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Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

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It was in the first bloom of that reaction against sound religious thought which trod on the heels of the moral corruption of the Restoration and the decline in earnestness in the Church of England accompanying that decay of manners, that the British world was startled by the publication of an anonymous little treatise called *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696). It was the work of a theological adventurer named JOHN TOLAND. His object was not to vindicate the claims of Christianity to the reasonable consideration of men; nor yet to develop the *rationale* of its distinctive teachings; nor to expound the elements and exhibit the adaptation to man's nature and condition of that "wisdom of God in a mystery," which hitherto hidden, was at length revealed to the apostles by the Spirit, and so transmitted to us. His object, on the contrary, was to declare that nothing that seemed to him mysterious was a part of Christianity—that its whole content is "reasonable," in the sense that it is level to and not above reason. Meanwhile he was loud in his asseverations that

his alembic left all the "essentials of Christianity" untouched. A generation later (1730), when the Deistic movement had attained its height, it fruited in the more mature work of MATTHEW TINDAL, also published anonymously, and never finished, which bears the title of *Christianity as Old as Creation*. It did not trace Christianity back into the eternal counsels of the Godhead and show how from the beginning, in the purposes of the Divine love, all its glorious provisions of mercy lay prepared; nor did it begin with the great promise of the Seed at the gate of Eden, and exhibit the gospel latent in the Old Testament even from the first. Its alternative title already betrays its quite contrary purport: *Or, it reads, the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*. His design was, the author tells us, to strip religion "of the additions which policy, mistake, and the circumstances of the time have made to it," and so to restore it to a form in which it is worthy of an "infinitely wise and good God." This is, of course, his euphemism for the discharge from Christianity of all that makes it Christianity as distinguished from

CURRENT OPINION ON NEW TESTAMENT DEMONOLOGY.

From the naturalistic point of view, demoniacs were not victims of demons, but were sufferers from diseases, especially of the brain and nervous system. These ailments included "not only insanity and mental diseases in general, but also nervous disorders and derangement of the organs by which spiritual intercourse is carried on" (Weizsäcker, *Untersuchungen*, p. 375); or, to quote the words of the late Dr. Bruce: "In every case of which we have details there was a disease, either madness, or epilepsy, or dumbness, or dumbness accompanied by blindness, or chronic muscular contraction" (*The Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, p. 177). The notion that these maladies were due to the malign influence of evil spirits originated in the superstition of the age.

Two important questions arise—What attitude do the advocates of this theory take 1. Toward the New Testament records in which the cure of demoniacs is reported, and 2. Toward the person of Christ?

The prominent features of the narratives are the demoniac speaking in the name of the demons, the recognition of Jesus as the Christ, and the destruction of the herd of swine. 1. Writers like Strauss, of course, conclude at once that these outstanding features are unhistorical and impossible, and hence that the accounts as a whole are pure inventions. 2. Not so others. These conspicuous features, no less than minor ones, are of course described by the evangelists in the terms of ancient superstition, for those terms were imbedded in the common speech; but yet, it is claimed, the incidents of the narratives can all be accepted as facts and explained on the theory of nervous disease. It is conceivable, so the explanation runs, that the insane man, imagining himself possessed by an evil spirit, spoke as its mouth piece; that, since the Messiah was expected, the hope burst into expression from the lips of the insane men at Capernaum and Gadara under the spell which the whole aspect and manner of Jesus was fitted to produce and they confessed that he was the Holy One of God and the Son

**The Accounts
Substantially
True, But Not
Absolutely In-
errant. Legendary
Elements.**

of God; and that the demoniac of Gadara rushed upon the swine with fury, now playing the part of agent for the demons, as before he had played the part of spokesman. So Bruce and Beyschlag (*Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, pp. 184-190; *Leben Jesu*, ii³, 143, 199). A difficulty besets this explanation, as Bruce himself admits.

Jesus is represented by Mark and Luke as granting permission to the demons to enter the swine. This difficulty is forcibly removed by assuming that Matthew, who makes Jesus merely say "depart," "gives the tradition in its purest form," and Mark and Luke have incorrectly reported it (Bruce, p. 189f). Meyer, who likewise regards the gospel narratives as substantially true, declares that the attempt to evade the force of the narrative by saying that the demoniacs themselves rushed in among the swine, runs counter to what is clearly recorded, and one must either take the whole account as real history or admit the existence of legendary elements (on Mat. viii. 28-34).

