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Where Do Demons Go?, Bipolar Disorder And Manic Disorder, Demonic Possession, Modern Science Versus The Scriptures, Oppression And Possession, King Saul's Demonic Oppression, Controlling Our Thoughts, Our Mind The Battlefield, Paul's Thorn In The Flesh, Jacob Wrestles With An Angel, Paul's Sufferings, Ripe Conditions For Demonic Possession, Our Evil Violent World, Mary Magdalene, Judas' Possession, Connection Between Sickness And Demonic Possession, Children As Victims Of Sickness And Demonic Possession, Satan More Powerful Than God?, Job's Afflictions, Satan Works By God's Permission, God Creates Deaf Dumb Blind Etc., God Is In Complete Control

Recently, a certain person wrote to me and asked me the following two questions: "If a person is under demonic possession and the demon is cast out, where does it go? Can it go into young children who are in the same house?" This same person went on to explain that another person in her family suffers from bipolar disorder. The Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary offers us the following definitions regarding this disease and associated words:

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Bipolar Disorder - An affective disorder characterized by periods of mania alternating with periods of depression, usually interspersed with long intervals of normal mood. Formerly manic depressive illness.

Manic Disorder - A type of affective disorder characterized by euphoric mood, excessive activity and talkativeness, impaired judgment, and sometimes psychotic symptoms, as grandiose illusions.

Mania - excessive excitement or enthusiasm; craze.

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Being as I am not a doctor or a psychologist, and thus do not possess a background in these areas, and also because I neither personally know the individual who has written to me, nor the family member who is said to be affected by this malady, obviously, I cannot offer any kind of valid medical judgment regarding their situation. Thus, my comments will be limited to discussing the possible spiritual nature of their situation, which again, will be based upon the information which this person has provided to me.

As a result of her Christian background, this person has arrived at the conclusion that what she has been witnessing in the other family member, is a form of demonic possession. She also relates that any attempts to free the afflicted person from these assumed demonic attacks, through spiritual

intervention, have failed.

Now, obviously, I realize that some people involved in the aforementioned professions, who might be reading this, will be quick to scoff at this woman's claims, and dismiss them as nothing more than the ramblings of a Christian fanatic who has a limited knowledge and understanding of "true" science. Allow me to clarify that the point of this series is not to offer a definitive conclusion regarding whether or not all mental disorders are a result of demonic possession; it is merely to provide useful information regarding demonic possession, as it is found in the Bible, so that you the reader can arrive at your own conclusions. Let us begin by turning to the Gospel of Matthew. In the twelfth chapter, Jesus had this to say:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." Matthew 12:43-45, KJV

In these verses, we have a clear example of a man who had been possessed by a devil, or unclean spirit if you prefer, who was apparently freed of the same, and yet who came under demonic possession again. As I point out in other articles, it is my understanding that there is a difference between demonic oppression, and demonic possession. In other words, I classify demonic oppression as being bothered by a demon from without, while I view demonic possession as actually being possessed by a demon from within. In the former, the person has not become a vehicle, or receptacle for that evil spirit, while in the latter he has.

One Biblical story which comes to mind, is that of King Saul. While I am not exactly certain, I think that Saul's case might be classified more as an oppression rather than as outright possession, because the spirit did not reside within him continually, but rather came and oppressed him occasionally, and then left again when David played his harp. We find the story in the First Book of the Prophet Samuel, where we read as follows:

"But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me

David thy son, which is with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul. And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

1 Samuel 16:14-23, KJV

This event of God's spiritual anointing departing from King Saul must have left a heavy impression on young David. Years later, after David himself had become king, and after he had seriously sinned against the Lord, by plotting the death of his general, Uriah, in order to cover his sin of having committing adultery with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, David too must have feared that the Lord might remove His Spirit from him. Thus, in his heart-felt prayer of repentance, which we Christians today know as Psalm 51, David wrote:

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." Psalms 51:9-11, KJV

Before leaving the story of Saul's oppression behind, I do want to bring one important point to your attention; and that is that the evil spirit which was afflicting Saul was sent by the Lord. The verse clearly states "an evil spirit from the LORD". Please remember this point, as it will be related to other comments I will be making in this series.

Many of you reading this will undoubtedly be familiar with what we might classify as a less dramatic form of spiritual oppression. I am referring to such things as discouragement, doubts, fears, temptations, etc. These are types of outward attacks which target our primary battleground; that is, our minds. As I point out in some of my articles which deal with the topic of spiritual warfare, it is for this very reason that the Apostle Paul admonishes us in the following manner:

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" 2 Corinthians 10:5, KJV

"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Hebrews 12:3, KJV

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:2, KJV

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Corinthians 2:16, KJV

So Paul advises us to bring every thought into captivity, and to have the mind of Christ. In other words, Paul is telling us that we must exercise control over our thoughts, submit ourselves to God's Will, just as Jesus did, and not allow Satan to enter therein with his lies, doubts, fears, discouragements and temptations; because if we fail in this area, if we grow weary and faint in our minds, and weaken in our thoughts, that demon of darkness will no doubt do his best to try to enter in, in full force, until we are totally defeated. I further discuss putting on the mind of Christ in such articles as "So You Think You Are So Humble?".

Only two chapters later, after advising us to control our every thought, we discover that Paul suffered from outward attacks in a much more serious manner. Paul candidly writes the following to the Corinthian brethren:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." 2 Corinthians 12:7, KJV

Some of you may be aware of the fact that there has been a considerable amount of debate regarding the exact meaning of the previous verse. I offer some of my own speculations in such articles as "Why Doesn't God Heal Me?". What exactly was Paul's "thorn in the flesh" which God used to keep him humble, or as Paul writes, "lest I should be exalted above measure"? Poor eyesight perhaps which may have been a result of his Supernatural Encounter on the road to Damascus? His pride? While these are some of the theories which have been put forth, which even I myself have previously considered, as I was just re-reading the verse, I became curious and looked up the word "buffet" in my Greek lexicon. It states in part:

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kolaphizo {kol-af-id'-zo}

- 1) to strike with the fist, give one a blow with the fist
- 2) to maltreat, treat with violence and contumely

----- End Quote -----

While I already understood the meaning of the word "buffet", it wasn't until I read the previous definitions, that the idea occurred to me, that perhaps Paul may have literally meant that he was receiving physical blows to his body by some "messenger of Satan". Please don't be too quick to dismiss such a possibility. The idea of being touched, or struck, or sexually abused by invisible forces is nothing new. There have been documented cases of such occurrences which are known within the halls of psychology and other related fields. Furthermore, all such attacks are not self-inflicted. In fact, as you may already know, there is a very clear Biblical precedent. I was immediately reminded of the story of Jacob's nighttime wrestling match with a rather unusual individual, as it is found in Genesis chapter thirty-two, where we read:

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

Genesis 32:24-30, KJV

Here we have a clear example of a human wrestling with what was clearly an Angelic Being. While at the beginning of the account, he is referred to as a man, from the Hebrew "iysh", it soon becomes apparent from the outcome of the story, that this Visitor, was not only very visible, and very physical, but he also was not of our world. He was sent from the Other World, in order to convey a special blessing upon Jacob, but not before testing him, and in fact, humbling him. Similar to Paul, the self-righteous, law-abiding Pharisee, who in his pride and spiritual blindness, persecuted the Christian brethren, Jacob too was a proud, cunning deceiver who stole both his brother's birthright and blessing. Whether or not Jacob remained crippled for life after the Angelic Messenger had dislocated his thigh is a matter of speculation; but if such was the case, it undoubtedly contributed to keeping Jacob a more humble man; just as Paul tells us that the purpose of his "thorn in the flesh" was to keep him humble.

