

HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART ONE

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Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

Slain In The Spirit, Satan Is A Copycat And Imitator, Spirit Of God Or A Seducing Spirit, Demonic Possession, My Friend's Concerns, My Personal Experience, Persecuted By The Dragon, Defining "Slay", God's Word Or Man's Word?, Overcome By The Spirit Or A Demonic Attack?, Is It Power From Above Or Power From Below?, Logical Explanations, Test The Spirits, Similar Hebrew And English Words, Defining "Fall", Nephilim, Defining Overwhelm And Overcome, Look To God's Word, Led By The Spirit

Some time ago, after reading my article entitled "Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?", one of my readers wrote to me regarding the remarks I had made concerning a modern-day occurrence within some churches which is commonly referred to as being "slain in the spirit". As those of you who have read the aforementioned article will know, I personally have some rather serious reservations regarding this so-called "manifestation of the Spirit". For those of you who haven't read the article yet, allow me to share a few quotes with you from it:

----- Begin Quote -----

This leads us to another important topic concerning the various Gifts of the Spirit which I touched on earlier. One dangerous pitfall into which some churches have fallen, such as some of the Roman Catholic charismatics, as well as the Pentecostals, is that of being taken over, or possessed, by a false spirit which attempts to imitate God's true Holy Spirit. Don't ever forget that Satan is a copycat. He is an imitator. He is a usurper who unrightfully tries to take that which is not his. This deceptive spirit tries to convince its deluded victims that it is the true Light of God, and that its manifestations are of a Divine Nature, when in fact they are not. Remember again the Apostle Paul's

admonition:

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

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Maybe some people are being "slain" by the spirit in their churches, but it certainly isn't the Holy Spirit with which I am familiar. It is a deceptive demonic spirit of which we are warned to beware! It is what Paul also referred to as a "seducing spirit". If you have any doubts whatsoever about these people who foam at the mouth and fall all over the place, and writhe and tremble and shake in what they call "spiritual ecstasy", then I seriously advise you to consider the following verses:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"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."

Mark 9:18, KJV

"And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him."

Luke 9:39, KJV

----- End Of Quote -----

While some of my readers will no doubt take offense at my comparing being "slain in the spirit" to the aforementioned group of verses, I am sorry, but that is exactly what I see when I view certain online videos where people are engaging in these activities. I don't see God's Spirit moving. I see demonic contortions, if not outright demonic possession. I see people being controlled by something which is clearly not of God in the least. How in the world does that kind of strange behavior glorify God? Quite simply, it doesn't.

Being one who seriously considers my opinions, after reading the above comments, this dear person was quite alarmed due to the fact that being "slain in the spirit" is a regular occurrence within their church. According to this person's description, their congregation actively practices the Gifts of the Spirit, and prayerfully looks to God's Word in order to confirm His Will. This person also stated that sometimes during prayer time, when the Spirit of God is believed to be present, certain people will "fall in the spirit" when hands are laid upon them. In fact, this person states that this has also occurred to them on a number of occasions as well.

In addressing this person's concerns, allow me to first say that I personally have never actually witnessed firsthand anyone being "slain in the spirit". As such, I want you to understand that any views that I may express here concerning these strange things which are occurring in some modern-day churches, are based primarily on testimonies I have read, as well as on observations made by others who have described these events to me. In addition, as I mentioned earlier, I have also watched a number of online videos, and seen a few things on some American television shows in the past which have not impressed me in a very positive spiritual manner.

Because of these facts, the only thing that I know how to do, as has always been my practice, is to look to the Word of God in order to hopefully provide a Spirit-led answer to this question concerning being "slain in the spirit".

Having said all of the above, while this will surely offend a few people, allow me to first state that just the term alone, "slain in the spirit", bothers me. I honestly do not know where the phrase originated, but it simply does not strike me as being a very godly term. As I began to ponder this issue, the very first thing which came to my mind was a picture of the red dragon persecuting and attempting to slay the Lord's children. I am reminded of such verses as the following:

"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born . . . And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child . . . And the earth helped

the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 12:4, 13, 16-17, KJV

As I explain in many other articles, such as "Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?", this red dragon who seeks to slay the Lord's children is none other than Satan himself, who has been permanently banished from the Halls of Heaven. While he still possesses limited powers, this old demon is nevertheless under God's control. This is quite evident from reading the Book of Job where we see Satan slaying Job's family, possessions, and then even poor old Job himself.

It might interest you to know that the word "slay" is used exactly seven times in the King James Version of the New Testament. In every single instance, it means to kill, or to be killed in some way. Four different Greek words are used in these seven verses. They are "apokteino"; which means to kill in any way whatever; "katasphatto"; which means to kill off or to slaughter; "thuo"; which means to sacrifice, immolate, slay, or kill; and finally, "anaireo"; which means to kill or slay a man among other things. Following are the seven verses where these four Greek words are translated as "slay" in the KJV New Testament:

"Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:"

Luke 11:49, KJV

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

Luke 19:27, KJV

"And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day."

John 5:16, KJV

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."

Acts 5:33, KJV

"And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."

Acts9:29, KJV

"And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat."

Acts 11:7, KJV

"And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."

Revelation 9:15, KJV

In addition to the previous verses, there are others in the New Testament where the word "slain" is used. In most cases, this word is derived from the same four Greek words I described previously. However, there are two others as well. These are "sphazo"; which means to slay, slaughter, butcher or to put to death by violence; and "apothnesko", which means to die of a natural or violent death. What we see then is that, according to the way it is used throughout God's Word, "slay", or "slain", only means one thing, and nothing else; and that is to kill man or beast.

Now, I don't doubt that some of those people who support this practice of being "slain in the spirit", and who have probably been "slain in the spirit" themselves, are going to object, and accuse me of being a legalist. They are probably going to suggest that I come out of the "dark ages" and look at a modern dictionary. Of course, I have already consulted a dictionary, so I am already aware of what their argument is going to be. In the 1981 edition of the American Heritage Desk Dictionary, the second meaning for the word "slay" is "to overwhelm, as with laughter or love".

In other words, those people who indulge in this practice of being "slain in the spirit" would have us believe that they are actually being overwhelmed by God's Spirit, and not by some demonic force of darkness. As I have said on many other occasions, we must each operate according to our own faith, and according to our personal understanding of God's Word, and how we each feel led of His Spirit. As the Apostle Paul wrote in his discourse concerning the eating of meat:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5, KJV

If you wish to accept modern man's definition of the word "slay", that is entirely up to you. Personally, I prefer to look directly to the Word of God, and at the original Koine Greek words, in order to see how the Lord Himself, and His First Disciples, used these different words. As I have already clearly pointed out, in the New Testament, "slay" and "slain" mean only one thing, and that is to kill. If I am being a bit too technical for some of you, I am sorry, but this is just how I feel about this issue.