The other question which emerges when it is premised that demoniacs were the victims of disease only, and not of evil spirits, concerns the knowledge and veracity of Jesus. Did Jesus share in the popular error regarding demons; or, knowing otherwise, did he countenance it? 1. Strauss, in former days, and more recently Keim, have affirmed that Jesus erred in his belief. The

**Some Affirm
That Jesus Did
Not Know.**

same assertion is repeated by F. C. Conybeare in the pages of the *Jewish Quarterly* for 1896, and by Johannes Weiss in the *Herzog-Hauck Realencyklopädie*, 1898. 2. Bernhard Weiss like-

wise holds that Jesus did not apprehend [these maladies] otherwise" than did the people (*Life of Jesus*, II. 79); but Weiss contends that although Jesus shared in the erroneous opinion of the age, he advanced beyond it. He connected the phenomena with

**Jesus Shared
In the Error, But
Advanced
Beyond it.**

Satan, *i. e.*, "the superhuman power that dominates humanity" (I. 341). "The radical fact was simply this, that the sinful condition had reached a height where the man no longer had

the mastery of sin, but sin of him; and when sunk in this utter impotence, and possessing no will of his own, he yielded to the enslaving power of sin, this domination is referred to a superhuman

spiritual power which held sway over him, and deprived him of all volition. Jesus advanced beyond the popular idea." He "expressly recognized the profound internal connection which often exists between mental and bodily diseases and the sins of which they are the consequences (Mat. ix. 2; John v. 14). He referred the maladies ascribed to demons in their radical moral cause" (II. 8off). In this theory of demoniac possession, Weiss has no following. The case of the epileptic boy has been widely cited against his view as evidence that the demoniac condition was not necessarily the result of aggravated personal sin. It is noteworthy that Weiss declares Matthew's statement that the boy was demoniac to be an addition to the original account. 3. Prof. Schwartzkopff likewise holds that Jesus shared the erroneous conceptions of demons which were current in his day (*Weisagun-*

**Jesus Erred
Because Under
The Limitations
Of Ordinary
Humanity.**

gen Jesu Christi, 1895, pp. 184, 203). Jesus was sinless; a "religious genius," who possessed a perfect unimpaired religious talent" (*Konnte Jesu irren*, p. 82). He was a true man, was subject to the limitations of humanity, was not

omniscient, and was a child of his time (79, 80, 85). Schwartzkopff is a humanitarian. He expressly repudiates the divinity of Christ "in the old sense" as understood by the Church, *i. e.*, the doctrine of the God-man; and appealing to one set only of the phenomena recorded in Scripture, he magnifies Christ's humanity. 4. To permit believers in Christ's divinity to hold nevertheless that he shared in the popular misconception regarding demoniacs, Bruce suggests the doctrine of kenosis. In becoming man, Christ became subject to limitations; his mission was

**Kenosis:
Jesus Knew
Exhaustively
Moral and
Religious Truth
Only.**

moral and religious, and he had the full equipment of knowledge for that work; but his infallibility did not extend to other spheres. Bruce makes use of Weiss's admission that, if possession were not essentially a moral, but only a psychic phenomenon, then ignorance as to its

nature might be ascribed to Jesus without prejudice to his infallibility, which relates only to moral and religious truth (*Miraculous Element in the Gospel*, p. 183). This suggestion, made by Dr. Bruce from apologetic motives, has not been adopted. The kenoticists, for obvious reasons of their own, have not been eager

to champion it, not even that enthusiastic advocate of kenosis, Canon Gore, much to the feigned disgust of F. C. Conybeare. Nor will that winsome kenoticist, Canon Mason, admit that Christ was liable to mistake (*Conditions of our Lord's Life on Earth*, 1896, p. 29); and Adamson, extreme kenoticist though he is, apparently accepts the reality of demons (*Studies in the Mind of Christ*, 1898, pp. 69-71, 261, 274).

Other advocates of this view of demonology, who at the same time believe in the divinity of Christ, hold firmly to the fulness of Jesus' knowledge. He knew that the demoniacs were sufferers from diseases, not from demons. How, then, account for his words on this subject? To this question it has been answered 1. That Jesus knew, but has not been correctly reported. Owen C.