So if Jacob had an actual physical conflict with an Angelic Messenger, is it also possible that Paul is telling us that he likewise wrestled with a demonic messenger who struck him with physical blows? An interesting possibility indeed! Of course, we cannot dismiss a more mundane explanation either; and that is that, according to Paul's own words, as well as the writings of Luke, Paul and his companions were indeed physically assaulted by flesh and blood persons, such as the unbelieving Jews of the Diaspora, that is, the Dispersion, during their various missionary journeys throughout the areas of southwestern Asia and southern Europe. So whether Paul is talking about a direct confrontation with a demon, or is merely referring to persons who were possessed by demons, the end result is still the same: He was physically, and violently, attacked. As the Lord had spoken earlier to Ananias at the beginning of Paul's ministry:

"But the Lord said unto him [to Ananias], Go thy way: for he [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:15-16, KJV

Only a chapter earlier in that same second Epistle to the brethren at Corinth, Paul tells us of his many sufferings in his own words, as we see here:

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

2 Corinthians 11:23-27, KJV

For more information regarding this topic of the Apostle Paul's sufferings and persecutions, please refer to the article, "A Biblical Cafeteria, Or The Whole Course?".

But let us return to the words of our Lord found in Matthew chapter twelve. Concerning actual demonic possession, the question which arises in my mind is this: Exactly what kind of place would a demon, or group of demons, find hospitable? What would attract them in the first place? I would think that a primary requirement would be a willing victim; that is, someone who has knowingly opened up their life to sin and evil. As we have already seen, it would also be someone who is weak in their mind, who does not know how to fend off Satan's attacks; that is, the lies, temptations, doubts and fears which he so skillfully uses against us. Sadly, there are a lot of people living in the world today who would seem to fall into this very category. I was just reminded of the following verses, which perfectly describe the world in which we live today. Paul is quoting here from the Psalms, Proverbs, and the Prophet Isaiah. If things were this bad in Paul's day, just think how much worse they must be today:

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Romans 3:10-18, KJV

But looking again to the examples found in the Bible, Mary Magdalene, the prostitute turned dedicated follower, most certainly qualified as a candidate for demonic possession. In fact, we are clearly told in two of the Gospels, that Jesus cast seven devils out of her, as we see by the following verses:

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." Mark 16:9, KJV

"And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went

seven devils," Luke 8:2, KJV

So, as you can see, some people actually invite demons into their lives through their own sinful lifestyles. So it would seem then, that rebellion against God's Laws, such as His moral laws, creates an avenue for demonic possession. We find another clear-cut example of demonic possession in the case of Judas Iscariot, the Lord's betrayer. His heart was obviously not right with God. Judas was filled with doubts, and obviously greed; and thus, he made himself a target of demonic attack. The following verses certainly seem to suggest that his was a case of outright demonic possession:

"When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus's bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus's breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."
John 13:21-27, KJV

"Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John 6:70, KJV

Please notice that those verses very specifically state that "Satan entered into him". The Greek word used there, which is translated as "entered", is "eiserchomai", which the Greek lexicon defines as "to go out or come in: to enter". One of the sub-definitions also states "of Satan taking possession of the body of a person". So again, it seems that Judas was not just oppressed from without, he was possessed from within. Extending this thought further, is it possible that Satan himself, and not merely a demonic subordinate, possessed Judas? Is it possible that Satan wanted to make sure that the job got done right? Considering that one verse states that "Satan entered into him", while the other says that he "is a devil", I think it would be wise to leave this question open. Regardless of who possessed Judas, we know what the final outcome of that possession was.

It should be noted, however, that not all demonic possession may be a result of personal sin and rebellion against God's Laws. There may be other causes and reasons for it. As I've explained in some of my articles, contrary to modern science and medicine, which by its very nature attempts to attribute scientific and medical causes to all human maladies, God's Word makes it very clear that some bodily afflictions are the direct result of demonic possession, or at the very least, demonic oppression from without. When Jesus healed certain people, how did He do it? Did He use some medicinal herb, as if the problem was merely physical or mechanical in nature? No. We are plainly told that the Lord went right to the source of the problem; He cast out a demon, or perhaps even a group of demons. Consider this prime example:

"And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose." Mark 9:17-27, KJV

So here we see a young man who had been both deaf and dumb since he was a young child. It appears from the verses that not only could the young man not speak, nor hear, but that he also possibly suffered from periods of insanity, as well as epileptic fits which caused him bodily harm. Contrary to the modern medical view, Jesus recognized this man's problem as a clear case of demonic possession; and thus, He worked a miracle accordingly. Notice that the writer, Mark, uses the phrase "foul spirit", and that the Lord very specifically commands "Thou dumb and deaf spirit...come out of him". This clearly points to a spiritual cause, for what is viewed by modern medical professionals as a wholly mental and physical affliction. The spiritual aspect of the problem evades them.

They haven't yet made the connection between one's mental and physical state, and one's spiritual condition; because they have been trained to believe that everything must have a plausible scientific explanation. The idea that Satan, or one or more of his demons, might gain control of a person's mind, and thus their very body and physical actions, remains foreign to such professionals. The exception to my statement would probably be some naturopathic doctors, who, according to my limited knowledge of said profession, do place greater emphasis on a person's spiritual well-being, as an important step in their recovery from illnesses of various kinds.

In addition to this connection between the spiritual and the physical, what this story also demonstrates, is that some people, even those in an "innocent" state, such as a child, can become afflicted with a serious bodily ailment, by no fault of their own. Because of the clear link that the Lord made between the physical and the spiritual, this story also supports the belief that even children can become the object of a demonic possession. I am sure that some people will undoubtedly find the previous remark rather unsettling, but as you can see by the Scriptural evidence, this is not just

a fabrication I have dreamed up. I can only share with you what is contained in God's Word. Consider also the following example found in the Gospel of John:

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." John 9:1-3, KJV

Here again, we see a man who was afflicted with blindness from birth. Some non-Christians, and even some Christians, might be tempted to argue that such things are not the work of a loving God. "He would never afflict a baby in such a manner", they might claim. "If some spiritual force is truly involved, it must surely be Satan", they might propose. Yet, if we take a moment to more deeply examine such erroneous statements, what we realize, is that those people who make such claims, are indirectly saying that Satan is in effect more powerful than God. After all, if we continue in their line of thought, we ultimately must ask ourselves, "If God is so powerful, why didn't He stop Satan from afflicting a poor baby in such a manner?". In short, we begin to doubt God's Power; we question His Love; and we even accuse Him of being cruel and unfair; which is exactly what Satan does. In fact, this is what a lot of ungodly antichrists in the world do today. They blaspheme our God, and accuse Him of being some kind of ugly, cruel, uncaring monster. Is this not so?

Naturally, I by no means accept the notion that Satan is more powerful than God. In fact, as I point out in other articles, Satan and his demonic horde cannot perform their evil deeds except by the Will and Permission of God. This point is clearly brought out in the story of the Patriarch Job, where we are told that Satan was only able to touch Job, after God had specifically given him permission to do so, as becomes evident by the following verses:

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD." Job 1:6-12, KJV

"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD,

and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." Job 2:1-7, KJV

In short, while this will be a difficult saying for some of my readers to accept, the simple truth of the matter is that demonic possession, and any physical or mental impairments which may possibly result from demonic possession, cannot occur, unless God allows it to happen for some reason. In my view, there is simply no other way to interpret the verses we have examined thus far. Their meaning seems abundantly clear to me. Either God is in total control of His Creation, including what Satan and his minions are allowed to do, or else He is not. If such mental and physical maladies are the result of demonic oppression, or outright possession, as all of these verses seem to indicate, then this means that God must be allowing these oppressions and possessions to take place, in order to accomplish some Divine Purpose, which is simply beyond our current human understanding. As I have shared many times before, the Lord tells us:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

This controversial view that God allows demonic possession and oppression to occur, along with any mental or physical afflictions which may accompany them, can be substantiated further by the following verse found in the Old Testament. To give you a little bit of background, the Lord had just called Moses from within the Burning Bush, and dear Moses was complaining that he was too slow of speech; which some people interpret as meaning that Moses may have stuttered. Please consider how the Lord replied to Moses at the time, as it is rather revealing, and perhaps even shocking for some people:

"And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?" Exodus 4:11, KJV

So there it is in black and white straight from God's Word. It is like a simple mathematical equation of one plus one equals two. In the previous verse, the Lord clearly tells us that He makes the dumb, the deaf, and the blind; and we can assume by logical extension that His statement would include any other form of human malady as well. In the Gospels, when people were healed of such things, we have clearly seen that Jesus identified and cast out a demon or a group of demons,

as the source of the problem. So, if one plus one equals two, then the result of our equation must by necessity be, that the way that God allows certain people to be afflicted by such things, is by using Satan, or at least his demons, to either oppress or possess their bodies. You will recall that earlier in this series, I also pointed out to you how it was the Lord who caused an evil spirit to overcome stubborn King Saul. God was, is, and will always be, in complete control of His entire Creation.

