

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CONDITION OF A PASSIVE MIND

It is very pitiful that believers do not know the fundamental difference between the work of evil spirits and the work of the Holy Spirit. Without realizing it, they have allowed evil spirits to come in and occupy their minds. Now we want to briefly see a mind that is under the attack of evil spirits.

#### ABRUPT THOUGHTS

When a believer's mind falls into passivity, many thoughts will be injected into him from outside. There will be unclean thoughts, blasphemous thoughts, and confused thoughts. They will come wave after wave through the brain. Although a person may make up his mind to reject them, he finds that he cannot stop the thoughts, nor can he change the direction and subject of his thoughts. The mind seems to be like a machine; once the switch is turned on, the machine cannot easily be stopped. The believer may use his will to oppose them, but still find that he cannot rid himself of the thoughts he does not want. Thoughts that come contrary to the believer's will are from evil spirits.

Sometimes a sudden flash of thought comes into a believer's mind and causes him to understand, know, or invent some special thing. It may suggest that he do this or that. This sudden thought seems to come from the believer himself, but on examining it, he will find that it does not originate from himself. Hence, this is also a work of evil spirits in a passive mind. A believer should reject sudden thoughts that suggest certain actions. These are not coming from the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, if the believer acts according to these thoughts, he will see how senseless the result will be.

We know that in this last age, evil spirits are doing a considerable work of teaching (1 Tim. 4:1). The believers should be on the alert so that evil spirits do not give them these teachings in their passive mind. Many believers think that they themselves are studying the Word, that they themselves are receiving much new light, and that they themselves are understanding many things that men of former times did not understand. But these believers should be careful because in many cases it is not they who are thinking, but evil spirits who suddenly have given them these thoughts. Evil spirits may cunningly wedge into the believers' thoughts one thought of their own. Since many believers are ignorant of the fact that their mind can take in the teaching of evil spirits, they read and meditate in their study and receive a great deal of sudden enlightenment when they are by themselves. They consider that they have invented something new in the divine teachings and write down these sudden thoughts or publish them, thinking that these are the result of their research. When others read about them or listen to them, they marvel at their superior intelligence. Actually, we do not know how many teachings have their source in the bottomless pit. Many heresies, "spiritual teachings," and interpretations of the Bible, which divide the church of Christ into pieces, come from men who suddenly understand certain doctrines in their studies. We should not merely consider how excellent the enlightenment we have received is. Instead we should ask, "From where do I get such enlightenment?" (1) Is it revealed by the Holy Spirit through the intuition? (2) Is it from my own mind? (3) Or are evil spirits giving these thoughts to me?

When a believer's mind is passive, evil spirits are most likely to inject all kinds of nonsensical thoughts into him. They will tell him, "You are God's special vessel..your work will shake the whole world..your spiritual life is much higher and deeper than

others..you should go another way..soon God will open a wide preaching door for you..you should come out to live by faith..your spiritual usefulness is really limitless." Thus, the believer is disarmed of all his weapons of watchfulness, and he lives by these thoughts all the day long, dreaming at every moment about how great, wonderful, and capable he is. Because he does not use the reasoning and the mind, he does not know how these thoughts damage the spiritual life and how ridiculous they are. He sets his mind on himself continuously and fantasizes what his future will be.

Among those who preach the Lord's Word, some are frequently controlled by sudden thoughts. Many preachers preach the "sudden revelations" that have passed through their minds. When they speak, they either do so in obedience to those sudden thoughts, or they follow the "revelation" which has been in their minds for a long time. They consider these to be from God, and they receive them passively. Little do they know that God does not give revelations suddenly, nor does He give revelations to the mind. Although sometimes such words can be very meaningful, they are nevertheless from evil spirits. Sometimes when a believer preaches, many verses suddenly pour into his mind. His mind does not initiate it, but the verses keep coming. The audience is touched. However, when the meeting is over, the audience wakes up as if from a dream and finds that they have not received any practical help in life. Such an outpouring of the Scriptures sometimes happens in one's private time also. But this also is a work of evil spirits.