Some of these testimonies I have read simply disturb me. When some of my readers write in and inform me that either they, or else someone that they know, has been pushed down or knocked down to the ground by some invisible force in some of these churches, it worries me. It causes me to be spiritually on the alert. I recall the testimony of one troubled person some time ago who described one of these events. This person stated that as the congregation began their praise session, this person began to feel a warm tingling sensation first in their feet, and then moving up slowly through their legs. This person was totally horrified by this experience because, while they had expected God's Spirit to descend from above, this feeling was originating from the ground below. For good reason then, this person began to rebuke the sensation in Jesus' name, and then it immediately stopped. I am reminded of several verses from the Epistle of James where he is discussing divisive spirits within the church:

"But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."

James 3:14-15, KJV

Is it possible that this experience of being "slain in the spirit" or "falling in the spirit" is by no means what some sincere God-fearing people have been led to believe? If I were to ignore the witness of the Spirit, and look at these

experiences with my natural reasoning, I might think that perhaps this falling over, or fainting, or whatever it is that is actually happening to these people, might simply be due to the room being too hot, or perhaps due to not enough oxygen being in the immediate air around the person being prayed over, or perhaps due to extreme emotionalism, or maybe even simply due to the weight of all of the hands being placed upon a certain person. I could even contribute it to the power of mass hypnosis or suggestion, and the fact that these people want it to happen to them. Thus, it does happen to them, because they invite it to happen through their willingness and auto-suggestion.

However, I tend to believe that there is more to it than that. This whole idea of falling over just does not strike me as being a part of real godly manifestations. I simply don't believe that God operates in this way. While these people are being overwhelmed by something, I simply have a difficult time accepting that it is something good. As I have warned my readers many times before, we must try -- that is, test -- the spirits, in order to determine if they are truly of the Lord. We must choose the good and eschew the evil. Consider the following two verses:

"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

"Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."

1 Peter 3:11, KJV

At this point, I should mention that while the Bible does not use the word "slay" in the context of meaning to be overwhelmed by something, as in being "slain in the spirit", it does contain the words overwhelm, overwhelmed, overcome and overcame. The word "overwhelm" is only used in the Old Testament, while "overcome" is used in both Testaments. I must admit that I was quite surprised when I discovered the Hebrew word for "overwhelm", which is only used one time in the Old Testament. One thing which I have noticed since I first began writing articles for the Lord, is that there are quite a number of English words which are very similar in pronunciation to Hebrew words. For example, in the Old

Testament, the word "cord" is derived from the Hebrew word "chebel", which is pronounced khay'-bel; just like our English word "cable". Following is an example from the story of the harlot Rahab and the two spies sent by Joshua to spy on Jericho:

"Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall."

Joshua 2:15, KJV

Another clear example is our English word "money". While conducting research for the article "Mondex and the Mark of the Beast", I discovered that there is -- or at least was at one time -- a Jewish coin called the "maneh". This word is derived from the Hebrew "manah", which means to count, reckon or number. This coin is equal to sixty shekels, or two pounds six ounces in English troy-weight. This word "maneh" is very similar to our English word "money" in that it is pronounced "maw neh". While today we are told that our word "money" is derived from the Latin word "moneta", I tend to believe that this Hebrew word "maneh" helps to emphasize for all of us who is really in charge of the worldwide commercial system; as if we didn't already know. Following is an example where we find this word "maneh" used in the Old Testament:

"And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs: twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh."

Ezekiel 45:12, KJV

According to some information I came across at one time, if it is to be believed, approximately ninety-five percent of all English words can be traced to a Hebrew word. It was because of personal discoveries like the above, that I was a bit surprised when, while studying this issue of being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit" as some people refer to it, I learned that in the single instance in which the word "overwhelm" is used in the Bible, it is used in a rather negative context. More importantly, I discovered that it is derived from the Hebrew word "naphal". Pronounced naw-fal', this word means to fall, or to be cast down. Here is the one verse from the Book of Job where we find the word "overwhelm" being used:

"Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your

friend."

Job 6:27, KJV

No doubt you can see the obvious similarities in meaning and pronunciation between our English word "fall" and the Hebrew word "naphal". However, what you may not know if you haven't read my series regarding this same subject, is that it is likewise from this very same Hebrew word that we derive the word "Nephilim". As you will learn in the series "Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis", the Nephilim were the evil spawn of giants which were born as a result of the ungodly union of the rebellious Fallen Angels, and the beautiful women of Earth. This is why they are also sometimes referred to as "the fallen ones".

Perhaps it is just a matter of coincidence, or perhaps I am simply imagining things, but could it be that when these people are being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit", that the invisible presence which is overwhelming them, and causing them to be knocked unconscious, or to be pushed over, or to fall to the floor is not the true Spirit of God whatsoever? The simple fact that the word "overwhelm" in the previous verse from the Book of Job is derived from "naphal", is something worthy of consideration in my view.

To add a degree of balance to my previous statements, as is only appropriate, allow me to also mention that in the case of the word "overwhelmed" as it is used in the Old Testament, it is derived from a variety of Hebrew words. One of these is the word "kacah", which is pronounced kaw-saw'. Of the one hundred and fifty-two times that it is found in the Old Testament, one hundred and thirty-five of those times, it is translated as "covered". So this is apparently its primary meaning. Only two times is it translated as "overwhelmed". Here are a few examples where it is used:

"Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me."

Psalms 55:5, KJV

"And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies."

Psalms 78:53, KJV

Another Hebrew word which is translated as "overwhelmed" in

the Old Testament, is the word "ataph", which is pronounced aw-taf'. As will be seen by the following verses, it means to envelop oneself, or to be faint or feeble; to grow weak:

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

Psalms 61:2, KJV

"I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah."

Psalms 77:3, KJV

"Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate."

Psalms 143:4, KJV

One more word which is translated as "overwhelmed" in the Old Testament, is the Hebrew word "shataph", which is pronounced shaw-taf'. This word means to wash, rinse, overflow, engulf, rinse or wash off. It is used in the following verse:

"If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul."