As we continue this series in part two, we will look at such topics as Micaiah and the lying spirit, being deceived by our own choice, lying spirits and false prophets, free will and personal choice, learning through hard experience, God knows His children, His sheep hear His voice, group possession and demon transferral, Jewish elders were the children of Satan, defining gnashing with teeth, the martyrdom of Stephen, the day of Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit, our bodies are spiritual temples, the Fruits of the Spirit, our example speaks volumes, mechanical failures, our temporal existence, spiritual and mental link, extended punishment, afflictions not due to sin, healing as a way to glorify God, God honors faith, reasons for our afflictions, and folly of judging God. I trust that you will join me.

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Micaiah And The Lying Spirit, Deceived By Choice, God Chooses Delusions, Lying Spirits And False Prophets, Free Will And Personal Choice, Learning Through Hard Experience, God Knows His Children, His Sheep Will Hear His Voice, Group Possession Demon Transferral, Jewish Elders Were The Children Of Satan, Defining Gnashing With Teeth, Martyrdom Of Stephen, Day Of Pentecost And Gift Of Holy Spirit, Our Bodies Are Spiritual Temples, Fruits Of The Spirit, Our Example Speaks Volumes, Mechanical Failures, Our Temporal Existence, Spiritual And Mental Link, Extended Punishment, Some Afflictions Not Due To Sin, Healing As Avenue To Glorify God, God Honors Faith, Reasons For Some Afflictions, Don't Judge Or Question God

As I concluded in part one, God is in absolute control of His Creation; both His physical Creation, as well as His spiritual Creation, including Satan and all of his demons. Through Scriptural analysis, we have seen how these negative spiritual forces are behind some of the mental and physical ailments which afflict people, including babies and young children, and that all of these things apparently occur with God's Permission. God can send a good spirit to perform some deed, just as He can also send an evil spirit to perform an action, and it is not for us to question God's Ways. In the story of King Saul, we saw how the Lord sent an evil spirit to afflict the king, as a result of his sins of stubbornness and rebellion against Him. Another Old Testament story which I have shared a number of times before, such as in "Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth", "Have You Been Slain In The Spirit?" and "Great Cloud Of Witnesses: God's Holy Ghosts?", involves King Ahab, the Prophet Micaiah, and the false prophets of Baal.

We find the account in 1 Kings chapter twenty-two. The gist of this amazing story is that Jehoshaphat, who was the king of the southern kingdom of Judah, which was ruled from the city of Jerusalem, went to see Ahab, who was the king of the northern kingdom of Israel, which was ruled from Samaria. This is the same King Ahab and Queen Jezebel who persecuted the Lord's prophet Elijah. The Lord was very upset with Ahab and Jezebel because of their many evil doings, all of which are recorded in 1 Kings chapters sixteen through twenty-two.

To continue, King Ahab revealed his plan to attack Ben-hadad who was the king of Syria. Being a righteous king in some regards, Jehoshaphat asked Ahab if he had first sought the Lord's Will regarding the matter. Being as evil as he was, Ahab wasn't the least bit concerned with how the Lord might view his plans. However, to appease Jehoshaphat so that he would join him in battle at Ramoth-gilead, Ahab called for his prophets. Unknown to Ahab, however, was that the Lord was going to put His own plan into action. He was going to allow Ahab to purposely be deceived by his own prophets, in

order that he might fall in battle. In the following verses, God's true prophet, Micaiah, reveals the deception to the two kings:

"And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee." 1 Kings 22:19-23, KJV

Because Micaiah faithfully obeyed the Lord in spite of the threat to his own life, he was cast into prison by the evil king of Israel. Ahab and Jehoshaphat then went against the king of Syria. During the course of the battle, one of King Beh-hadad's archers shot an arrow up into the air by chance. This arrow found its mark. King Ahab was mortally wounded and died that same day. As had been prophesied, the king's blood was licked up by the dogs when it was washed out of his chariot. Later, his evil queen, Jezebel, was also eaten by dogs.

Just as we examined examples in the New Testament where God permitted demons to shut the ears and mouths of the deaf and the dumb, here we see the Lord doing the exact opposite. He purposely sent a lying spirit to possess King Ahab's false prophets. That spirit used the prophets' bodies and tongues as a medium to communicate a false message to the king, in order that Ahab might be deceived. Why did the Lord allow this to happen? Aside from the fact that Ahab was an evil king who merited punishment, for the same reason that the Apostle Paul tells us that God will send strong delusion in the Last Days; and that is because people no longer love the truth, and actually want to be deceived, as we see here:

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:"
2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, KJV

In fact, the Prophet Isaiah also very directly tells us that God will both choose the type of delusion, and send it, when His children stubbornly refuse to take heed to His Voice, as we see here:

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."
Isaiah 66:4, KJV

In his first Epistle, the Apostle John also advises us to

try, or to test, the spirits, because many false prophets are gone out into the world, who deny that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1, KJV

Please notice how John makes a direct link between lying spirits and false prophets, thus confirming once again that these false emissaries of light are possessed by demonic forces which have taken control of their tongues. Surely this has come to pass in our own day, where there are many self-proclaimed prophets who spout off New Age dogma, and other damnable lies and heresies which are contrary to the true Word of God. The Apostle Peter saw this day coming, and thus he was inspired to write:

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."
2 Peter 2:1-2, KJV

In fact, as I have mentioned many times before, in one of His Endtime sermons, Jesus also warns us that the deceptive tactics of these false prophets will be so great, that they will even attempt to deceive God's very Elect, if it were possible. Consider the following verse found in the Gospel of Matthew:

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."
Matthew 24:24, KJV

At this point, some of my non-Christian readers might be becoming a little confused, and even questioning some of the information I have presented here. One question might be: "You Christians constantly claim that your God is a God of truth; yet you are painting a picture of Him here as one who has no qualms with resorting to lies and deceit in order to accomplish His Purposes. Isn't this rather contradictory? Isn't it even possible that some of those people who claim to be His children might be deceived by such trickery?".

In response to such questions, allow me to state this: As I said early, it is really not our place to question God. To do so is utter foolishness in my mind. To question Him in a negative, critical manner, is basically to place ourselves on the same level as God. That was Satan's mistake, and look where he has ended up. Furthermore, as I also pointed out a moment ago, some of the things that God does are to some degree affected by our personal choices. I wrote an entire article on this topic a number of years ago entitled "Free Will And Personal Choice". If we, due to our pride, and our stubbornness, refuse to bow ourselves to God's Will, and reject the truth of His Word, then He will simply allow us to wallow in our mire, until we have learned our lesson. He

will even send the delusion that we desire.

Allow me to ask you a simple question: Don't we as parents sometimes do the very same thing with our own children? If they are stubborn and foolish enough to rebel against our authority, don't we sometimes let them have their way, even though we realise that they have made a bad choice? Like God our Heavenly Father, we simply know that as much as it may hurt us to watch them suffer, sometimes it is the only way that our children will ever learn their lesson.