Since the believer has reserved some ground in his mind for evil spirits, they can give him any thoughts they wish. Very frequently, among believers who work together, evil spirits implant, without any ground, a suspicion or a barrier between them, making them separate from one another. Evil spirits make the believer think, without any reason, that this man is this way, and that man is that way. He thinks that this man treats him probably this way, and that man treats him probably that way. Therefore, the evil spirits divide the believers. Actually these thoughts are groundless. If the believer knows to resist them and check the source of these thoughts, there will not be so many divisions. But the believer still thinks that it is his own thinking and does not know that evil spirits are also able to put thoughts into his mind.

## **PICTURES**

Evil spirits are not only able to inject thoughts into the believer's mind, but they can also form different kinds of pictures in his mind. Some of these pictures are very clean and good, which the believer likes. But some are very filthy and sinful and are abhorred by the believer's conscience. Whether it is something good or bad, something the believer likes or abhors, he has no power to stop these pictures from coming into his own mind. Past experiences, future predictions, and many other things are always lingering before his eyes in spite of the opposition of his will. The believer's imagination has fallen into passivity; he can no longer control his own imagination and has yielded to evil spirits who are now using his imagination at will. A believer should realize that everything that is not produced by his own mind is given to him by supernatural spirits.

## **DREAMS**

Some dreams are natural, but some are supernatural. Some belong to God, and some belong to the devil. Except for the dreams that are caused by man's own physiology or mind, the rest are supernatural. If a believer's mind is open to evil spirits, many of his dreams at night are probably the "pictures" he obtained during the day in disguise. Evil spirits make him see the pictures during the day and dream about them at night. If a

believer wants to check if his dream is from evil spirits, he only needs to ask, "Has my mind been passive during the day?" If so, the dream which he receives is not trustworthy. Dreams from God always make people normal, peaceful, stable, reasonable, and sensible. But dreams that come from evil spirits are all strange, vain, false, foolish, and cause people to become elated, stupefied, confused, and irrational.

The evil spirits can give a believer many strange dreams, some of which are very good, because his mind is passive. If a believer's mind has fallen into passivity, all of his dreams will not be from God, neither will they be natural; instead, they will be from evil spirits. At night the mind is naturally not as active as during the day, and it becomes more passive. Then evil spirits will seize the opportunity to accomplish their goal. These kinds of dreams at night make the believer dizzy and dampen his spirit when he wakes up in the morning. Sleep does not seem to increase his vigor, because while he is sleeping, evil spirits are affecting his whole being through the passive mind. All who frequently suffer from dreams at night have evil spirits working in their mind. If a believer single-mindedly rejects the evil spirits' work both during the day and night, he will soon be free.

## **INSOMNIA**

Insomnia is a very common disease among today's believers. It is the most obvious evidence of evil spirits' work in the mind. When many believers lay on the bed at night, many thoughts pour into their mind. They are continuously thinking about their work in the day, recalling their past experiences, or reviewing many unrelated things through their mind. It appears as if they are "thinking" about thousands of things and considering what they should do, how they should do it, and what is the best strategy. It appears as if they are considering in advance the things that have to be done the next day, what they should plan, what kind of circumstances they will encounter, and how they should deal with different problems. These thoughts come repeatedly. Although the believer knows that the bed is the place for sleep, and that it is not a desk where one does his thinking, the mind keeps on turning. Although the believer knows how important sleep is to his work the next day, and that he desperately needs to sleep and does not want to think, he cannot do as he pleases for reasons unknown to him. His mind continues to vigorously work and hinder his sleep. Perhaps the believer has tasted the bitterness of insomnia for many days. Perhaps he has completely rested from every kind of work and does not want to use his mind anymore. However, when night comes, even though he is very tired, the mind will not rest, as if it is a "thinking machine" which is very active and refuses to stop. His own will has absolutely no power over his own thoughts; he can only let it stop by itself. The believer cannot stop his thoughts. Before his mind can rest and he can go to sleep, he can only wait for a certain kind of power within himself to stop him from thinking. Sleep should refresh people. But after a person continuously has this kind of experience for several nights, he will regard sleeping, bed, and the night as something dreadful. Nevertheless, he cannot afford not to sleep. Every morning when he rises up, it seems as if he has just come back from a horrible world. The head is confused, the will is paralyzed, and all of his strength seems to have disappeared.