Psalms 124:2-5, KJV

What I personally find rather interesting is the fact that in all of these verses, no matter which Hebrew word is used, the English word "overwhelm" is used in a negative context, and not in a positive one. It is used to describe either the oppression or the destruction of the innocent by the wicked, or else the destruction of evildoers. Nowhere do we see this word "overwhelm" being used in a positive manner. This again shows how some words in our modern English language have meanings which differ from their original definitions and intentions as used in the KJV Bible.

Another word worth studying is the word "overcome". This word is found in both the Old and the New Testaments; and it is used in both a positive and a negative manner. In the New Testament, it is derived from three different Greek words.

These words are "nikao"; which means to overcome, to conquer or to be victorious over another; "hettao"; which means to be overcome, or to be conquered, or to be made inferior; and "katakurieuo"; which means to bring under one's power, to subject one's self, to subdue or to master. In a general sense then, all of these words mean to overpower another, whether for good or for evil. We see these words being used in a negative context in such verses as the following:

"But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."

Luke 11:22, KJV

"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 19:16, KJV

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

2 Peter 2:19-20, KJV

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."

Revelation 11:7, KJV

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Revelation 13:7, KJV

On the other hand, we also find a number of very positive verses which demonstrate the Lord and His saved children overcoming the evil of the world. Consider the following for your personal inspiration:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be

of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33, KJV

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

1 John 2:13-14, KJV

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

1 John 4:4, KJV

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Revelation 3:21, KJV

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Revelation 12:11, KJV

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Revelation 17:14, KJV

Being as Hebrew is such a precise language, in the Old Testament, there are seven different words which are all translated into English as the word "overcome". These seven words are the following: "guwd"; which means to invade or to attack; "chaluwshah"; which signifies weakness, defeat or prostration; "yakol"; which means to prevail, to overcome, to endure, to have power or to be able; "lacham"; which means to fight, to do battle or to make war against; "rahab"; which means to behave proudly, to act stormily, boisterously or in an arrogant manner; "halam"; which means to smite, to strike, to hammer or to strike down; and

"abar"; which means to pass over or by or through, to alienate, to bring, to carry, to do away, to take, to take away or to transgress.

For the sake of brevity, and because the New Testament words already provide us with a clear understanding of how the word "overcome" is used in the KJV Bible, I'm not going to provide examples from the Old Testament for these seven Hebrew words. Please feel free to conduct your own research. Of course, as Christians, our main concern should be, as the Apostle Paul wrote, to fight against evil, and not to be overcome by it, as we see by the following verse:

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
Romans 12:21, KJV

This is really the key issue here. Are these people being overcome by God's true Holy Spirit, or is it something else? As I have stated on a few other occasions, when my readers ask me certain questions, sometimes I simply and honestly do not know how to answer them. I might have an inkling of an idea, but not much. All I know how to do is to go straight to the Word of God. I just have to trust fully in Him, and believe that He will show me what I need to see in order to answer the person's question.

I will simply sit here in my desk chair, with my hands on my keyboard, and the Lord's Spirit will just begin to bring different verses to mind which I have read or memorized over the years. God answers me through His Word. As I begin to type what I receive, things just start coming together from all over the Bible. As I type what I believe He has given me to share, He continues to give me more. While some people may find this hard to believe, I just cannot deny the way these things happen. All I can say is that Jesus promised to bring all things to our remembrance by way of His Holy Spirit, and I believe that this is exactly what happens with me, and not with me alone. Some of you will know exactly what I am talking about. Consider this verse:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
John 14:26, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART TWO

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

Negative Context Of Falling: Adam And Eve, The Fallen Angels, Nimrod And Tower Of Babel, Joshua And Jericho, Philistines And Dagon, Lucifer's Fall, Nebuchadnezzar's Idol, Demoniac And The Swine, Acts 2: Drunk On The Spirit?, Demon-Possessed Behavior, Satanic Sorcerers, Bible-Based Christian Behavior, Spiritual And Mental Sobriety, Our Bodies Are The Temple Of God's Spirit, God Is Not The Author Of Confusion, God's Still Small Voice, A Lack Of Genuine Faith?, Don't Touch God's Anointed, Oppressive American Policies, Divided Christians

Continuing our discussion from part one, while Satan has slipped into some of these modern churches and deceived the congregations by turning everything around, so that being "slain in the spirit" or "falling in the spirit" is now viewed as being a very positive thing, and as evidence of the presence of God's Spirit, I believe that the Lord has shown me how totally contrary this practice is to His Word.

Let me state for the record that when some of these people say that they "fall in the spirit", I am not sure if they mean that they physically fall to the floor -- such as when one faints -- or if they simply mean that they fall under the influence of the spirit. I tend to believe that in some cases, depending upon to whom one is talking, it means the

former, and in other cases, it means the latter. In other words, some people definitely are literally falling down under this spiritual force, as is quite evident in a number of the online videos I have watched, such as the Benny Hinn videos.

While this may alarm some of my readers, the simple truth of the matter is that from the very beginning of the Bible to the very end, the act of falling is described as a negative experience, and definitely not as a positive one. Falling in some way involves rebellion, and God's displeasure in some way; physically-speaking, as well as metaphorically-speaking. When Adam and Eve rebelled against the Lord by listening to the subtle lies of Satan, they fell from grace and were kicked out of the Garden, as we see by these verses:

"Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."
Genesis 3:23-24, KJV

As a result of the Fallen Angels rebelling against the Lord and mating with human women, the wicked generations of the pre-diluvian days fell under tons of water, while Noah was lifted on high in the Ark by the grace of God, as we can determine by these verses:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. 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. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 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. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Genesis 6:1-8, KJV

When proud Nimrod and his misguided followers tried to build a city and the tower of Babel which would reach unto Heaven, in order to establish themselves and make themselves a name, the Lord confused them with different tongues. As a result, the tower was either destroyed, or else it simply fell into disrepair in His hot displeasure. The Scriptures don't make clear the actual fate of the tower. Consider these verses:

"He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar . . . And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

Genesis 10:9-10, 11:4-9, KJV

When in obedience to God's command, Joshua and the children of Israel marched for seven days around the city, the heathen of Jericho probably thought that they were crazy. While they relied upon their walls of brick to keep them safe inside, the Lord made the walls of the city fall due to the faith and obedience of His children, as we see here:

"And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the

seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

Joshua 6:15-20, KJV

When the pagan Philistines stole the Ark of the Covenant from the children of Israel and placed it in their temple next to the statue of their false god Dagon, in His fury, twice the Lord made it fall over so that it split into several pieces. Again, consider these verses:

"And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day."