**Jesus Had
Full Knowledge.**

**But
Reports
Untrustworthy.**

Whitehouse, in Hastings' Bible Dictionary, without affirming anything in regard to Jesus' knowledge, casts this suspicion on the record. "We are dealing," he says, "with the reports of chroniclers whose minds were necessarily colored by the prevailing beliefs of the age, psychic and cosmic. 2. Accepting the authenticity of the record, others resort first of all to the theory

**Jesus' Words
Explained by
Accommodation.**

of accommodation. Jesus indeed knew; but "when a disease, especially a psychical disease, has its roots in the imagination or in a hallucination, it is natural, and always regarded as necessary, for the physician apparently to accept this view" (Winer). "Healing was possible only through the acceptance of the existing view, leaving the idea itself untouched" (Meyer on Mat. iv). Barth rejects this particular form of the explanation, but holds a modification of it. He says that since Jesus did not come to advance natural science and anticipate the future results of physiology, he was obliged to hold the demoniac for possessed, according to the belief of his people, and treat him accordingly (*Leben Jesu*, 1899, p. 129). The main difficulty which besets this theory is raised by the discourses of Christ. 1. Christ, when asked by his disciples why they could not cast the demon out of the epileptic boy, replied: "This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer" (Mat. xvii. 21; Mark ix. 29). The theory of accommodation will save Christ here, but at the expense of the apostles.

Row admits this. The disciples, he says, shared in a popular error of psychology or medicine. Christ addressed them in language couched in their own forms of thought. His mission did not require him to correct their error as to the nature of the disease. Inspiration was granted them to give a true account of Christ's teaching and life (*The Supernatural in the New Testament*, pp. 244, 263, 267). How true the account which they give is may be seen in the admission of Meyer, himself an accommodationist, that the accommodation theory is not tenable apart from the assumption of legendary elements in the narrative; and in Barth's assertion that the account of the demoniac's cure at Gadara "rests on a misunderstanding of the disciples who witnessed it (*Leben Jesu*, 130). 2. The advocates of the accommodation theory have another difficulty to face in the apologetic discourse of Christ when accused of casting out demons by Beelzebub (Mat. xii. 24-29). Row would get rid of the difficulty by interpreting Christ's words as an *argumentum ad hominem* (p. 250). By this means, it is claimed, Jesus completely turned the tables on his assailants, and made clear that if, as he professed, he wrought these miracles by the Spirit of God, then God's kingdom had come among men. But Jesus did not stop at that point. He continued; and, on the theory of an *ad hominem* argument, he said: "Since you believe that these phenomena are due to Satan—whether I share that belief or not is irrelevant—then you must confess that a stronger than Satan has come and bound him, and is spoiling his goods. You should be loyal to your beliefs, and make this confession." Thus Jesus needlessly went on, and advanced an argument that loses all force, if their belief is incorrect, and *ex hypothese* he knows that it is incorrect. Not only so, but Jesus does not explain his rejection of their belief about possession. He deliberately argues with his opponents that they should accept him as the Messiah from premises which he purposely employed in a different sense than they, and for other reasons than they supposed he was urging. He used the *argumentum ad ignorantiam*. Accommodationists save Christ's knowledge, but they come dangerously near saving it at the expense of his candor. Accommodationists may relieve the situation, but not remove the difficulty, by accepting the doctrine that

Satan is a personal being. But are they willing to admit the existence of a personal devil? If so, why this ado about demons?

From this exposition it is plain that the theory which regards the demoniac as being merely a sick man can only be maintained by impugning the record and emptying Christ's words. According to the record the demoniac was dominated by an evil spirit, and his physical system often, perhaps always, suffered in consequence. As alone affording an adequate explanation for both the recorded phenomena and the words of Him who came down from heaven, this doctrine received the cordial assent of Delitzsch and Godet, who have recently passed away; and it finds earnest advocates among scholars of whom may be mentioned Bishop Westcott, Canon Gore, Prof. Laidlaw, and the aged Prof. Steinmeyer among writers on the miracles, Edersheim, Farrar, and Gilbert among writers on the life of Christ, Prof. Riddle and Bishop Chadwick (*Expositor*, 1892, 1893) among commentators, and Dr. Samtleben (*Beweis des Glaubens*, 1897) among pastors.