At such times, the believer always considers his body the cause of these phenomena. He may think that he is mentally disturbed or that he has overworked his mind. Actually: (1) These reasons are hypothetical most of the time and not real. (2) Even if reasons do exist, the believer should be cured once he rests or is remedied by some natural methods. Yet commonly-used natural methods often turn out to be ineffective. (3) These reasons

are the signboards that evil spirits use to disguise their work in secret. When thoughts are racing in the believer's mind at night, he should ask himself, "Where do these thoughts come from? Are they my thoughts? I do not want these thoughts, and I have no intention to have these thoughts. How then can I say that they are my thoughts? If they are not my thoughts, who is giving me so many confused, defiled, and depressing thoughts? Who else is there, other than evil spirits?"

## **FORGETFULNESS**

Because of the attack of evil spirits, many believers lose their original power of memory and often have the phenomenon of forgetfulness. Words just spoken are forgotten in an instant, work just done is forgotten in an hour, things just put down are forgotten before the day is over, and things just promised are forgotten in a moment. The believer acts like a man without a mind; nothing seems to be retained in his mind. He may think that this happens because his memory is worse than someone else's memory. Little does he realize that this is due to the disturbance of evil spirits in his mind. In such a condition, the believer finds himself jotting down all kinds of "memos," and becomes a slave to his notebooks. He must depend on these things as his "reminders"; otherwise, he will encounter difficulties all the time. We are not saying that a believer's mind should remember all kinds of things. We admit that many things are forgotten through the passing of years, and even current events can be forgotten because the impression produced in the mind is not deep. We are not saying that believers should remember everything. However, other than the above-mentioned matters, there are many things which have not transpired long ago, which the believers have paid attention to. Given the short period of time and the circumstances, a believer should remember these things. Yet there is often not even a shadow of memory; he cannot recall anything. This is not natural; rather, it must be the attack of evil spirits. For example, it is not natural to forget what we have most recently paid attention to. Some forgetfulness is natural; some is not natural. Behind all the unnatural forgetfulness, there are the attacks of evil spirits. Evil spirits are very capable at taking hold of certain of our nerves at critical hours and making us forget what we should have remembered. Countless numbers of believers have suffered considerable hardships as a result of the attacks of evil spirits in this area. Many works are damaged because of this. Many embarrassments result from this. Therefore, the trust that others have in this type of person decreases, and his usefulness also decreases. Yet he still does not realize that these memory lapses are caused by the work of evil spirits in his mind.

At other times, a believer's memory seems to be very good and does not seem to suffer from any sickness. But strangely, there are certain sudden lapses in his memory! At many critical junctures, when the mind should be working very well, it suddenly becomes muddled and cannot remember anything. As a result, matters fall into a hopeless situation. This sudden lapse in the function of the mind may seem strange to the believer. He may think that he is momentarily failing in his mental power and that this will last only for a little while; he does not realize that this is a phenomenon of the attack of evil spirits on the mind.

## **LACK OF CONCENTRATION**

Many times evil spirits also take away the power of concentration in the believers' minds. The power of concentration is different from believer to believer. But according to the experience of believers, a variation in the power of concentration mainly comes as a result of the evil spirits' distraction. Many believers seem unable to concentrate their thoughts. Some are a little better. If they try to concentrate on one thing for a few

minutes, they find their thoughts flying all over the place instead. This is especially true when one is praying, reading the Scriptures, or listening to a message. Many believers feel that their mind is always wandering. Although they have made up their mind to concentrate, it cannot be done in actuality. Although they exercise the will to control these racing thoughts, and although it may produce some effect for a while, nothing seems to last for long. Sometimes they find themselves completely out of control within themselves. All these are the works of evil spirits. But these works occur because the believers' minds have already reserved ground for them. It is unfortunate that believers waste away their mental power in this way. The result is that nothing is accomplished all day long. Just as it is a damage to waste physical energy, it is a damage to waste mental energy. Many believers today have wasted much time and not secured any results because their minds are under the attack of evil spirits and unable to concentrate.

Because evil spirits attack the mind in such a way, believers often experience a kind of "absentmindedness." Initially the mind is sharp. Suddenly, there is an emptiness, and one finds his thoughts flying away to nowhere. He does not know what he is doing or what book he is reading. He may think that his mind is on something else. However, the point to realize is that these kinds of thoughts are not initiated by one's own will. Countless numbers of believers have the experience of a sudden loss of hearing of what others are saying during the meetings and also at normal times. It is evil spirits which are causing them to not hear the words which are profitable to them. At such moments, evil spirits either cause their minds to stop functioning or force them to think about something else.