1 Samuel 5:1-5, KJV

In the Book of Isaiah, when Lucifer became lifted up in his pride and tried to exalt himself to the very Throne of God, instead, he fell, or was cast down to the Earth, until the day that he is cast into the Lake of Fire, as we see by the following group of verses:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

Isaiah 14:12, KJV

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

Luke 10:18, KJV

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Revelation 12:7-9, KJV

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Revelation 20:10, KJV

While the wicked, rebellious men of Earth continue to build their puny, corrupt governments and temporal kingdoms, just as King Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision of the great idol in Daniel chapter two, we are told that the stone which is cut without hands -- that is, Jesus Christ -- strikes the idol of man in its toes, so that it comes crashing down when the Lord subdues the nations of the world, and sets up His own everlasting Kingdom:

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth . . . And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall

break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

Daniel 2:34-35, 44, KJV

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Matthew 21:44, KJV

In the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Mark, when the Lord cleansed the possessed man of his legion of demons, we are told that a nearby herd of swine was filled with those same demons, and that they then violently ran down a steep place into the sea where they drowned, as we see by these verses:

"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."

Mark 5:7-13, KJV

Over and over again we see that this act of spiritually or physically falling down, or being cast down, is a negative event which is brought about by the sin of rebellion, which results in the judgments of God in some way. It was never a positive experience.

Despite this Biblical truth, today we have people in certain churches who claim to get so "drunk in the spirit", that they actually become giddy and fall over as if they had actually drunk too much wine. I have read some of these testimonies for myself. If there is one thing of which I am certain, it is that absolutely nowhere in the Bible do we find the Lord's servants being filled with the Spirit, and then acting in this manner. In fact, it was the false, unbelieving Jews who launched this accusation of being drunk against the Apostles

in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, as we see by these verses:

"Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."

Acts 2:13-15, KJV

As I point out in other articles, what really happened there is that once the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, they were suddenly given the gift to speak in a number of foreign tongues, so that the large crowd who surrounded them could receive the message of the Gospel. The hard-hearted, unbelieving Jews who mocked them apparently didn't understand said languages, so they assumed that the Apostles were drunk, and that they were just speaking gibberish, which was not true in the least.

Nowhere in the Book of Acts, or anywhere else in the New Testament for that matter, have I ever found people falling all over each other "drunk on the spirit", rolling on the floor, barking like dogs or making noises like other animals, stomping their feet, foaming at the mouth, staring in some kind of a hypnotic trance, shouting "Jeez-us, Jeez-us, Jeez-us!" at the top of their lungs, being knocked or pushed to the floor by some invisible force, laughing hysterically totally out of control, shaking and trembling and convulsing, or asking "Do you feel the spirit brother, do you feel the spirit?". It just isn't there. At least not in my Bible. As I pointed out at the beginning of this series, the only people who manifested odd behavior of any kind in the New Testament, were those who were either possessed by demons, or else those who dabbled in the occult forces, such as the two sorcerers Simon and Elymas. Consider the following verses:

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries."

Acts 8:9-11, KJV

"But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."

Acts 13:8-11, KJV

The behavior of the Spirit-filled Christian, as described by the early Disciples, is extremely different from what we see happening in some modern-day churches. As I have explained before, we are supposed to control our minds, our thoughts, our spirits and our actions. This advice is Scripturally sound doctrine. When the people in some of these churches behave themselves as I previously described, they are doing so in direct contradiction to the very Word of God. Consider the following example verses:

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

Proverbs 25:28, KJV

"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

"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

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at

home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

Titus 2:1-8, KJV

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;"

1 Timothy 3:2, KJV

I think it is important to point out that in the previous set of verses, the word "sober" is not just speaking of sobriety as in the case of limiting our intake of alcohol. It is also talking about mental and spiritual sobriety as well. In other words, similar to what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth, it is talking about self-control. It is derived from the Greek word "nepho" -- which means to be sober, to be calm and collected in spirit -- and from "sophron" -- which means to be of a sound mind, sane, in one's senses, curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled and temperate.

Quite frankly, I honestly do not understand how some of those people can claim to be in control of their minds, bodies and spirits, when they are falling down, shaking and trembling, being knocked unconscious, pushed to the floor, jerking like zombies, and doing all of those other grotesque things while being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit". It makes absolutely no sense to me whatsoever. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are supposed to glorify God in both our bodies and in our spirits, as we see by these verses:

"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

As I said earlier, how is being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit" glorifying the Lord? With all of the loud music, singing, screaming, yelling, stomping, laughing, foaming, fainting, tongues, prophesying, and falling over

going on, how is the Lord supposed to even get through all of that racket and confusion? He can't! And that is exactly what it is; nothing but total chaos and confusion! Of course, you already know what the Bible says about that:

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

1 Corinthians 14:33, KJV

Now, some of these people claim that in their particular church, it isn't quite like that; and I don't doubt that it is true. As we are told in the Book of Ecclesiastes, there is a time for everything. There is a time for studying the Word of the Lord in quietness. There is a time for singing and praising the Lord. There is a time for exercising the Gifts of the Spirit such as Tongues and Prophecy. There is a time for everything; and undoubtedly, some of these churches do it well.

Despite this, based upon everything I have discovered in the Scriptures thus far, and seen in a number of videos, and shared with you in this series, I am not convinced of the Divine Nature of being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit". Please notice that I purposely do not capitalize the word "spirit", because I am by no means persuaded that it is truly God's Spirit which is behind all of that bizarre behavior. Do you honestly want to know how God's true Spirit normally operates with His children? Consider the following group of verses:

"And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?"

1 Kings 19:10-13, KJV

I can personally testify that when the Lord chooses to speak to me, that is exactly what it is like. It is a still, small, almost-imperceptible voice which speaks His Word to my heart. It is something very deep within me. While I use the word "heart", please understand that I am speaking metaphorically here. It is just something that I sense deep within. It isn't an audible voice, and there is no overpowering onslaught of physical emotions. I don't become overwhelmed or overcome by some invisible force so that I am in some kind of a stupefied daze, like the people I see in some of those videos.