Now, concerning deceiving His own children, in agreement with the Scriptures, I believe that God knows those who are His. He knows who He has called into His Kingdom. I don't believe that any of His truly saved, chosen, predestinated children will be lost. Yes, God may temporarily allow us to fall, and to even backslide for a time, so that we might learn some valuable lessons which we might not be able to learn any other way, but I believe that in the end, He will pick us up again. I also believe that, just as Jesus said, God's true children will hear His Voice. They know the True Shepherd, and they recognize the truth of His Word when they find it. I base these beliefs upon verses such as the following:

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28, KJV

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37, KJV

"...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5b, KJV

So again, regardless of how much spiritual deception is allowed to enter into the world, in the end, I believe that God's true children will come to Him, like moths attracted to a light! They won't be deceived for long!

Before leaving behind the story of Micaiah and King Ahab, there is one other interesting point I wish to make. In a sense, what we see occurring with the false prophets of Baal, might be viewed as a form of "group possession". We are not just talking about one individual being possessed, but an entire group of prophets. I honestly can't say that I fully understand the mechanics of the Spirit World, so I am not exactly sure how this one spirit was able to possess all of these false prophets simultaneously, and take control of their tongues. I will even go as far as to suggest that perhaps it didn't exactly happen that way at all.

This brings us to an interesting topic which I first began to discuss the other day on our private Christian mailing

list. In response to the woman who had originally written to me regarding the situation with her afflicted family member, I had made the comment to her that, yes, I did feel that her children might be in danger, if the other family member was truly possessed by a demon, or maybe even a group of demons. This prompted one of our list members to write in and ask me about what she referred to as "demon transferral". Not being associated with organized religion, or knowledgeable of the jargon they like to use, I wasn't familiar with the term, although it is easy enough to understand.

It was in fact this sister's question which motivated me to undertake a deeper study of this topic of demon possession, which has thus resulted in this current series. As is often the case when beginning a new article, I didn't possess the answer to this sister's question. Sometimes my writing is an exercise in faith. I just expect God to give me the answers that I need, as I begin to delve into His Word. It is in the process of teaching others what the Scriptures have to say regarding a topic, that I often learn myself. So as you can see, I am being blessed with new knowledge, even as I am being a blessing to others by sharing what I have learned.

Having said that, I am wondering now if the account of the Prophet Micaiah and evil King Ahab might be the answer we seek. This woman was wondering if there was a Scriptural confirmation for the doctrine of "demon transferral". Well, perhaps this may be it. I would speculate that maybe, just maybe, this lying spirit which was sent by the Lord, simply jumped from one false prophet to the next, took control of their tongue, and spoke the lies which the king wanted to hear. Can I conclusively prove this? No; but I would not dismiss it altogether.

In my mind, it really comes down to a basic question: Can spirits occupy more than one place, or more than one body, at the same time? Wouldn't this seem to make them a little too close to being just like God, who many of us have been taught to believe is omnipresent? If the answer to the first question is "no", then this would seem to add more weight to the possibility that this lying spirit was transferred from one false prophet to the next. The only other possibility that I can see, would be that this lying spirit may not have been alone. Perhaps God sent a number of other lying spirits along with the one mentioned in the story.

Whatever the case may be, I suspect that this may not be the only incident where what I have termed as "group possession" may have occurred. In particular, I am reminded of an account found in the Book of Acts. Before I discuss it however, allow me to briefly mention another topic, as it directly relates to the story found in the Book of Acts. As some of you will already know, Jesus had some very harsh things to say to His self-righteous enemies; that is, the religious leaders of His day who ruled the temple. It was in large part because of some of the Lord's poignant words, that the Jewish Elders sought to kill Him. In particular, I am reminded of the following:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is

made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." Matthew 23:15, KJV

"I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:38-44, KJV

Clearly then, Jesus knew that some of the Scribes and the Pharisees were the very children of hell; they were the spiritual offspring of Satan. I say some of them, because the Scriptures do inform us that a few of the members of the Sanhedrin accepted Jesus, and were in fact secret Disciples, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea. For the most part, however, they were devil-possessed blind leaders of the blind. Having said that, perhaps we can gain a better understanding of what really happened in Acts chapter seven, when Stephen boldly challenged the false religious system which these children of hell promoted, and forced upon the people. At the height of Stephen's preaching, when the anointing of the Spirit must have been heaviest upon him, consider what happened:

"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth...Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."
Acts 7:54, 57-58, KJV

Here we have this supposedly respectable body of educated religious leaders, upon whom had been entrusted the grave responsibility of being the keepers of the very Oracles of God, as well as teaching them to the people, acting like a pack of wild, demon-possessed animals. And I have no doubt that at that moment, they were in fact totally overtaken by the demons which possessed them! Stephen's witness was so powerful, that these religious leaders went totally insane! They totally lost it and became participants in a murderous frenzy! They screamed, they covered their ears, and they ran upon him together like a pack of wolves and began biting him! Yes folks, that is exactly what "gnashed on" means. It doesn't just mean that they ground their teeth as you may have heard; it means that they bit upon Stephen; and God knows what else they did to him before they finally stoned him outside of the city. Consider what the Greek lexicon tells us concerning the verb "gnash":

brucho {broo'-kho}

- 1) to grind, gnash with the teeth
- 2) to bite, to chew

So, personally, I am convinced that this is another clear case of "group possession" by demonic forces. But, as we have already seen, God controls both good and evil spirits. We have examined two examples of demonic "group possession". While the idea may at first seem strange to you, because you have never been taught to view it in this manner, there is one very well known example of positive "group possession" which I would like to bring to your attention as well. You will find it in Acts chapter two, where the promise of the Holy Spirit was finally delivered on the Day of Pentecost, as we read here:

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4, KJV

I discuss this same event in more detail in other articles. The main point I wish to make is that there is such a thing as positive "group possession". All of the Apostles and Disciples were simultaneously filled with, or possessed by, the Holy Ghost. When we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, do we not technically become His property? Did He not pay the price for our Salvation with His own Blood shed on the Cross? So, in reality, the Lord possesses us, He owns us. Furthermore, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, are we not possessed by it, just like the Disciples of the First Century? Do we not in actuality become receptacles for it? The Apostle Paul confirms this very fact when he writes:

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7, KJV

So God's Holy Spirit is in us, it possesses us; just as a person who rebels against God, can become possessed by an evil spirit. There is really no difference in the process, but the fruits of that possession are surely different! As the Apostle Paul also wrote:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23, KJV

And as Jesus plainly taught us:

"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
Matthew 7:20, KJV

So all that a person has to do is to look at our life, in order to determine what spirit we are really filled with. Are you a living example of Christianity who is filled with God's Holy Spirit, or are you a rebellious, demon-possessed child of the world? The choice is yours. I hope that you will choose Jesus if you haven't already done so.

With all of the various verses and stories I have shared with you now, we are gaining a more rounded understanding of how God operates, as well as understanding the causes behind some forms of sickness and demonic possession. Please note that I do say "some". At this current time, I do not believe that all forms of bodily afflictions are necessarily a result of demonic attack. I believe that some things are simply due to mechanical failures of the body; such as being the result of an accident, or old age, or other mundane causes. In my opinion, this would include such maladies as tooth decay, broken bones, clogged arteries, failing eyesight, etc. We are all flesh and blood creatures; and as we all know, as it has been ordained by God, time and age have an increasingly negative effect on our bodies. It is the way of the flesh. As it is written:

"...for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
Genesis 3:19, KJV

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."
Psalms 103:14, KJV

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4:14, KJV

As far as where to divide those afflictions which are the result of purely physical causes, from those which may be of a more spiritual origin, it is difficult to say. As a matter of personal speculation, based upon what we do find in the Bible, I would propose that the closer we get to problems which are mental and emotional in nature, and perhaps more directly related to the nervous system, the more likelihood there is that they may possibly be attributed to spiritual causes; that is, to demonic oppression or possession. As I noted earlier, our minds represent the primary battleground. I'll touch more on this topic momentarily.

