

DEMON EXPERIENCES

in Many Lands

by

Various Contributors

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CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

CHRIST THE VICTOR

“Come quickly! My son is about to die!”

In a land such as this, where sickness and death among children are so widespread, one becomes rather accustomed to hearing this desperate plea of a parent who has tried every medicine that he or the witch doctor knows, and then turns in desperation to the missionary for help.

One also becomes accustomed to following the Indian to a filthy little thatched-roof shelter and finding a diseased child at death's door, the family, standing or sitting around, having started the prelude to their monotonously weird death wail.

THE HOUSE OF MAXIMO

A few days ago, I was summoned in this very manner to the house of Maximo, an unbeliever, who lives here in Caco. There was the child, Ostacio, a schoolboy of about nine years of age, and there was the family starting their mourning.

All this I had witnessed many times before. However, as I drew closer to observe the boy, something immediately struck me as being quite different from the usual sight of a dying child. Instead of lying listlessly in his mother's arms with eyes closed and heavy, irregular breathing, he was thrashing from side to side. His eyes were enlarged and staring into space and it took two adults to hold him down.

My first thought was that he was in a state of delirium from some disease, but his father said that there had been no other symptoms other than a mild siege of vomiting three days before. I then learned that he had become listless and had lost consciousness of his environment in the morning, and that three hours previous he had started screaming, clawing, spitting and biting. He no longer recognized his parents and could not speak a word.

The next step was to examine him.

His pulse was normal in spite of his convulsive sieges, he had no fever, and there seemed to be nothing physiologically wrong with him. As I watched the poor little fellow, who was ordinarily a quiet youngster, I could not help but think of the boy spoken in Luke 9. Then I recalled that about three weeks earlier I was visiting this same family, and as we sat in the shade of a tree by the clearing in front of the little house, a gust of wind formed a whirlwind and lifted dust and leaves into a circular pattern in the center of the small clearing.

The father clutched his baby in his arms and excitedly ordered the little boy who was now sick to take a stick and drive the wind to the river. I couldn't help but laugh at the incident, but the father in very serious tones said, "Don't you know that a devil is in the wind when it comes like that and that if you don't drive him away he will enter your youngest child and make him violently sick?"

I explained that he should not be so foolish as to believe that the Devil inhabits the wind, but rather that he dwells in the hearts of those who know not God, and that his purpose in this world was not to make people sick, but to defeat God's purposes and cause men to sin against God.

CHRIST'S POWER MANIFESTED

Another indication that the boy's condition was spiritual was that the family has been known to patronize the witch doctors.

Even as I entered the house I smelled something burning, and on looking around I discovered a clay pot with smoldering feathers, a sure sign of the witch doctor's visit. The only thing I knew was to pray, so I told the parents and requested that they stop the mourning.

I bowed my head and prayed that God would heal the boy of his sickness, and then commanded in the name of the Son of God that the spirit leave the boy. After praying I went to the clinic to get a sedative. In the space of five minutes I returned on the bicycle with some Phenobarbital. A miracle had happened.

The boy was fast asleep in his mother's arms. Before I was out of sight the child had relaxed and fallen asleep. The next morning he awoke and spoke to his parents, completely conscious of his surroundings. Now he is back to school and completely normal again.

South American Indian Mission

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