One interesting thought which has occurred to me, is that perhaps one reason why some of these people need all of these physical signs and manifestations, is because they really don't have true faith. At the very least, perhaps their faith has been greatly diminished for some reason. Thus, they need something to boost their faith. I discuss this same topic in articles such as "Faith and the Shroud of Turin". Now, if my statement strikes a raw nerve with you, then perhaps you are the one who needs to hear this the most. I am reminded of something that Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke:

". . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:8, KJV

While these people claim that these strange things happen as a result of their faith, could it be that some of them occur because of a lack of the same? Might it be possible that the Christian world today has so little genuine faith left, that they have a need for all of these emotional props, feelings in the flesh, and other weird manifestations in order to convince themselves that they still do have faith, and that God has not abandoned them? As alarming as this statement may be to some of you, could there be some truth to it? In fact, I have read some stories where certain dishonest preachers, pastors or ministers will stage or fake things -- including healing people -- to either draw in the crowds, or to try to boost the faith of their congregation.

It is a Biblical fact that even though the Lord had abandoned ancient Israel on numerous occasions due to their sins, the Israelites were in denial of this very fact. As I explain in

articles such as "Oh Israel, Why Will Ye Die?", when the true Prophets of God tried to expose the sins of their brethren in order to encourage them to repent, both the political and the religious leadership of Israel mistreated them, and accused them of being liars and false prophets; and they eventually paid for their grave error. Consider what happens when the ungodly persecute God's true children:

"And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand."
2 Chronicles 36:15-17, KJV

As I point out in articles such as "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution", this is why we find verses like the following in the Bible:

"Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."
Psalms 105:15, KJV

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye."
Zechariah 2:8, KJV

As troubling as this thought may be for some of you, is it possible that the United States of America is currently in the very same position as the Israelites of old? In other words, is it refusing to acknowledge its own sins, even though they reach unto Heaven like a foul stench? From all of the material which I have seen and read over the years, it appears that the Christian community in America is divided into two major camps.

On the one hand, we have Christians who honestly acknowledge the many sins of America. These people easily recognize the violence, oppression, and ungodly nature of a corrupt, cruel

government which forces its will, not only on its own people by the quiet, subtle enactment of restrictive laws, but also upon other countries of the world through the imposition of economic sanctions and other harsh measures, through the overpowering of weaker nations by sheer military might and intimidation, etc. While seemingly justifiable reasons have always been given for these actions -- which many Americans have blindly accepted -- the truth of the matter is that these political, economic and military forces only wish to maintain the United States of America as the dominant power in the world. It is all about American hegemony.

This first group has likewise sadly watched as God has been removed the public school system, from the public square, from government offices, etc. At the same time, the teaching of evolution has replaced Creationism; abortion is available on demand, including for some minors; same-sex "marriage" is legal nationwide; gender identity issues confuse our young; abuse of hard drugs and over-the-counter drugs is at an all time high; and so many other things destroy our nation from within. Thus, this first group of Christians senses that the judgments of the Lord may soon fall upon a nation which has clearly turned its back on God and His Word.

On the other hand, there are misguided Christians who claim the exact opposite. This second group is so oblivious to the true state of the nation that they continue to wave their red, white and blue flags. They sing "God Bless America" and the "Star-Spangled Banner", and they promote the belief that so-called Christian America is now headed for even greater heights, particularly under the current president. Some of these people are convinced that there is a great spiritual revival sweeping across the land. They assert that God has begun to raise up -- or else will soon be raising up -- great Apostles and Prophets as in ages past.

From what I have read, some of these people envision a second day of Pentecost, in which a great outpouring of God's Spirit will occur, based on an ancient prophecy that is found in the second chapter of the Book of Joel. I discuss this topic in the article "Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?", and I will discuss it in more detail later on in this series. These erroneous beliefs are tied in directly to another widespread belief concerning a final great American Prophet known as Elijah. As I point out in my series "Elijah: Where Are the

True Prophets of God?", based upon my personal understanding of the Scriptures -- such as the verses which are found in the Book of Malachi where this belief originates -- I believe that this is a totally false doctrine resulting from a gross misinterpretation of the Scriptures.

Obviously, both of these groups cannot be correct. One of them must be speaking the truth, while the other speaks and prophesies a lie.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART THREE

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

Evil King Ahab And Prophet Micaiah, God Will Choose Our Delusions, Jeremiah And The False Prophets Of Peace, The Sign Of A True Prophet Of God: Fulfilled Prophecy, Modern False Prophets In America, False Sense Of Peace And Safety, Genesis Flood, The Withdrawal Of God's Spirit And Judgment, Our Existence Is The Result Of God's Will, Modern Attitudes And Worldliness, Jesus And Paul Warn Of Sudden Destruction, Child Chastisement And Abandonment, God Will Hide His Face

As you may know, in ancient Israel, the Lord had His true Prophets who prophesied destruction and doom to a rebellious, unrepentant nation, while Satan had his many false prophets who countered them with prophecies of victory, peace and safety. A primary example of this can be found in 1 Kings chapter twenty-two. This story revolves around the death of

Ahab, who was one of the rebellious kings of Israel during the years of the divided kingdom. At that time, Jehoshaphat, who was the king of the southern kingdom of Judah who ruled from Jerusalem, went to see Ahab, who ruled Israel to the north from Samaria.

As earlier chapters reveal, the Lord was very upset with Ahab and his wicked wife, Queen Jezebel, due to their many evildoings, such as persecuting the Prophet Elijah. In the story, Ahab reveals his plans to attack Ben-hadad, the king of Syria. King Jehoshaphat asks Ahab if he had first sought the Lord concerning the matter. In order to appease King Jehoshaphat so that he would join him in the planned battle at Ramoth-gilead, Ahab calls for his prophets. What did these politically-correct, false emissaries tell the king? Consider the following verses:

"Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

1 Kings 22:6, KJV

King Jehoshaphat obviously felt that something was amiss with this prediction, so he makes further inquiry. Ahab then informs him that there is another Prophet by the name of Micaiah, whom he doesn't particularly care for because he never prophesies anything good for the king, as we see here:

"And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so."