While demonic possession can be the result of sin and evil in our lives, some people are also overpowered by demons due to no fault of their own. Such was clearly the case with the example I mentioned to you earlier in part one, taken from the Gospel of John. Allow me to share those verses with you again in order to refresh your memory:

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his

parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." John 9:1-3, KJV

We are told that this man was blind from birth; thus making it totally impossible that his affliction may have been the result of personal sin. You will notice that the Disciples even went so far as to ask Jesus who had sinned, the man or his parents. This question may have been motivated by the fact that in the Old Testament, we are told that the Lord sometimes punishes a family for their sins up through the third or the fourth generation. Also, in the New Testament, at the time of Jesus' trial before Pilate, Matthew records the Jewish mob as having shouted "His blood be on us, and our children". Consider these verses:

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" Exodus 20:5, KJV

"Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." Matthew 27:25, KJV

However, in this particular case, Jesus made it clear that the man's parents were not at fault either. The Lord adds that the man was afflicted in order that the power of God might be revealed. Being as Jesus is no longer walking the Earth as a man, and thus there is no further any need for Him to prove His Ministry as there was back then; and also because we must consider the fact that we are now required to believe simply by faith, without the need for any signs, it is difficult to say how much this principle should still be applied to modern sickness. As troubling as that thought may be for some people, if we are honest with ourselves, we do need to consider it. As the Scriptures also tell us:

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." John 20:29, KJV

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"
2 Corinthians 5:7, KJV

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
Hebrews 11:6, KJV

So again, the question is this: Does God purposely still allow some people to get sick today in order that He might reveal His Power? Personally, I honestly don't know. There are so many things wrong in this current world, and so much sin and evil everywhere, I tend to lean more towards the idea that modern sickness is due to other reasons; not that God would not be glorified, if He truly did choose to reveal His healing Hand in a person's life.

In my personal life, I have known a few parents who have seriously afflicted children. One thought which has occurred to me, is that God may possibly be trying to use that child to teach the parents important lessons regarding love, mercy

and patience, and I might add, humility. Through such heart-wrenching situations, perhaps He is testing us to see if we will still love that child, even if they are not as whole as we would like for them to be. Perhaps He is also testing us to see if we will begin to doubt, complain and question His Wisdom and His Love for us, or remain wholly devoted to Him, and love Him in spite of it all. If there is one thing that the Bible teaches us, it is that it is simply not our place to question God in a negative way; that is, in a critical fashion. It is, however, our responsibility to accept His Will for our lives, in whatever form it may come, in humble submission. I discuss this topic more at length in the series "So You Think You Are So Humble?". I am reminded of the following verses:

"Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"
Job 40:1-8, KJV

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Romans 9:20, KJV

"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."
Ecclesiastes 5:2, KJV

As we continue this series in part three, we will turn our attention to such issues as the corrupted gene pool theory, Adam and Eve and the sentence of death, our inherited sinful nature, the effects of sin and a shortened human life span, defining the "waters" in Genesis, the pre-diluvian Earth, the water above the firmament theory, Noah's Flood, God's ability to see the future, future fiery judgments, UV rays and aging, sin as the primary source of human suffering, the "creation gods" of modern science, our Resurrection hope, schizophrenia and multiple personality disorder, connection between demonic possession and mental disorders, the story of "Legion", and more on "demon transferral". I trust that you will join me.

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Corrupted Gene Pool Theory, Adam And Eve And Death Sentence, Sin And Death Passed On To All Men, Human Life Span Shortened Effect Of Sin, Defining Waters In Genesis, Pre-Diluvian Earth Water Above Firmament Theory, Noah's Flood, God Foresees The Future, Future Fiery Judgments, Ultraviolet Rays And Aging, Sin The Primary Source Of Our Woes, "Creation Gods" Of Modern Science, Die In Sins, Our Resurrection Hope, Schizophrenia, Multiple Personality, Connection Between Demonic Possession And Mental Disorders, Story Of "Legion", "Demon Transferral" Defining "Dry Places", Percentage Of Water In The Human Body

One interesting theory which has been proposed, which I personally believe has some merit, is that in addition to the reasons we have already discussed here, some sicknesses may be a direct result of genetic deterioration in the human gene pool, which itself may very well be a direct by-product of the sin which has ruled upon the Earth for the past six thousand years. One popular verse which immediately comes to mind is the following:

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
Romans 6:23, KJV

While we can argue that Paul was referring to Eternal Death, which will result from God's Judgments at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment, as opposed to Everlasting Life which will be granted to those who accept Jesus Christ, it may also be that Paul was referring to something much more mundane; that is, our passing away at the end of this life. Let me remind you that in the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis, the Lord said to Adam and Eve:

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17, KJV

A number of different interpretations have been applied to the previous verse. Some people reason that because Adam and Eve did not physically die the very same day that they ate of the Forbidden Tree, that therefore, God must have been speaking in a spiritual sense. In other words, they died spiritually. This would seem to be true; because as far as we know, (and there is nothing in the Scriptures to suggest otherwise), before that time, Adam and Eve could have lived forever in an Eternal Paradise on Earth. Another idea which has been proposed, is that they died spiritually, in the sense that their fellowship with the Lord had been broken, as a result of their sin. Again, this idea also has merit. However, if we continue reading the Genesis account, we soon discover that at the time that the Lord passed judgment on Adam and Eve and the serpent, He specifically said to Adam:

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Genesis 3:17-19, KJV

So God cursed the ground; and He told Adam that he and his descendants would return to it. They would no longer live forever in an Eternal Paradise on Earth. They would die. He warned them before they sinned that if they disobeyed Him, they would die; and in the previous verses He is meting out the punishment exactly as He said He would do.

As I have mentioned before, sometimes when we read the Bible, because it is an instantaneous affair, we slip into this frame of mind where we tend to forget that there are time intervals between certain things that are said, and certain things that are done. We acquire this expectation that if something is said, it will be carried out in the very next sentence. Thus, because Adam and Eve did not die physically on the very same day that they ate of the Tree, we assume that the Lord must have meant something else.

In this case, God warned them what would happen if they disobeyed. After they disobeyed, after they had broken His Laws, just like a worldly judge would do, God passed the sentence. However, just as a lot of people sit on Death Row for years before they are finally executed, so too, Adam and Eve would continue living for many years, before the actual sentence of death would be carried out in their bodies; but it was indeed carried out. To this day, the earth, that is, the ground, has indeed been cursed, in the sense that it has become the receptacle of men, our common grave, as a result of sin. As the Apostle Paul tells us, sin and death were passed on to all men:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by

one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:12-21, KJV

So, no matter how we choose to interpret the story, God did in fact fulfill His word to them in every regard. Adam and Eve eventually died in a physical sense; and they also died in the sense that the sweet fellowship they had known with the Lord was broken. And of course, they apparently began to lose whatever supernatural qualities their bodies may have possessed before their fall. However, I am not so sure that this was an immediate process, and I will tell you why.

As I have mentioned before, and as it is made rather clear in the Bible, following the Fall of Adam and Eve, men still lived for literally hundreds of years. In fact, Methuselah out-lived Adam by thirty-nine years, and Noah lived longer than Adam by twenty years. It wasn't until hundreds of years after the Flood had occurred, that the human life span was dramatically shortened. If you study my article "The Earth Is Under 7,000 Years Old", you will discover that some 2,500 years after the Genesis account, or about four hundred years after the Flood had occurred, some men were still able to live to be about 120 years of age. What made this possible? Was it that the initial spark of life given to Adam and Eve was still having a powerful effect on human longevity? Was it something in their perfect gene pool which continued to be passed on for a number of generations?