According to Biblical teaching, there exist evil spirits subject to Satan, just as there are holy spirits who are subject to God. The devil and his angels are spoken of, whose proper habitation is the abyss, and for whom the eternal fire has been prepared (*Mat. xxv. 41; Rev. xii. 7, 9*). They are fallen angels (*2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6*). The demons are unclean spirits (*Mat. viii. 16; Mark v. 13, 15*). Their prince is Beelzebub (*Mat. ix. 34; xii. 24*) that is Satan (*Mat. xii. 26; Luke xi. 18*), and their proper habitation is the abyss (*Luke viii. 31*). They believe in God and tremble (*Jas. ii. 19*). The demons are thus the agents of Satan, and doubtless the fallen angels referred to above. It was hellenic influence which led Josephus erroneously to identify them with the souls of the wicked dead (*Godet on Luke iv. 33-37; Johannes Weiss*). 1. The New Testament doctrine differs widely from the pagan demonology which prevailed among heathen nations and crept in even among the Jews. Jewish demon tales are found in the apocryphal book of Tobit (*vi. 7, 14-17; viii. 1-3*) and in Josephus (*Antiquities viii. 2, 5; War vii. 6, 3*). Referring to these statements, and amply acquainted with Talmudic

The Doctrine of Christ and His Apostles.

Differs Widely From Pagan Demonology.

lore, Edersheim declares that "those who contend that the representations of the Evangelists are identical with the popular Jewish notions of the time, must be ill acquainted with the latter" (I. 482). According to Cheyne "the chief foreign influence on Jewish demonology was no doubt Babylonian" (*Encyclopaedia Biblica*). Babylonian utterances on the subject are gathered together, and the Babylonian belief is stated by Zimmern in the *Sunday School Times* for November 18, 1899, as follows: "Demons . . . are considered offsprings of the lower regions. The wilderness is their chosen abode, whence they issue to invade city and country. They rush from house to house. No door, no lock, can arrest their progress nor bar their way. . . . They are particularly successful as destroyers of the family life. They sow the seed of discord between husband and wife, son and father, friend and comrade. They know no mercy but rage against men. They are devourers of human flesh and drinkers of human blood. If they can take a man by surprise, they will tie his hands and feet, spew poison and gall upon him. Day and night must he wander restlessly around, wailing and lamentation are his food." Zimmern is careful to add that we should wrong the Babylonians of the later period, if we judged of their conceptions by these stories. Conybeare and Johannes Weiss, however, attempt to show that Christ believed in this vulgar form of demonology. To secure evidence they resort to forcing a literal meaning upon the words of common speech. By this method the most intelligent men of ancient and modern times may be convicted of crass ignorance and puerile beliefs. Owen C. Whitehouse, while confessing his indebtedness to Conybeare for valuable information, puts in a word of protest; and Zimmern shows incidentally how the psalmist would be falsely condemned of belief in sorcery by such a treatment of his words in Ps. li. 7. The doctrine of Jesus stands in as marked contrast to heathen demonology as his teaching concerning God is gloriously distinguished from heathen polytheism. His doctrine of God is true: why should not his doctrine of Satan and demons be also true? That pagans and many Jews held false notions of the spiritual world, and were sunk in degrading superstition, does not invalidate the doctrine which Jesus taught. He came to lead men into the truth. 2. Again, as a rule, the records distinguish between de-

moniac possession and ordinary natural disease. Insanity without demonism was known to the Jews from the teaching of the Old Testament (Deut. xxviii. 28; Dan. iv. 33-36), and mania due to the presence of a demon was seen at Gadara.

Demoniac Possession Distinguished From Natural Diseases Accompanied by Similar Symptoms. According to the authorities there were cases of blindness, dumbness, and epilepsy which were treated as due to natural causes (blindness, Mat. ix. 27-30; Mark viii. 22-26; dumbness, Mark vii. 32-37; epilepsy, Mat. iv. 24), and other cases of the same afflictions which were due to demons

(Mat. ix. 32, 33; xii. 22; xvii. 15, 18), and there were yet other cases of demoniac possession which were not accompanied by loss of sight, speech, or consciousness (Mark i. 23-26). Possession is classed with the ailments of man, and dispossession with cures; but possession is not regarded as forming merely a distinct group of diseases. It is distinguished from diseases, as in Mat. x. 1; and Luke, who was a physician, reports this distinction as made by Christ himself in his commission to the Twelve (Luke ix. 1). Jesus also made a distinction between them in his method of effecting a cure. His occasional procedure in curing ordinary ailments bore more resemblance to exorcism (compare foregoing citations) than did his treatment of the possessed. The Evangelists do not mention the cure of demoniacs by Christ during the Judean ministry; but the Synoptists and John knew of such cures being wrought during the Galilean ministry (see Mark ix. 38).