1 Kings 22:7-8, KJV

It did not matter to Ahab that Micaiah was a true Prophet of God. He preferred to be lied to by his false prophets due to the fact that his mind was already made up. Regardless of what the Lord thought, Ahab was determined to fight against Ben-hadad. At first, Micaiah was very hesitant to reveal the truth to Ahab; perhaps because he feared for his life. But, after being prodded by King Jehoshaphat, Micaiah finally

told them that Ahab would be defeated and killed, as we see by the following verses:

"And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace . . . 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 22:17, 19-23, KJV

Naturally, King Ahab wasn't the least bit pleased that this one lone Prophet of God would dare to insult and contradict his four hundred politically-correct prophets by calling them liars, and then prophesying defeat for the king. Thus it should come as no surprise that Ahab rejected the words of this true Prophet of God by saying the following:

". . . Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"

1 Kings 22:18, KJV

Because he was faithful to obey the Lord instead of worrying about the opinions of men, Micaiah was cast into prison by this evil king of Israel. Ahab and Jehoshaphat then went up to war against the king of Syria. During the course of the battle, one of King Ben-hadad's archers shot an arrow up into the air by chance. In precise fulfillment of Micaiah's prophecy, the arrow found its mark; and Ahab was mortally wounded and died that same day. As had been prophesied, Ahab's blood was licked up by the dogs when it was washed out of his chariot. Later, his evil wife, Queen Jezebel, was also eaten up by dogs. Thus, Micaiah was vindicated as a true Prophet of God, while the four hundred false prophets

were exposed, precisely as Moses had admonished hundreds of years before when the Lord spoke through him saying:

"And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

Deuteronomy 18:21-22, KJV

At this point, some of you might be wondering why the Lord would purposely allow someone to be deceived, even to the point of sending one of His own ministering spirits to bring about the deception. Perhaps the answer can be found in an old proverb which states that a man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still. In other words, the Lord knew that it was useless to try to change King Ahab's mind. Just like stubborn King Saul, Ahab was determined to do what he wanted to do.

No doubt the Lord could have easily forced the situation, but that would have interfered with Ahab's free will and personal choice. Thus, the Lord gave the king exactly what he wanted, and chose Ahab's delusion for him by sending the spirit to lie through the mouths of his four hundred false prophets. This is why we find the Lord saying the following through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah:

"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 the article "The Office of a Prophet", another classic example I mention concerning a true Prophet of God being persecuted and ridiculed by the false ones, is that of the Prophet Jeremiah. From the very beginning of his prophetic ministry, due to his sharply-worded message which pierced the hearts of the wicked, Jeremiah was not well-received by his idolatrous countrymen. Unlike the politically-correct, false prophets of peace of yesterday and today, he was not afraid to speak the truth; despite the persecution which it brought upon himself. Consider the following harsh words

which were spoken by this fiery Prophet of the Lord:

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

Jeremiah 5:31, KJV

"Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed."

Jeremiah 14:14-15, KJV

"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 23:32, KJV

"For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 29:9, KJV

For a full forty years, the Prophet Jeremiah faithfully warned the Israelites to humbly submit themselves to the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, and to accept the invasion as a chastisement from the Lord. But, as had occurred with Micaiah years before, Satan raised up his false prophets who ridiculed, persecuted and contradicted Jeremiah. Consider, for example, the following incident concerning the false prophet Hananiah:

"Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way . . . Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest

this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month."

Jeremiah 28:10-11, 15-17, KJV

This wasn't the only time that Jeremiah had confrontations with the false prophets of Israel. Shortly after the above event occurred, the Lord further exposed the demonic delusion of these deceptive liars when He spoke through Jeremiah saying the following:

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 29:8-9, KJV

As the Apostle Paul would write over six hundred years later in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the Word of the Lord is like a powerful, sharp sword which pierces the very hearts of wicked and rebellious men, as we see here:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

Returning to the Book of Jeremiah, later, a foolish plan was developed whereby some of the rebellious Jews thought to escape from the Babylonian forces by fleeing into Egypt. In other words, they were trying to flee from the chastisements of the Lord. Jeremiah again tried to warn them not to do this as it would not fare well with them. However, once again he was accused of being a liar and a false prophet by the very people he was attempting to save. Consider these verses:

"And it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and

Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:"
Jeremiah 43:1-2, KJV

Of course, we know from both the Bible, as well as from secular history, that all of the words of the Prophet Jeremiah came to pass exactly as they had been stated. For in approximately 587 B.C., Jerusalem was indeed invaded and destroyed by the forces of Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, just like Micaiah years before, Jeremiah was likewise vindicated as a true Prophet of God; thus fulfilling the words of his fellow Prophet, Ezekiel, who was inspired by the Lord to speak the following:

"And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them."
Ezekiel 33:33, KJV

This attitude of the ancient Israelites is very typical of some people today -- such as many hard-hearted Americans -- who likewise hate God's true messengers, and accuse them of being false prophets of gloom and doom. Despite this verbal, and sometimes physical, persecution, rather than go along with all of the other false prophets of peace and safety of this modern era, who strive to be politically correct, and who paint a rosy picture of the future, the Lord's true messengers are not afraid to speak the whole counsel of God; even if they are words of coming destruction and judgment.

In contrast to this, consider what the Apostle Paul wrote regarding the Jewish false prophets who would deceitfully lull their countrymen to sleep with their false words of comfort, peace and safety, and well-being, even though their very own destruction would soon be upon them:

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."
1 Thessalonians 5:3, KJV

It is because of these examples that I have given, as well as the verses which I have quoted, that I personally am greatly concerned about all of these spiritual leaders in the United States of America, who are currently speaking of a second day

of Pentecost, of some coming American Prophet Elijah, and of a time of great revival in America in which many Apostles and Prophets will arise and inspire people to repent of their sins and return to the Lord. In my view, all of this talk seems totally contrary to what we find in the Scriptures. While they speak of peace and safety, and lull Christians to sleep with their talk of a great revival, and blessings upon America, the Bible paints a very different picture. I am reminded of the following verse that is found in the Book of Genesis:

"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

In the previous verse, the word "strive" is derived from the Hebrew word "diyn", or "down". This word means to judge, to contend, or to plead with someone. In this particular case, if we consider what the rest of the verse has to say, as well as what happened right after this in the Book of Genesis, I believe that the appropriate meaning in this verse, is to plead. In other words, it appears that what the Lord may be saying, is that He was slowly running out of patience with the wickedness of man; and that the time was soon coming when He would simply withdraw Himself from the Earth, in order to execute His righteous judgments upon the wicked. You may recall that in the very first chapter of the Book of Genesis, we find the following verse:

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Genesis 1:2, KJV

Whereas God's Spirit had previously moved close to the Earth in order to create life, with the above statement that is found in Genesis chapter six, it appears that the Lord is saying that He would eventually stop pleading with humankind to repent, that He would withdraw Himself, and thus remove His life-giving Spirit -- that is, the breath of life -- and that He would eventually destroy everything that He had previously created. Some people -- myself included -- are of the opinion that Genesis 6:3 is stating that the Flood was going to occur exactly one hundred and twenty years after this statement was

made; thus fulfilling the Lord's Words. The main point to consider is that when it finally came time for judgment, the Lord withdrew Himself and His Spirit, and that is why we are told that everything with breath died, as we see here:

"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die . . . All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died."

