



The Biblical Demonology

Demons and the Superstitious Mind



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Why people are reluctant to tempt fate.

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The present research explored the belief that it is bad luck to "tempt fate." Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated that people do indeed have the intuition that actions that tempt fate increase the likelihood of negative outcomes. Studies 3-6 examined our claim that the intuition is due, in large part, to the combination of the automatic tendencies to attend to negative prospects and to use accessibility as a cue when judging likelihood. Study 3 demonstrated that negative outcomes are more accessible following actions that tempt fate than following actions that do not tempt fate. Studies 4 and 5 demonstrated that the heightened accessibility of negative outcomes mediates the elevated perceptions of likelihood. Finally, Study 6 examined the automatic nature of the underlying processes. The types of actions that are thought to tempt fate as well as the role of society and culture in shaping this magical belief are discussed. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2012 APA, all rights reserved)

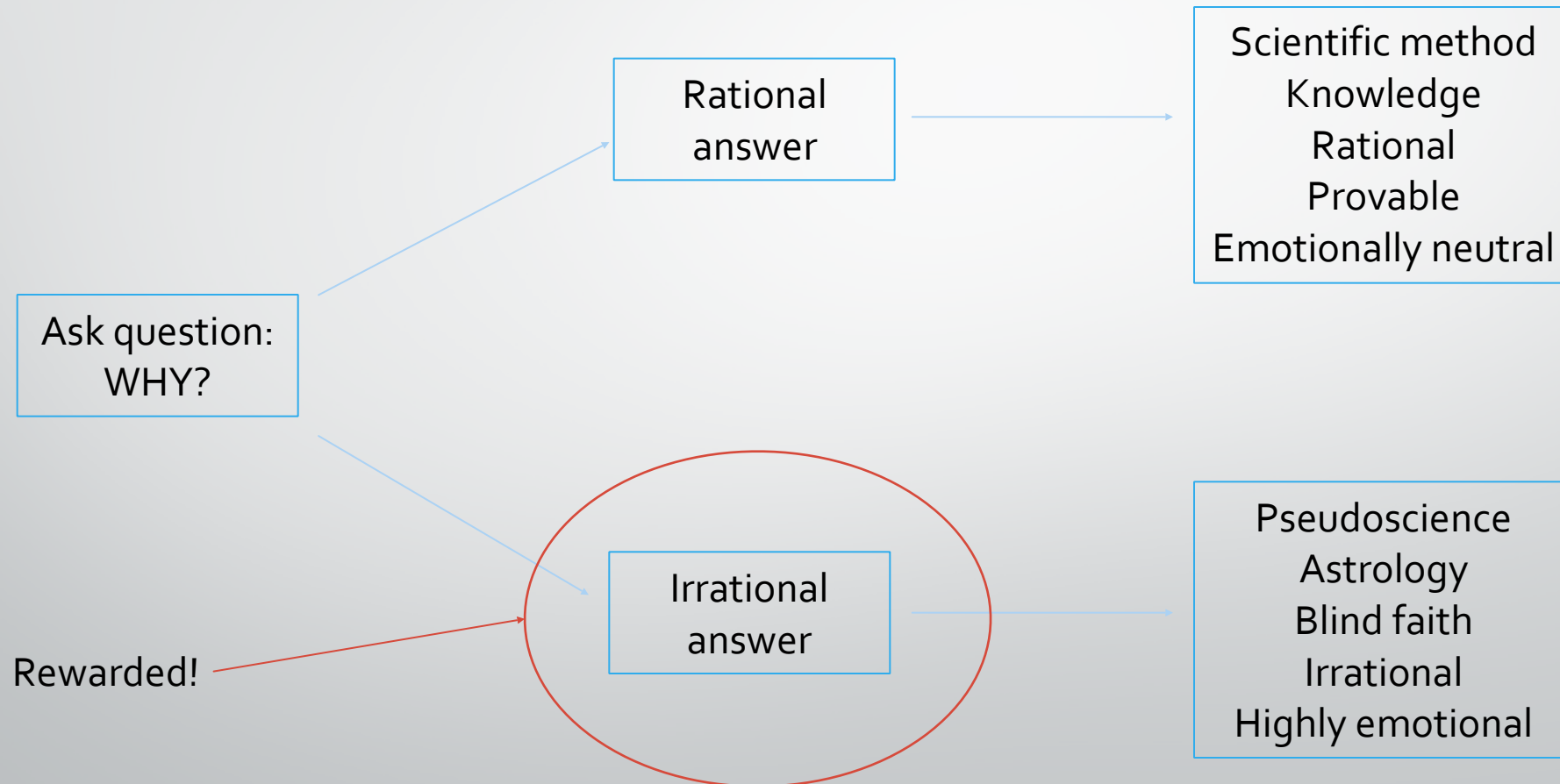
Cognitive Processing

- Associative processing: a fast, parallel processing mode characterised by spreading activation based on memory. This type of processing occurs outside focal awareness.
- Reasoning: a slow, serial type of processing that occurs within focal awareness and requires an active effort.