As I noted earlier, I tend to think that perhaps it took time for the effects of sin to corrupt and deteriorate the human gene pool, to a point where the balance was broken, and the forces of death which work against men's bodies, were stronger than the force of life within men's bodies. The aging process was thus accelerated, and the effects of disease and sickness began to more heavily take their toll.

Some people have also proposed that the post-Flood Earth, and more specifically, the post-Flood atmosphere, may not have been the same as it had been before the Flood. It has been suggested by some people, that prior to the Flood, the Earth was enshrouded by more than just a thick cloud layer. Please consider the words of Moses:

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." Genesis 1:6-8, KJV

Allow me to bring something interesting to your attention. In the previous verses, the Hebrew word translated there as "waters" is "mayim". It is the same exact word which is used only a few verses later when Moses describes how God gathered the waters together in order to form the seas. It

is also the same word which is used when the Lord creates sea life. In short, "mayim" very clearly means water, just as you and I know it today; good old H₂O. Now, on the other hand, when clouds are discussed in the Old Testament, we find different words being used, such as "anan", "shachaq" and "ab". These words are not used in the Creation Account. Now, if Moses really meant clouds when he wrote "waters which were above the firmament", why didn't he use one of these three words? Why did he use the Hebrew word "mayim" instead? Could it be because that is literally what he meant, and what he wanted us to understand?

So based on Genesis 1:6-8, there is a belief that there was an actual belt of water suspended above what in Hebrew is called the "raqiya"; that is, the open expanse of the sky, or firmament. This layer of water later poured down on the Earth during the Flood. In other words, in the beginning of Creation, before God made the dry land to appear, the Earth was covered by a huge global ocean, and hung in the darkness of space. Above that ocean, and surrounding the Earth, was the empty sky, or firmament. Above the firmament was a belt, or band, whatever you wish to call it, of water. Once you understand the Hebrew words used in the Book of Genesis, it is very easy to form this picture in your mind. It seems very plausible to me, and seems to be more in accordance with the original Hebrew words used in the text.

Concerning the Flood, even logic dictates that such a great volume of water, so great that it covered the highest point of land by some fifteen feet, had to come from somewhere. As I have pointed out before, we honestly don't know what was the highest point of land at that time, being as the Bible does tell us that God broke up the Earth, caused the oceans to swell past their appointed shores, and divided the land into different continents. Would forty days of constant rain have been enough to accomplish such a massive feat as Noah's Flood? Perhaps; but then again, perhaps not. Maybe something more drastic was needed. Taking this thought a step further, could it even be that God placed that layer of water there, in a sense reserving it there, knowing full well for what purpose He intended to use it over 1,500 years later? After all, His Word does in fact tell us that He knows the outcome of the full story, even before it has happened. Consider the following verses:

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

If the idea of reserving the flood waters in the heavens beforehand seems a bit foreign to you, consider the fact that the Apostle Peter also tells us that God has reserved both the heavens and the Earth for yet another terrible judgment which will happen sometime in the future. In fact, in speaking of this future event, Peter refers first to the Flood in order to make a comparison, as we read here:

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out

of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men...But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:5-7, 10, KJV

Directly related to this idea of a belt of water surrounding the pre-diluvian Earth, is the belief that it was this very layer of water, which helped to filter out the harmful UV, or ultraviolet rays of the sun, which, as science informs us, contributes to skin cancer, aging, and other negative affects on the human body. Again, this idea has some merit, because as we have already seen, by four hundred years after the Flood, people's lives had been reduced from living over nine hundred years, to barely living one hundred years, with a few scattered exceptions, such as Moses, Aaron, Joshua, etc. By King David's time, even seventy years was viewed as being an old age. Thus, King David, who in fact died at the age of seventy, wrote:

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Psalms 90:10, KJV

In the Book of Genesis, there is a verse which suggests that men's lives would be reduced to a maximum of 120 years as a result of the Flood. As we have seen, with the belt of water gone, the UV rays were no longer filtered out as they had been beforehand, and this is precisely what happened. In chapter six, just prior to the Flood account, we find the following nebulous verse:

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Genesis 6:3, KJV

The reason why I view this verse as being a bit nebulous, is because it has been interpreted in two different ways. One school of thought suggests that it means that God is saying that He was going to send the Flood in 120 years in order to destroy man, and remove him from the face of the Earth. This idea seems to be supported by verses six and seven which say:

"And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." Genesis 6:6-7, KJV

The second school of thought views Genesis 6:3 as meaning that God is saying that He will reduce man's life span to a maximum of 120 years following the Flood, which did in fact occur some four hundred years later. It was a slow, gradual process. It didn't just happen all at once. The problem that I personally have with the first view, is that according to

my calculations, from the time that verse was spoken, there were only eighty to one hundred years until the time of the Flood arrived. Of course, I do not dismiss the possibility that there might be errors in my calculations.

But, whether we attribute it to that original spark of life, which God gave to man during the Creation, waning weaker and weaker as we grew further away from Adam and Eve, or to a corrupted and deteriorated gene pool, or to an unrelenting onslaught of ultraviolet rays since the time of the Flood, the end result has been that disease, sickness and death, at an earlier and earlier age, have been visited upon humanity. Perhaps our sad state has been a result of a combination of all of the aforementioned factors; but even if that is the case, they still point to one common source; and that is the sin which was introduced by the Original Pair, which has now infected us all with a sinful nature, being as we are their descendants. Surely, we have all felt the wages of sin; and should the Lord for some reason delay His coming, we will also experience the sting of death. As Paul also wrote:

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" Hebrews 9:27, KJV

Modern man, however, is not happy with such a fate. In his pride, he has convinced himself, that through his science, if he works hard enough, and long enough, he will find a way to defeat God's Edict; that is, His pronouncement of death upon all men because of sin. Modern man thinks that he can reverse the curse of aging; and eventually, even the curse of death, if he can just unlock the final mysteries which still challenge him. Rather than humbly accept what God has ordained for humanity, and choose the way which God has set before him in order to obtain Eternal Life, (that of course being through Jesus), modern man wants to cheat. He wants to do it his own way, and get there some other way, by becoming his own little "creator god"; and he will attempt to do it without forsaking his sins. But what did Jesus have to say regarding those who attempt to enter by some other way? He made it very clear when He said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." John 10:1, KJV

Try as he might though, I don't believe that God will allow man to overcome death through his science. As Jesus said so long ago regarding the unbelieving Jews, unless man accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, he will die in his sins:

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come...I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 8:21, 24, KJV

However, as I point out in such articles as "Death, Final Battle, Final Victory", for we Christians, death is by no means the end, but only the beginning of a new and better life; in fact, an Eternal Life; for as it is clearly written:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, KJV

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, KJV

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Philippians 3:20-21, KJV

In the meantime, however, we must continue to deal with the many afflictions which torment and attack our vessels of flesh and blood. Returning to the original situation which prompted this series, in her email message to me, the woman referred to the affliction the other family member suffered from, as a form of schizophrenia. Being as I do not possess a formal background in any scientific or medical field, and due to my limited understanding of this affliction, perhaps like some of you, I was under the mistaken impression that schizophrenia was primarily characterized by an individual possessing multiple personalities; however, it appears that this is not exactly an accurate description of the malady. According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, it seems that this form of the disease is rare. It states as follows:

----- Begin Quotes -----

Schizophrenia - Also called dementia praecox. A severe mental disorder characterized by some, but not necessarily all, of the following features: emotional blunting, intellectual deterioration, social isolation, disorganized speech and behavior, delusions, and hallucinations. A state characterized by the coexistence of contradictory or incompatible elements.

Multiple Personality - A rare disorder in which an individual displays several functionally disassociated personalities, each of a complexity comparable to that of a normal individual. Also called split personality.

Schizotypal Personality - A personality disorder characterized by a group of symptoms similar to but less severe than schizophrenia, as odd behavior, peculiar thinking, and social isolation.