Genesis 6:17, 7:22, KJV

This goes hand in hand with something that the Apostle Paul said in Acts chapter seventeen regarding our very existence being the result of God's Will when he stood on Mars' Hill and preached to the ancient Greeks in Athens:

"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

Acts 17:28, KJV

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul dwelt on this very same topic when he penned the following lines as well:

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Colossians 1:16-17, KJV

What does this have to do with our current discussion? Quite simply, I believe that there are attitudes in the world today which match the attitudes which existed in the world during the days of the Patriarch Noah, just prior to the Flood. As I point out in articles such as "Selfishness: A Prophesied Sign of the Endtime", today, there are many people who are living selfish, spiritually-blind lives. They are totally indulging themselves in the things of the world, and the things of the flesh. The Apostle John perfectly described this kind of decadent life when he admonished the Lord's children with the following words in his first Epistle:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the

world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:15-16, KJV

As we saw earlier with the verse from Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians, the destruction of the wicked of his generation would come quickly, just as it likewise came very quickly for the evil people of Noah's generation as well many centuries earlier. Of course, the Apostle Paul was only reiterating what Jesus Himself had sternly warned about in the following verses:

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Luke 17:26-30, KJV

Thus, exactly as the high priest Caiaphas had feared in the following verses, and exactly as Jesus and the Apostle Paul had warned, in 70 AD the nation of Israel felt the full wrath of God when the Romans, under Vespasian, and then under his son Titus, made a full invasion of Israel, and destroyed both Jerusalem and the temple, and carried away captive thousands of Jews into other areas of the Roman Empire:

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

John 11:47-50, KJV

Taking into consideration these sobering examples from the past, where people were going on business as usual, totally unaware of the fact that God had abandoned them, and that severe judgment and destruction would soon fall upon them, is it possible that our current world is living in a similar state of blind denial as well? Is it possible that contrary to outward appearances where so many deceived Christians talk about a coming spiritual revival, that just as God abandoned the Earth during the great Flood in the days of the Patriarch Noah, He -- and thus His Spirit -- have for the most part abandoned the ungodly people of the world in these current days as well?

This is not to say that He has abandoned us completely. After all, the Lord was surely with Noah and His family in the Ark. He was also with the true Believers during the First Century as well when the false Jewish religious system was destroyed. So we can assume that God remains with His true Church today as well. However, what about what is happening in the modern, false church where all of these strange manifestations have been occurring?

To help you to better understand this concept, consider how we act at times as parents when we are upset with one of our children. Let's face it; kids are kids. Sometimes they do things which so totally irritate and upset us, that we don't even want them around us; because we are afraid of what we might do to them in our heated moment of anger. So what do we do? Well, we might send the child to his room in order to get him out of our sight while we think of an appropriate punishment.

In a way, this act of sending the child to his room is like a temporary form of abandonment. We haven't really abandoned him, but we want to let him think that we have, so that he will seriously consider the gravity of whatever the wrongful act was which brought down our wrath upon him. If that child has been brought up correctly, if he has any reverence for his parents, while he is waiting in his room, knowing that judgment is soon in coming, he is going to be fretting quite a bit. He is going to be seriously thinking about what he has done wrong. He will probably even be thinking of words to say in order to make things right once the chastisement has been meted out. As I explain in the article "Beholding

the Evil and the Good", this act of temporary abandonment is fully supported by the Scriptures. God does this with His own children when they have rebelled against Him. Allow me to share the following verses with you from that article:

"We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through."

Lamentations 3:42-44, KJV

"Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods."

Deuteronomy 31:17-18, KJV

"When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only:"

Job 34:29, KJV

"Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings."

Micah 3:4, KJV

"And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."

Deuteronomy 32:20, KJV

"[[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]] How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?"

Psalms 13:1, KJV

"Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."

Psalms 27:9, KJV

"LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled."

Psalms 30:7, KJV

"And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily."

Psalms 69:17, KJV

"Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily."

Psalms 102:2, KJV

"Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit."

Psalms 143:7, KJV

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee."

Isaiah 54:7, KJV

"Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel 39:29, KJV

If you are interested in my views concerning Jesus's words on the Cross when He said "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" -- that is, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" -- I encourage you to read the aforementioned article. The main point I wish to emphasize with these verses is that in His moment of anger, while He metes out His judgments, God does indeed abandon His rebellious children. In fact, as in the case of ancient Israel, quite often He abandons them years before the judgments even begin to fall. In American slang, we refer to this as allowing one to "stew in his juice".

In other words, God sometimes allows people to suffer in their sins for a while so that they really learn the lesson that He is trying to teach them. He lets Satan buffet them about a bit in order to sober them up. The Lord simply turns His Face away, He withdraws Himself, and His Spirit, as if

behind a cloud, even though we are whining for help. But don't worry; because He is a good Father; and He also knows when enough is enough. If you doubt that God can even remove His Spirit, consider the desperate plea of King David during a time in his life when he greatly sinned against the Lord:

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

Psalms 51:11, KJV

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART FOUR

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

How And Why: Point People To God's Word, God Withdraws His Spirit, Will God's Judgments Soon Fall?, A Spiritual Vacuum, Beware Of The Wiles Of The Devil, Misinterpretation Of The Prophecy of Joel, Promise Of The Coming Comforter, Our Dark And Evil Times, There Is No Coming Day Of Pentecost Event, Holy Spirit Available To All Believers, Gospel Is Preached, Changing Tide And Persecution Of Christians, Rise Of Islam, Is Promise Of Revival A Control Mechanism?, The World Vision

At this point, you may be wondering what all of this has to do with being "slain in the spirit". As my regular readers know, my approach to researching and answering an issue, is to build my case one step at a time. I want to make sure that you fully understand how and why I arrive at particular conclusions. It would be very easy for me to tell you what I

believe without going into all of the details, but how is that going to help you? This is what some Christians writers do. They tell you what they believe, but they don't tell you why they believe it. They don't point you to the Word of God. In my view, this is what being a Bible teacher is all about. It isn't about uplifting the man, or the man's words. It is about lifting up the Lord and His Word; for as King David wrote:

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

Psalms 138:2, KJV

So allow me to join all of these different thoughts together. Contrary to all of these false American prophets who talk about a great revival, and a tremendous outpouring of God's Spirit during a second Pentecost which will result in an Endtime Elijah, as well as in many other great Apostles and Prophets rising to the fore, I believe the exact opposite is predicted in the Scriptures. In like manner, while some of them predict peace, prosperity and safety for the United States of America, based upon her many crimes against God, against humanity, and even against the Earth itself, I can't possibly see how these deluded people can make such claims.

