1 August 1849, 9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Desire of Ages*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1898.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Example of Faithfulness—No. 2." *Review and Herald*, 9 May 1899 289-290.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Evangelism*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1946.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Experience and Views." *Review and Herald*, 21 July 1851, 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "God's Means for Diffusing light." *Review and Herald*, 26 December 1912, 3-4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Gospel Workers*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1915.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Government of God." *Review and Herald*, 9 March 1886, 145-146.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Great Controversy*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1950.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Humility and Faithfulness in Labors." *Review and Herald*, 8 April 1884, 227-228.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Messages to Young People*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1930.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Ministry of Healing*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1905.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Selected Messages*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Sin Pardoning Savior." *Pacific Union Recorder*, 8 December, 1904, 1.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Story of Prophets and Kings*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Testimonies for the Church*. 9 vols. Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1948.
- Winn, C. Albert. *Acts of the Apostles*. The Layman's Bible Commentary. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1982. 20:108.
- Williams, Charles. *Witchcraft*. Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2005.
- Willimon, William H. "Acts." *Interpretation*. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1973.
- Youngblood, Ronald F. *Exodus*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1983.