----- End Quotes -----

As you can see, there appear to be some common symptoms between these various mental disorders. From reading these definitions, my new expanded understanding is that multiple

personality disorder is a rare, more severe form of the more common schizophrenia, which itself is a more severe form of schizotypal personality; but again, this is not a qualified opinion.

Whatever the case may be, based upon what this woman has written to me, and given what we find in the pages of the Bible, as I mentioned earlier, I advised her that there is a possibility that her children could be in serious danger due to the other family member's affliction. Whether or not the person in question suffers from a full-blown case of multiple personality disorder, or a less severe form of the disease, I do tend to agree with the woman, when she states that the problem appears to be spiritual in nature. I rest my belief upon the fact that what is described in the dictionary bears striking similarities to multiple demonic possession. In the following story, please notice that when the Lord directly confronts the man, or better said, the evil spiritual forces within him, they plainly state "My name is Legion: for we are many". This multiple possession is confirmed by the fact that upon being commanded to leave the man's body, the horde of demons entered into a herd of swine, which suddenly went berserk, and ran over the cliff, and drowned in the sea:

"And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." Mark 5:2-15, KJV

In part two, we briefly discussed the possibility of "demon transferral". In this incident from the Gospel of Mark, we find another possible clue that "demon transferral" may be possible. While this is again personal speculation on my part, please consider the following:

In this story, we are told that upon realizing their fate, that is, that they were about to be cast out of the man, the

demons known as "Legion" requested that Jesus cast them into the herd of swine. Have you ever stopped to consider why they may have done this? If you have ever read my article "Hell And The Lake Of Fire", then you will already know that there appears to be some evidence in the Bible, which suggests that the deepest parts of the Earth, and the oceans, may possibly serve as holding places for demons. If this is correct, then my guess is that these demons knew that this is where Jesus intended to send them. Thus, in order to escape such a fate, they asked him to send them into the herd of swine instead. Of course, the pigs ended up jumping into the sea anyway, so the demons were defeated.

The point I wish to emphasize, however, is that this was in fact a transferral, even if it was by the Lord's order. In other words, the demons were transferred from a human to a group of animals. In part one, I shared something with you which may tie in directly with this story of "Legion". You will recall that Jesus said:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." Matthew 12:43-45, KJV

There is something in those verses which caught my attention. I am referring to the fact that in talking about the demon, Jesus says "he walketh through dry places, seeking rest". It was that cryptic phrase "dry places" which got my attention, because I wasn't exactly sure what Jesus meant by that. So, as is my custom, I looked up the original Greek words in my Greek lexicon, in order to determine if perhaps it might offer a clue which would expand my understanding. Well, it did, but not in the way I had anticipated. There wasn't any startling revelation. The actual Greek used in the phrase is "anudros topos". The word "anudros" means "without water", and the word "topos" means "place". So, the way that the KJV Bible translates it is rather accurate; a place without water, or a dry place.

That may not seem like much help at first, until you realize that the way to understand what Jesus is saying, is simply by comparing the places where the demon had wandered, to the place where it had previously, and happily, been. Where was that? In its human host, that's where! Now, have you ever wondered what percentage of the human body is composed of water? I found an answer to this question, in a post made by Jeffrey Utz, M.D., Neuroscience, pediatrics, of Allegheny University, who answered in the following manner:

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Different people have different percentages of their bodies made up of water. Babies have the most, being born at about 78%. By one year of age, that amount drops to about 65%. In adult men, about 60% of their bodies are water. However, fat

tissue does not have as much water as lean tissue. In adult women, fat makes up more of the body than men, so they have about 55% of their bodies made of water. Fat men also have less water (as a percentage) than thin men.

----- End Quote -----

An article I found in The Boston Globe also provides similar information. It states in part:

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An average adult body is 50 to 65 percent water -- that's roughly 45 quarts. Men are more watery than women. A man's body is 60 to 65 percent water, compared to 50 to 60 percent for a woman. In infants, the figure is a whopping 70 percent according to statistics compiled by the International Bottled Water Association.

"That's mostly for cushioning," says Felicia Busch, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association and specialist on the nutritional effects of water. "Because of the birth process, they need a lot of cushioning."

Water content differs throughout the body. Blood is made up of 83 percent water, bones are 22 percent water, and muscle is 75 percent water.

Men have more water in their bodies because they generally have more muscle mass than women, says Busch. There is no water in fat, she says, and women generally have a higher percentage of body fat than men.

----- End Quote -----

In short, we flesh and blood humans are far from being "dry places". In fact, we are rather "wet"; and it seems that, according to Jesus' own words, this is where demons feel most comfortable, or apparently at rest. You will notice that in the previous verses, the demon did not just return alone. He realized that he had it so good in the body that he had possessed, that he took along an additional seven demons. You might say that those seven demons "transferred" from elsewhere. So is this yet another example of so-called "demon transferral" perhaps?

As we conclude this series in part four, we'll continue our discussion on "demon transferral", as well as take a look at such issues as Satan's prime objective, modern scourges, the spirit of fear, controlling our thoughts and spirits, the exorcism of demons, the danger to others, God's desire for our deliverance, the story of the lunatic son, prayer and fasting as tools for deliverance, God's Power revealed in our weaknesses, trusting fully in God's love, putting on the whole armour of God, resisting the Devil, and submitting ourselves to God's Will. I trust that you will join me.

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Demon Transferral, Satan's Prime Objective, Modern Scourges, Spirit Of Fear, Controlling Our Thoughts, Exorcism Of Demons Dangers To Others, God's Desire For Our Deliverance, Lunatic Son, Prayer And Fasting As Tools, God's Power Revealed In Our Weaknesses, My Daughter And Diabetes, Trust In God's Love No Matter What, Put On The Armour Of God, Control Your Thoughts Resist The Devil, Submit To God, List Of Suggested Reading

Putting the previous verses together then, the picture I get is that, given a choice, demons prefer to possess flesh and blood bodies, and they are just as willing to take over the body of an animal, as that of a human; although I do suspect that the body of a human being is probably their preference; my reasoning being that, as we know, Satan's objective is to destroy humanity, and to keep people out of God's Kingdom. Not only that, but by possessing the bodies of weak-minded humans, they can influence other humans, and persuade them to engage in evil and rebellion against God. In the case of "Legion", the demons obviously knew that the Lord would not allow them to transfer to another human being, so they chose the next best thing; the herd of swine. If there had been a choice in the matter, I strongly suspect that they would have happily hopped onto, or into, another human being.

Taking all of these thoughts one step further; we have now seen how demonic possession, disease and sickness are very closely related; particularly when it involves diseases that are associated with the mind and the nervous system. One of the more recent scourges of our times, which has been felt all around the world, and which has highly alarmed medical professionals and world governments alike, is the transfer of traditional animal diseases to the human body. We have all heard of rabies; but in the past several decades, the world has been shocked to learn of AIDS, Mad Cow Disease, West Nile Virus, SARS, and others. Some of these horrors, such as AIDS, have reached epidemic proportions, with many millions of people already dead, or doomed to die without any hope for survival, in such places as Africa. It is as if the human-animal barrier has been breached, and I suspect that this has occurred on the spiritual level as well. Satan and his demons certainly seem to be out in full force! Why is this happening? One word: sin! Remember; God is still in control and not Satan. That demon of darkness is only the executioner of God's Will.

Returning to the story of "Legion", it is also interesting to note, that after Jesus had cast out the demons, we are told that the man was "in his right mind", which implies that prior to his deliverance from the demons, he was not sane. In other words, this story again points to a direct connection between mental disorder, such as schizophrenia, and demonic possession. As I stated earlier in this series,

our mind is Satan's primary battleground. Once he controls our mind, he is capable of controlling our physical body as well, including our nervous system. Please also note that the Apostle Paul wrote:

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7, KJV

Notice how Paul presents having a spirit of fear as being in contrast to having a sound mind. Perhaps you have noticed how some mentally disturbed people tend to have a wild look of fear in their eyes, or else they will have a propensity for shifting their eyes back and forth, as if they are in a state of paranoia. If God has not given us a spirit of fear, as Paul tells us, then who does? Obviously, it is Satan. In similar fashion, if God gives us a sound mind, who would rob us of the same? Again, the answer is obviously Satan.