After a believer's mind has been attacked by evil spirits, it is very difficult for him to listen to others. Sometimes, he seems to miss a few sentences or a few words. Before he can understand what the other party is saying, he must wrinkle his forehead in order to try to hear the words. Often he does not understand the very obvious meaning of the other party, or he misunderstands the teachings given to him by the other party. All these are caused by the disturbance of evil spirits in his mind, who put many prejudices into him or interpret the meaning of the words for him. The believer hears men and demons speaking at the same time. Therefore, he either hears nothing or he misunderstands. Many believers become disinclined or unable to hear others speak because evil spirits work this way. Before others finish their words, they want to cut in with something. This happens because evil spirits have given them many thoughts, forcing them to listen to them and speak what they have put into them. At such times, a believer hears two voices at the same time, one from the outside and one from the inside. He hears suggestions from evil spirits within, and he hears men's words without. Since the voices within are closer than the voices without, the believer's ears will seem to be blocked from hearing the voices without. What is ordinarily known as "absentmindedness," is in fact just the heart being occupied by evil spirits. How many times do believers think that they have become "absent-minded," when in fact their hearts have just been captured by evil spirits. If believers do not rid themselves of the work of evil spirits in their minds, it will be impossible for them to concentrate their minds on anything.

Because of evil spirits' disturbance in the minds of the believers, they shake their heads, as if to shake out the undesirable things. If they say something, they have to say it loudly in order to let their own minds hear what they are saying and to leave an impression. If they think, they also have to loudly speak what they are thinking. Otherwise, their muddled minds do not understand. If they read, they also have to loudly read. Otherwise, they do not understand what they read. All these are the result of the



disturbance of evil spirits in the mind. They cannot concentrate their thoughts, and they have to do these things before their minds can receive a little impression or know anything.

## **INACTIVITY**

Evil spirits also work to make believers lose their ability to think. Because of the exceptional length of time that their minds have been subject to the attack by evil spirits and because of the extent of ground the evil spirits occupy, many believers become unable to think. When this happens, their minds have almost completely sunk into the evil spirits' hands, and they cannot make decisions anymore. At this point, believers can no longer think. Although they want to think, they do not have the power to initiate any thoughts in their own minds. There is a tide of thoughts rolling in their minds already. They have no strength to stop these thoughts and then put their own thoughts in afterwards. It seems that the tide is too strong, and they do not have a chance to put in their own thoughts. Although at times they may find a space in their minds for what they want to think, they feel that it is very difficult to sustain such thoughts. It seems that too many voices are inside already; the agenda is already full, and their thoughts are involuntarily pushed out. We know that if a man wants to think, he has to exercise his memory, his imagination, and his reasoning. When a believer has lost his sovereignty over these things, he has no way to think about anything anymore. He cannot be creative. He cannot deduce. He cannot recall. He cannot compare. He cannot decide or understand. In short, he cannot think.

After the believer's mind has received the attack from evil spirits in this area, he will feel that his mind is imprisoned, as if he can think of nothing. It seems as if something is missing, and a kind of dizzy feeling looms over him, making it impossible for him to produce anything from within. Once the believer's mental ability is bound, he will spontaneously have an exaggerated view of everything. In the eyes of such a one, a pile of dirt will seem like a huge mountain. Everything seems difficult to accomplish, more so than ascending to heaven. He especially dreads those things that require him to use his mind. Nor does he like to converse with others, because this is very difficult. For him to go steadily and diligently forward with his work day by day is like asking him to sacrifice his life. It seems that within him, there is an unseen chain which no one understands. He feels very uncomfortable within to be enslaved this way, and many times there is the thought of resistance. However, he is unable to escape because his mind has been bound by evil spirits so that he is no longer able to think.

Thus, the believer has no alternative but to appear to be dreaming all day long. Time is wasted; he passes his days in the absence of any thought, imagination, reasoning, understanding, or even the mind itself. After the mind has suffered such an attack, the will is spontaneously affected because the mind is the light of the will. In this way, the believer passively allows his environment to toss him about, and he cannot choose anything himself. Alternately, he may be filled with all kinds of dissatisfaction, having no peace and being unable to fight against this bondage to gain the victory. It seems as if there is an invisible barrier to everything. There are many things which he should do, but as soon as he tries, a kind of impulsive feeling swells up in his mind and prevents him from going on. Nothing that he does seems possible; it seems as if his life is filled with difficulty and nothing can satisfy him.

