

The Night Visitor

Overcoming the "Incubus Spirit"

by Fr. Peter C. Sanders

An "Incubus" spirit phenomenon takes place when a woman repeatedly experiences some kind of "paralysis" during the time she is in bed. This is often accompanied by the feeling of a "presence" in, on or near the bed, and frequently the woman feels as if the "presence" is pressing on her chest or even as far as attempting sexual penetration. There is a similar experience that a certain percentage of men have which is called the "Succumbus" spirit.

Are these actual "demonic" attacks? Could they have a psychological or physiological basis? Are they ghosts (souls of the dead) or even angels? It is helpful to look at this phenomenon from a variety of viewpoints, consider why it takes place and then we can go towards a solution.

The symptoms

I have dealt with a number of women and men who came to me reporting these experiences. The kinds of experiences and reactions that they produce vary considerably, yet there are some commonalities that can help us define what is going on.

Several women have reported simply the sensation of a "presence" with them as they were in bed trying to sleep. One related that this took place even with her husband beside her. Many have related that the presence would press down on her, particularly in the chest area, and prevent movement or talking. Another woman told me she was "visited" one or two times a month, and felt the presence quite benign. She was even fascinated by it to the point of seduction. Upon further investigation, it turns out many members of her family experience the same. Interestingly, her sister was a prostitute, with a long line of family sexual brokenness.

What is the cause?

There are generally two trends to consider in drawing conclusions about the origin of this:

- the spiritual phenomenon
- the empirical scientific explanation

If one is open to a spiritual explanation, then it becomes clear that this experience can be of demonic origin.

In the kingdom of darkness, spiritual entities — demonic powers — are employed and given the 'assignment' of visiting individuals and exploiting whatever weakness they have. In the case of the Incubus phenomenon, the vulnerability is usually sexual. In that it is seductive, this process can be built up in the structure of the person's character over a long period of time, and becomes a "stronghold" — something in the person that is held strongly to keep her in this place of bondage. It all occurs with this goal: to detour her from the fullness of life and freedom in Christ and enslave them, or at least inhibit them from the purpose of service in God's Kingdom.

The empirical scientific explanation names this phenomenon "Sleep Paralysis" accompanied by delusions and hallucinations. This theory holds that the experience takes place between REM (rapid eye movement, during dream states) and NREM (non-REM) sleep and is attributable to physiological, namely the trigger of "sustained hyper-polarization of the motorneurons." My feeling is that the more scientific explanation cannot be immediately dismissed. It can also be a vulnerability that can be taken advantage of by diabolic forces.

How did this happen?

With respect to the spiritual diabolic infestation, when a Christian is affected habitually by diabolical manifestations it indicates that there has been some level of consent for that to take place, that is to say a spiritual “door” was opened. This consent can take place in a passive (or tacit) way, by simply *not opposing* something which is out of God’s order. In the case of the Incubus spirit, there most likely was a point in the sexual history of the individual or her / his family-generational line that provided an entry point for demonic activity, thus making the individual / family vulnerable. It most likely occurred through a person, place, organization or entity that had it’s own infestation. In this transaction, unholy or unclean bonds are formed to transmit this iniquity. Every time this stronghold is acted upon by the psycho-sexual dimension of the person’s being, iniquity is engaged; it is reenforced and the Image of God is increasingly disfigured.

Someone once said, “The problem is with strongholds is that they are ideas, attitudes or passions which blind us to the knowledge of God and to obeying Christ. That is what makes them so insidious and disorienting — we are made less and less able to recognize that our way of thinking, attitudes or passions are blocking us — “we don’t know that we don’t know.”

It can take place by engaging a fascination with the “presence” which is really a demonic force (as it presents itself in subtle seductive forms), like the woman I referred to above, or it can be directly engaged and invited. According to the level of consent, the degree and severity of the infestation can become more grave, To that degree, the Image of God in the person has be engaged and compromised. Thus, the demonic entity has an agreement (covenant) to act in the way that *it* chooses. In the case of the Incubus, a “legal right” is established for it to act until the consent is withdrawn and the stronghold is dismantled over time.