There is actually more to that verse from Paul's Epistle to Timothy, than what meets the eye. In the original Greek, the phrase "sound mind" is derived from the word "sophronismos". In addition to meaning soundness of mind, it also refers to self-control. When people become possessed by Satan, or by one or more of his demons, as I have already pointed out, they lose control of their minds. As a result of having no control over their mind, they may likewise lose control of their nervous system as well; which ultimately results in loss of control of their physical body. We've already seen this clearly in a few of the Scriptural examples we have examined, such as the case of the deaf and dumb man who suffered from epileptic fits, and thus repeatedly harmed himself in the fire. So once again, we see how some mental and nervous disorders can be directly related to demonic possession.

When these demonic possessions occur, as I have explained in a few other articles, it seems that what happens, is that the spirit of life which God has given to every human being, is apparently overpowered by the invading spirit or spirits. In other words, as long as the possession is occurring, a person loses control over their own spirit; and that is one of the reasons why possessed people act like someone else, or even like a number of different people, as in the case of split personality disorder. In the Book of Proverbs, we find the following interesting verse:

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." Proverbs 25:28, KJV

In the previous verse, the word "rule" is derived from the Hebrew "matsar", which means restraint or control. So what that verse is really saying, is that when we lose control over our own spirit, when we lose control of our mind, when we fail to bring every thought into captivity in obedience to Christ, we are in effect defenseless, just like a city without walls. We leave ourselves open to demonic attack. If there are no walls of defense up, if we have not put on the full armour of God, and are not standing guard, anyone can come in; ANYONE! What a sobering thought indeed!

As you can clearly see by now, demonic possession is a very

serious matter. Equally serious is the job of trying to cast one out. To confront a person who is stark raving mad, and who may possess the strength of ten men, is certainly not something that I personally would want to do by choice. But some people have felt the calling to do exactly that. These people have come to be known as exorcists. We find a clear example of exorcism in the Book of Acts. The reason why I'm mentioning this particular story, is because it shows how demons can overpower the young; particularly if they are provoked to do so. In Acts chapter nineteen we read the following:

"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."
Acts 19:13-16, KJV

So the lesson here is very clear: It is not wise to provoke demon-possessed people, unlike you really know what you are doing, and are certain that God has given you the spiritual authority to cast them out. To do so otherwise, is not only foolish, but you could be placing yourself in grave danger as well. It is because of accounts like the previous one, that I advised the woman in question that her children could be in a very dangerous situation, if it is in fact true that the other family member is possessed by a demon, or a group of demons. Again, I can only go by what this woman has told me.

In addition to warning the woman of the potential danger her children faced, I also told her that I don't believe that it is God's Will for the other family member to continue to be tormented by such demons as has been the case, according to what I have been told. In His Mercy and Love, I believe that God would like for deliverance to occur; but, the afflicted person must be a willing recipient of God's Deliverance. One would think that anyone who finds himself in such a state, would long for deliverance; but believe it or not, there are some people who actually enjoy being possessed by demons. I don't know if that is the case with the person in question, but I do know that any such deliverance will require some desperate prayer, and perhaps even fasting. Such was the case in the following example found in the Bible:

"And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto

them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:14-21, KJV

I am not exactly sure why the Lord said that fasting was an important requirement in the above case, but I suspect that it may possibly have something to do with the fact that when we are weak in the flesh, that is when we can actually be the strongest in spirit. This is because God's Spirit can more effectively work through us. The Apostle Paul seems to suggest this very same thing when he writes the following. Please note that these verses come right after those where he discusses his "thorn in the flesh", which we discussed earlier in this series:

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, KJV

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7, KJV

So, in essence, the less there is of us, the more there can be of Him shining through us; the more His Spirit is able to operate through us; just as I point out in such articles as "Are You Crucified With Christ?", "So You Think You Are So Humble?" and "Are You A Burning Ember For The Lord?".

In this series, we've talked a lot about demonic possession, disease, sickness, and life and death. We have discussed the drama of human suffering. These things are not happy topics, but I am sure that most of you reading this series, have had your share of such experiences. My family has likewise not been exempt. In particular, my daughter was diagnosed with Juvenile Diabetes at the age of eleven. As you can imagine, at the time, the news absolutely devastated me; particularly because I was informed that a lack of proper health care on our part, could lead to a number of serious outcomes in the future; such as blindness; amputation of the extremities as a result of gangrene setting in; coma; and kidney failure, which would then require dialysis, which would ultimately result in death after a three to five year period.

Had we not known the Lord, and His Word, perhaps we would have reacted differently. Perhaps we would have totally given in to despair. But, by His Grace, now, several years later, we both continue to march forward in our faith, and remain undaunted by any physical setbacks in the flesh. If there is one thing of which I have no doubt, it is that my daughter's heart truly belongs to the Lord, and she daily sings praises to Him. There is no rancor in her heart, or in mine for that matter. Yes, I admit that I sometimes wonder in my heart why the Lord has allowed this to happen to us. I

also question if it is perhaps due to sins in my own life; but I do not question God's Wisdom in the matter. Perhaps someday, we will fully come to understand His reasons. In the meantime, we both accept all things as coming from His Hand, and cling to such inspiring verses as the following:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28, KJV

So as I point out in "Why Doesn't God Heal Me?", God has a plan and a purpose in our afflictions, even if that purpose is beyond our current understanding. Regardless of whether we understand or not, we should never doubt God's Love for us. We must continue to trust in Him, and believe that He would not allow something to happen to us, unless He knows that it is for our own good. One of the most important lessons I hope you will learn from this series, is that we must each stand strong against our common enemy: Satan and his minions. As Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter six, we must put on the whole armour of God:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"
Ephesians 6:10-17, KJV

In particular, we must guard our minds and control our every thought, and not allow that Evil One to gain advantage over us in any way. We must not even listen to him; because if we do, we have already lost half of the battle. We must resist the devil, and submit ourselves to God's Will fully, as we see here:

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." 1 Peter 5:8-9, KJV

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7, KJV

So as you can see, part of winning the battle, isn't just

resisting the Devil, it is also submitting ourselves to God's Will. If we will do this, then He also promises to protect us, to care for us, to provide for us, and to bless us. We must simply meet His conditions. In his Epistle to the brethren at Rome, the Apostle Paul also wrote:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:1-2, KJV

With these verses, we have now covered a lot of territory. I am sure that I have not answered all of your questions on this topic, and there are many other related verses which I have not included in this series, but I do believe that I've presented you with a lot of new information; some of which even I was not aware of previously. As I stated earlier in this series, when I write these articles, they are often a learning experience for me as well. I am blessed, even as I am being a blessing to others; so we all benefit from these Bible studies.

Throughout this series I have mentioned a number of other articles, which are related to some of the topics we have discussed here. Allow me to list them below, along with a few other suggested readings, for your future consideration:

A Biblical Cafeteria, Or The Whole Course?
Are Personal Tragedies Due To Sin?
Are You A Burning Ember For The Lord?
Are You Crucified With Christ?
Beholding The Evil And The Good
Death : Final Battle, Final Victory
Free Will And Personal Choice
Great Cloud Of Witnesses : God's Holy Ghosts?
Have You Been Slain In The Spirit?
Hell And The Lake Of Fire
Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth
So You Think You Are So Humble?
The Lord Will Lift You Up
Why Doesn't God Heal Me?

I trust that these articles, as well as this current series, will be a blessing in your life. Resist the enemy! We are not ignorant of his devices!

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