This inactivity in the believer is different from ordinary inactivity. If a believer's mind is merely "inactive," it can still become active when it wants to. However, if it cannot

become "active," it means that it cannot act even when it wants to. He cannot think! It is as if something is over his head and pressing him down. This is a symptom of the severe working of evil spirits.

Many believers who are often worried and anxious have this illness. If we check into their environment and position, we can see that their environment and position are quite good, and they should be joyful and happy. Yet they are full of worries and unhappy thoughts. If you ask for a reason, they cannot give you one good reason. Yet if you ask them to get rid of these thoughts, they cannot do it. Even they themselves cannot explain why they are this way. It seems as if they have fallen into a mud pit and are unable to pull themselves out. It seems that they are already accustomed to worrying and have no more strength to pull themselves out of their situation. This is the work of evil spirits. If it is a natural kind of worry, there must be a cause and a sufficient reason for it. Every worry which does not have a cause or a sufficient reason is from evil spirits. The believer has sunk into this state because he received at one time the thoughts from evil spirits, and he is no longer able to free himself from them. His mind has fallen into a very deep passivity and can no longer act. He always feels that he is chained and full of heavy burdens. It seems that he even cannot see the sun and does not know the truth; it even seems that he cannot exercise his own reasoning. The evil spirits lock up their captive and put him in a stupefied state all day long. They like to see people suffer. Everyone that falls into their hands is treated this way.

## **INSTABILITY**

After the believer's mind is controlled by evil spirits, his thoughts become entirely undependable because he is responsible for very few of his own thoughts. Most of the thoughts are generated by evil spirits in his mind. It is very easy at such a moment for evil spirits to give the believer one kind of thought at one time and give him a completely opposite kind of thought at another time. Because the believer follows these kinds of thoughts, he becomes a vacillating person. People who work with him or who are together with him consider these instant changes as a characteristic of his unstable character. Actually, it is evil spirits who are changing the thoughts in his mind and altering his judgments. We often see a believer saying, "I can," at one moment, and "I cannot," at another moment. In the morning he says, "I want it," but in the afternoon, he changes and says, "I do not want it." This happens because evil spirits will inject the thought of "I can" into the believer's mind at one moment. Then the believer will think that he can really do it. At the next moment, however, evil spirits will inject the thought of "I cannot" into his mind. Then he will begin to think that he cannot do it, and he will change what he said at the beginning. In many conversations, when the tone suddenly changes, we can detect the work of evil spirits in the minds of men. The believer himself may hate such a vacillating life, but he is not his own person and has no way to stabilize himself. At the same time, if he does not act according to the injected thought, evil spirits will imitate the voice of his conscience and accuse him of not acting according to God's leading. Since he wants to avoid this kind of accusation, he has no choice but to fluctuate back and forth before men. Many fluctuating works have this source as their origin. When a believer listens to the suggestions of evil spirits in his mind, he ends up with many sudden works; when evil spirits change the subject, the believer's work changes with it. Evil spirits always make people think at the wrong time. They will wake up the believer in the middle of the night and tell him what he should do. If the believer does not do it, they will accuse him. Or they will tell the believer to change his way in the middle of the night and cause the believer to make very important decisions at a time when the mind is most confused. If we investigate the source of these matters, we will

see that many sudden changes in events are the result of the work of evil spirits in the minds of men.

## **TALKATIVENESS**

Believers who have evil spirits working in their minds sometimes do not like to talk with people because they have no strength to listen to people. The tides of thought in their minds are like rising winds and surging clouds that cannot be stopped by the words of others. However, they can at the same time be very talkative. Since their minds are filled with "thoughts," their mouths cannot help being filled with words. A mind that cannot listen to others, which only wants others to listen to it, is very often a sick mind. Many believers seem to be talkative and gossipy by nature. Actually, they are probably just a machine of evil spirits. Many believers seem to be a kind of "talking machine" of evil spirits!