What can be done about the Incubus Spirit?

1. Do foundational work

FAITH: Jesus Christ did all his healing and deliverance ministry in the atmosphere of faith. This means that he called people to believe and put their trust in him. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, “faith is a personal adherence ... to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed” (Cat. #150). We believe in a personal Savior who wants us to accept him personally, with all he has done, and all he has revealed for our life in him. The one who has been afflicted with an Incubus spirit first of all invites Jesus to be the One and Only Savior of her / his life, and vows to believe and obey all Jesus said.

CONVERSION: This means to repent of and renounce *all* things that are contrary to God’s word, including sin and a sinful patterns and any superstitious or idolatrous actions in the past or present. All occult objects in the person’s environment must be gotten rid of and not made available to anyone else.

EMBRACING THE FATHER’S WILL: This is a re-orientation of life, putting aside one’s own plans and ambitions, and striving to acknowledge that true happiness is in doing what God the Father has planned for life, with all its consequences.

2. Invite the power of Jesus’ deliverance and healing into personal and family history

Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind the times you have engaged the flesh that might have been a point of entry for the Incubus spirit. This includes each and every specific incident in which consent was given, actively or passively, to act sexually in a wrong or misdirected way.

Write out a complete sexual history. Include occasions of fornication, adultery, masturbation, pornography, deliberate entertaining of fantasies and other perversions of sexuality. Writing it down manifests impact and also gives a sense of overall patterns and the formation of strongholds. If you are Catholic put these in a special way under the precious Blood of Jesus by going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

3. Close the door in prayer

A.) Take authority over demonic powers, saying, "in the name of Jesus Christ I bind every Incubus [or Succumbus] spirit and associate spirits in His precious Blood. I command them to depart and go immediately to the Presence of Jesus Christ [in his Blessed Sacrament]."

B.) Explicitly invite the Lord Jesus to each incident and ask Him to exercise his authority over it and heal the damage that was done in you and the other person (if another person was there).

C.) Absolutely, completely, permanently withdraw your consent —active or passive — to that action and any demonic forces to act or enter through it: Say, "in the name of Jesus, I absolutely and totally withdraw my consent to this action. I renounce it forever and block every legal right of any satanic forces from acting through it."

D.) Demolish the strongholds. Declare, "In Jesus' name I come against every stronghold of Incubus [Succumbus] and any sleep disorder, I pull down, dismantle and destroy them." Other names of strongholds can and will be revealed. They can be treated in the same way.

E.) Cut the bonds: Say, "in the name of Jesus I cut and sever every unclean and unholy bond between me and this person [name the person, organization, or entity]."

F.) Bind yourself to Jesus: Say, "I bind myself, my sexuality and my brokenness to the Blood of Jesus Christ, for His highest and best purpose for my life."

G.) If you are Catholic, attend the Eucharist with the special personal purpose or intention of deliverance.

H.) Other deliverance prayers may be necessary with people who are appropriately trained.

4. Keep the door closed: On-going work (probably for a long season)

Continue the following on a daily basis for as long as necessary:

A.) Cut unholy and unclean bonds between you and anyone in your past or present with whom there maybe a strong, distorted emotional/sexual tie. This continues until there is a "knowing" in your spirit that this issue is resolved.

B.) Proclaim the destruction of strongholds in you against the knowledge of God and obedience to Christ. These may include, perversion, disordered sexual desires, stubbornness, deceitfulness, pride, etc. They will come to your conscientiousness as you need to deal with them.

C.) Explicitly tell God that you give Him permission and exclusive legal rights to change you, your attitudes, the way you think and the way you feel.

D.) Explicit and honest accountability and obedience to someone concerning your spiritual and sexual issues.

5. What to do if there is an "attack"?

If it is possible to speak, say, "I cover myself with the Blood of Jesus Christ, and profess Him alone as my Master and Savior. I renounce and command every Incubus spirit in the name of Jesus to depart, and go immediately to the Presence of Jesus [in the nearest Blessed Sacrament]." Thank the Lord for His deliverance.

If it is not possible to speak, then pronounce interiorly the name of Jesus and saturate every part of your being with His precious Blood.