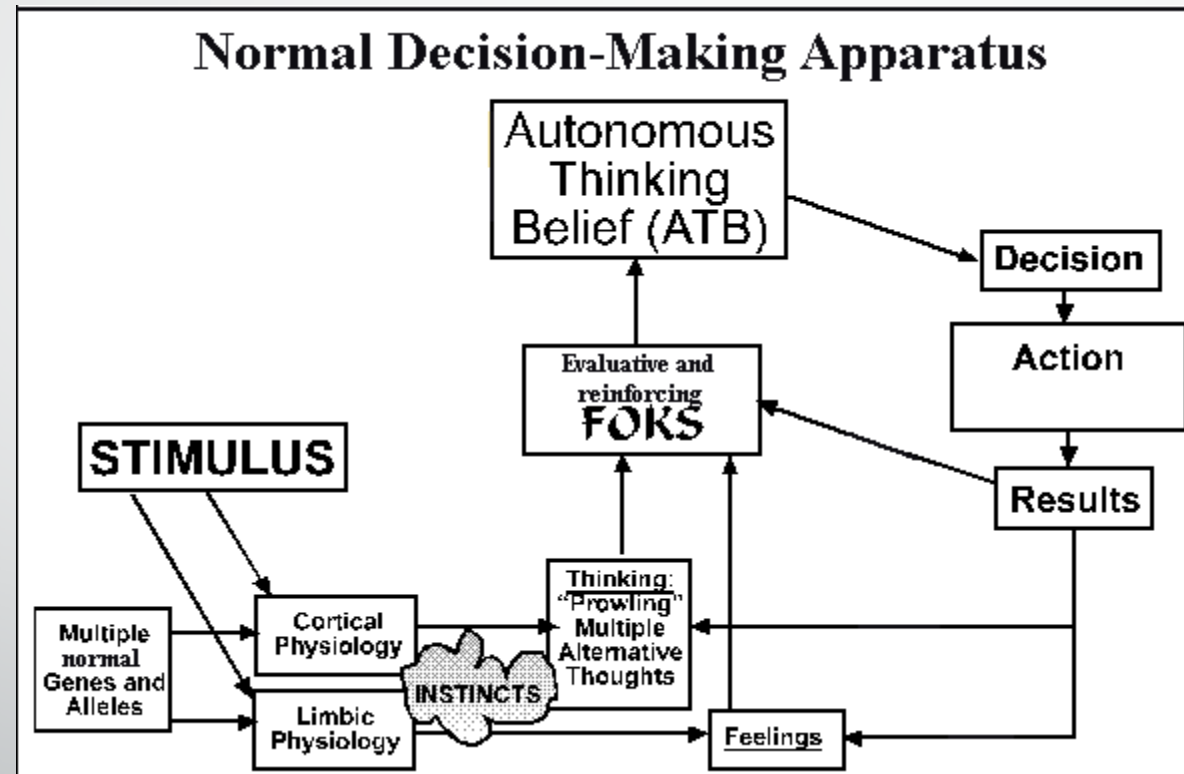
Why?



Superstition Instinct



Feel OK System



Why?



Pagan gods

Pagan rituals



Why?



Invisible forces

Superstitious rituals



Demons in the Old Testament

- "And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto **devils**" (Lev. 17:7 KJV)
- "They provoked him to jealousy with strange *gods*, with abominations provoked they him to anger. (17) They sacrificed unto **devils** (*shed*)" (Deut. 32:16-17 KJV)
- "And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the **devils** (*satyr*), and for the calves which he had made." (2 Chr. 11:15 KJV)
- "nor of mischance and the **demon** (*diamonia*) of noonday." (Psa. 91:6 LXX)
- "That all the gods of the nations are **demons** (*diamonia*); but as for the Lord, He made the heavens." (Psa. 96:5 LXX)
- Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto **devils** (*shed*)" (Psa. 106:37 KJV)
- "They will sacrifice in the gardens and burn incense on the tiles to **demons** (*diamonia*) which have not an existence." (Isa. 65:3 LXX)

What the Nations Said

- Demons can:
 - Summon thunder and lightning
 - Bring disease
 - Cause natural disaster
 - Bring good luck

Caused by Demons or God?

- “They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat*, and with bitter destruction...” (Deuteronomy 32:24)
- * Hebrew = “resheph”

Resheph

from Encyclopædia Britannica www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=64866



Bronze figurine from Samaria of Resheph holding a mace and shield; c. 1200 BC.
Erich Lessing—Art Resource

- (Hebrew “the Burner” or “the Ravager”)
- ancient West Semitic god of the plague and of the underworld, the companion of Anath, and the equivalent of the Babylonian god Nergal. He was also a war god and was thus represented as a bearded man brandishing an ax, holding a shield, and wearing a tall, pointed headdress with a goat's or gazelle's head on his forehead. Resheph was worshiped especially at Ras Shamra, Byblos...