3. Again, the symptoms of demoniac possession are unmistakable in the narrative. The three prominent features already mentioned must, on the disease theory, be explained away. The attempt to do so has not been a brilliant success. It is admitted by the authors of the attempt that the incident at Gadara cannot

Peculiar Symptoms. be explained away without assuming the incorrectness of the report. And in regard to the recognition of Jesus, the demoniacs go beyond

the Messianic expectation in at least one important point, when they discern his supreme holiness (Mark i. 24). There is another feature: the fearful struggle. Had the demoniac been merely a sick man, one would have expected the peaceful return of health. A woman, troubled by disease for twelve years, crept up in the crowd behind Jesus, touched his garment, was made

whole, and went away rejoicing. The multitude noticed nothing, heard no wild cry. There is no reason why epilepsy should not have left men just as quietly; no reason why the wild excitement of the insane should not have subsided without ado. An explanation is needed for that cry of horror and that terrible exhausting final paroxysm (Mark i. 26; ix. 26; cp. vii. 30). 4.

**Cure of
Demoniacs
The Earnest of
Satan's Fall.**

Again, in private discourse with his disciples, Christ emphasize the connection of this class of phenomena with the kingdom of Satan, and in the cure of this class of patients he saw the beginning of Satan's fall (Luke x. 17-20). 5. Again, the time of Christ was a period of spiritual disclosure. God was manifested in the flesh. Angels announced his advent, ministered unto him, and were seen at his resurrection and ascension.

**The Time an
Age of Spiritual
Disclosure.**

The Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove at his baptism, and by the power of this spirit, Jesus wrought his miracles. In the appearance of cloven tongues, like as of fire, the Holy Spirit rested upon the disciples at Pentecost, and they spake with tongues. There is reason profoundly to believe in these occurrences. This revelation marked a supreme moment in God's opposition to the kingdom of Satan. It is not strange that at this juncture the spiritual powers of evil were moved to put forth all their energy. It was "the hour and power of darkness, and hell was stirred to meet the second Adam, if haply he might be vanquished" (Taylor, *Miracles of Our Saviour*). To quote Gilbert's words: "It was antecedently probable that some extraordinary manifestation of Satan should accompany the extraordinary manifestation of God in Christ. Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan, and it was natural that Satan should make special efforts to counteract the influence of Jesus" (*Student's Life of Jesus*, p. 199). 6. Finally, there is the great analogy. A person possessed by a demon is described as inhabited by the unclean spirit (Mark i. 25, 26), having the unclean spirit

**The Great
Analogy:
Possession by
The Holy Spirit.**

(Mark iii. 30; vii. 25), in an unclean spirit, *i. e.*, in the company and in the power of a demon (Mark i. 23; v. 2). By the like phrases Paul describes possession by the Holy Spirit: "Ye are not in the flesh, but *in the spirit*, if so be that

the Spirit of God *dwelleth in you*. But if any man *hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*" (Rom. viii. 9). The analogy is complete. In each case the man is under the control of a spiritual power. As Gilbert says, "intrinsically considered it is no more difficult to understand how an evil spirit can enter into a human being who is alienated from God than to understand how the Holy Spirit can enter into a human being who is united to God. But centuries of Christian experience prove that the Holy Spirit does thus enter into men and control them."

The doctrine of demons is but part of the larger doctrine contained in the Old and New Testaments regarding the spiritual world. The disclosures in Scripture reveal that world with its hosts of angels, good and bad, acting by command and permission of God, wittingly and unwittingly carrying out the divine purpose, actively influential in the material world of which the earth forms but a small part.

JOHN D. DAVIS.

THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

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It is easy to separate John's gospel from the Synoptics. The difference is radical as to subject matter, style, and general point of view. But the difference does not amount to opposition. John, as the last of the four evangelists, supplements the subject matter and throws the resplendent glory of a chastened spirituality over the picture. His is the spiritual gospel, the gospel for Christians as Christians, from one who knew the heart of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke have very great similarities. In general they cover the same ground, though not precisely so. The Synoptic problem is still the most difficult question in New Testament criticism. The tendency at present is rather towards combining the three main theories into a more or less composite one, relying on the oral tradition, the use of one or more of the gospels by others, and the presence of some precious material according to Luke's introductory note. It seems fairly certain