

Macbeth: Daemonologie & Geography

From *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue, published in three books* by James VI of Scotland (later James I of England and Scotland), published in 1597. James I wrote this explanation of witches' behavior and actions as a dialogue, where one character (Philomathes) asks questions, and the other, more knowledgeable character (Epistemon) answers.

[Epistemon]: Every one of them proposes unto him, what wicked turn they would have done, either for obtaining of riches, or for revenging them upon any whom they have malice at...

[Philomathes]: What can be the cause that there are twenty women given to that craft, where there is one man?

[Epistemon]: The reason is easy, for as that sex is frailer than man is, so is it easier to be entrapped in these gross snares of the Devil, as was over well proved to be true, by the Serpent's deceiving of Eve at the beginning.

[Epistemon]: They can make men or women to love or hate other, which may be very possible to the Devil to effectuate, seeing he be a subtle spirit, knows well enough how to persuade the corrupted affection of them whom God will permit him so to deal with; they can lay the sickness of one upon another, which likewise is very possible unto him: For as an old practician, he knows well enough what humor dominates most in any of us, and as a spirit he can subtly walken up the same, making it peccant, or to abound, as he thinks meete for troubling of us, when God will so permit him...

[Epistemon]: They can raise storms and temples in the air, either upon Sea or land, though not universally, but in such a particular place and prescribed bounds, as God will permit them so to trouble... They can make spirits either to follow and trouble persons, or haunt certain houses, and affray oftentimes the inhabitants: as has been known to be done by our Witches at this time.

[Philomathes]: But will God permit these wicked instruments by the power of the Devil their master, to trouble by any of these means, any that believes in him.

[Epistemon]: No doubt, for there are three kinds of folks whom God will permit so to be tempted or troubled; the wicked for their horrible sins, to punish them in the like measure; the godly that are sleeping in any great sins or infirmities and weakness is faith, to waken them up the faster by such an uncouth form: and even some of the best, that their patience may be tried before the world as Job was.

Respond to the following questions in complete ideas.

According to the text:

1. What motivates witches to wickedness?
2. Why are witches usually women?
3. Describe the four examples the article gives of the wicked things witches can do.
4. Who are the three types of people God will allow witches to trouble? Why?

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The Geography of Macbeth