When many believers are chatting, joking, and slandering behind the backs of others, it seems as if they cannot control their own tongues. They are very clear in their hearts that they do not know what they are talking about. Even when they know what they are talking about, they often do not know how to stop or restrict their unprofitable words. It is as if an idea comes into their minds, and it cannot wait for even the slightest consideration before it comes out as words in their mouths. The tides of thoughts roll in and cause believers to speak many things involuntarily. Their tongues are no longer under the control of the mind and will. Many words that the mind has not thought through and that the will has not decided to say, nevertheless, are spoken. Sometimes words that are completely contrary to a person's motive and will are uttered. Only when such a person is reminded of his actions does he wonder why he spoke those words. This all occurs because the mind is passive. Evil spirits can utilize man's tongue through the passive mind. In the beginning, evil spirits just mix their thoughts with man's mind. Later, they mix themselves in with man's words also. When that happens, his mind will no longer be able to understand the thoughts of others or remember anything.

A believer should insure that his words have passed through his own mind first. All the words that have not passed through the thinking process are from evil spirits.

## **STUBBORNNESS**

After a believer's mind has fallen into passivity and been occupied by evil spirits, he will never listen to the explanation or evidence of others in any matter in which he has already made a decision. If others try to explain something more to him, he will think that they are invading his freedom. Furthermore, in his view, the one who is telling him something is very foolish and can never understand what he understands. His thoughts may be extremely wrong, but he thinks that he has reasons that cannot be explained. Since his mind has become completely passive, he does not know how to use his own reasoning to deduce, differentiate, or judge anymore. Instead, he indiscriminately takes in every thought that evil spirits inject into him, and considers them to be the most perfect thoughts. He may also hear supernatural voices and consider them to be the will of God. In his view, these voices are speaking laws to him, and no one can make him use his reasoning to check the source of these voices. If he has received any thoughts, voices, or teachings, he will think that he can never be mistaken and is absolutely secure. He will not want to test, check, consider, or reason again. He will become absolutely closed and defensive, and he will not want to know about anything else. Neither his own reason and conscience nor the explanations and theories of others can change him at all. Once he believes that God is leading him, it is as if his brain becomes sealed by a tight seal and



cannot be changed again. Since he does not use his own reasoning, he is subject to any deception by evil spirits and is completely ignorant of it himself. Those with only a little understanding will know his danger, yet he himself will be quite content. People who have been worked on by evil spirits to this extent are very difficult to recover.

## **THE PHENOMENON OF THE EYES**

The passivity of the mind and the attack of evil spirits can very easily be detected from the eyes, because no part of man's being expresses his mind more than his eyes. If the mind is passive, a believer can be reading a book with his eyes, but nothing enters his mind, and nothing is retained in his memory. When he talks with people, his eyes wander around in all directions, jump up and down, or change direction abruptly. Sometimes this can be very rude. It seems that he is not able to look directly into the faces of others. However, at other times, he fixes his gaze on the faces of others as if some unknown power is keeping his eyes from moving away.

This kind of staring can be very dangerous at times, because this is the way evil spirits lead a believer into the state of a spirit medium. In many meetings, the believers stare at the speaker's face for a long time, and are unable to hear what he is speaking; instead, they allow evil spirits to give them many thoughts or visions.

Regarding the use of our own eyes, we should note whether the turning of our eyes follows the consciousness of our mind, or whether they look at things without following the instruction of our will. When the mind is passive, our eyes are very easily dimmed; they see strange things which they were never asked to see. At the same time, they have no strength to concentrate upon what they want to see.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, even though the attacks of evil spirits upon the minds of the believers are a many and varied phenomena, the principle of stopping a person from having control of himself is the same. Originally in God's ordination, all the faculties of man (the mind being one of them) were completely under man's control. But because a believer will unconsciously give ground to evil spirits, they are able to occupy his mind, and they are able to operate independently and without interference from his will. Therefore, when he discovers any act in his mind that is independent from his will, he should realize that he is being attacked by evil spirits.

Whoever cannot be active when he should be active and quiet when he should be quiet; whoever is out of control and filled with thoughts and confusion; whoever labors without any result; whoever cannot work in the daytime and dreams at night, whoever is restless, hysterical, and hesitant; whoever cannot be watchful, focused, and discerning; whoever cannot remember things; and whoever is inexplicably fearful, frustrated, and perplexed is suffering from the work of evil spirits and from things that are unknown to man.