We have already seen through the Scriptures, that prior to, and during judgment, God does not outpour His Spirit. He does the exact opposite. He withdraws it, Himself, and His Divine Protection. You will also find this topic discussed in "The Children of God and Politics", as well as in "The Fruits of Disobedience". Personally, I believe that this is the point at which we are at with both the United States of America, as well as with the world in general. Like many other Christians, I suspect that God is poised to let His judgments fall, and possibly very soon. While the little boy has already been sent to his room in order to think over the matter, he is by no means in a state of repentance!

I am reminded of something I have shared in articles such as "Nature of the Alien: ETs, Demons or a Government Plot?" and "The Battle is Not Yours Alone!". It is important that we all understand that when people begin to reject the Lord in their lives, whether as individuals, or as an entire nation, they create a spiritual vacuum. Under normal conditions, a vacuum

cannot remain a vacuum for very long. It must be immediately filled with something else. Just as God's Spirit will not go where it is not wanted, Satan and his demons will indeed go where they are not only wanted, but where they are in fact consciously invoked by those people who are foolish enough to do so through various means.

However, the alarming part is that this may even include people who are young in their Christian faith, who don't really know how to differentiate between the Voice of the Lord's Spirit, and the voice of Satan or one of his evil cohorts. I have warned my readers many times in my articles that Satan is one deceptive fiend. He, his demons, and his worldly children, are much wiser than most of us could ever hope to be. That is why Jesus even said the following:

"And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

Luke 16:8, KJV

It is only by staying close to the Lord, and by faithfully studying His Word, that we can possibly hope to recognize the wiles of the devil. For as the Apostle Paul wrote:

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

As I briefly mentioned in part two of this series, some of the key verses which are used by these people who talk all about a revival and a great outpouring of God's Spirit in America during a second day of Pentecost, are the following, which are found in the Book of the Prophet Joel:

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be

delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."

Joel 2:28-32, KJV

For quite a long time, I also believed -- perhaps mistakenly so -- that these verses were referring to a final outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in the Last Days. Of course, even the meaning of the phrase "Last Days" is really open to debate. However, taking into consideration what I believe the Lord has shown me in recent years, I began to wonder if this was truly the case. In other words, is it possible that just as some people have misinterpreted the time frame of the verses in the Book of Malachi, so that they erroneously believe in an Endtime Elijah, that the above verses from the Book of Joel have also been misunderstood? What if the phrase "the great and the terrible day of the LORD" is not referring to our current times at all, but rather to an event which occurred two thousand years ago? I discuss this event in considerable detail in the series entitled "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?".

If we are truly honest with ourselves, we must admit that this is a distinct possibility. Due to the lack of a complete record of the events which occurred back then, we honestly do not know what celestial or earthly signs the Lord may have performed. The Sun being darkened, and the Moon being turned to blood, could easily have been a solar eclipse and a lunar eclipse during that age. Additionally, deliverance did in fact come from Mount Zion and Jerusalem; not only because Jesus preached in the very Temple, but because it was also there where He was crucified; and it was from there that His Apostles began to spread the Gospel message. Regarding this deliverance of which Joel speaks, when Jesus began His public ministry, one of the first things He did was to quote the following from the Prophet Isaiah:

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal

the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:16-19, KJV

These are not the only things which cast doubt upon this belief in a second day of Pentecost, as is proposed by the Latter Rain people and quite a few other charismatic groups. The Apostle Peter's words in the Book of Acts also indicate that the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled on that day when there was a great outpouring of the Lord's Spirit on all of the Disciples in Jerusalem; exactly as Jesus had promised a short time before. As you read the following verses, bear in mind that Peter had just received the Holy Ghost. Thus, he was speaking by the power and influence of God Himself. He was not leaning to his own understanding when he said these things. After His Resurrection, Jesus even opened up the Old Testament Scriptures to His Disciples; so I don't see how Peter or anyone else could have been mistaken when he said that this was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Joel. Consider now the following verses:

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Acts 2:14-21, KJV

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Luke 24:25-32, KJV

Notice that we are specifically told that Peter stood "up with the eleven". I don't know how you understand these words, but I understand them to mean that they were all in unison with Peter. This act of standing up together was a sign that, doctrinally speaking, they were in agreement with Peter. That is, they agreed that the words of the Prophet Joel were being fulfilled that very day. They had no doubt about this whatsoever. They had all seen Jesus after His Resurrection. He had opened up the Scriptures to them. They knew exactly what they were talking about. They weren't mistaken. They weren't deceived. They hadn't misunderstood the Scriptures. According to Jesus' own words, which were in fact a repetition of what is found in the Old Testament, they were establishing a principle doctrine of our Faith. Consider the following verses:

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

Matthew 18:16, KJV

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

2 Corinthians 13:1, KJV

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,"

Romans 16:25, KJV

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."
1 Peter 5:10, KJV

Despite this clear affirmation by the Founding Fathers of our Faith, today there are many spiritual leaders who make the false claim that the words of the Prophet Joel have not yet been fulfilled; or else they twist them and say that it is going to happen again. If you are one who believes in this idea of a second day of Pentecost, or in the coming of a second Prophet Elijah and other great Apostles and Prophets, then I ask you to please seriously consider the following.

As many of you will know, that particular day of Pentecost in Jerusalem was an extremely important part of God's Plan which greatly contributed to the spread of, as well as the survival of, our Christian faith. It was so important, that during the course of His ministry, Jesus made mention of the coming promise of the Comforter -- that is, the Holy Ghost -- on a number of occasions. Following are some of the key things He said about it:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."
John 14:16-17, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
John 14:26, KJV

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"
John 15:26, KJV

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he

will shew you things to come."

John 16:13, KJV

Now let me ask you something. If the Lord had planned for a second day of Pentecost in our present day, doesn't it seem likely that He, and His Apostles, would have made mention of it somewhere? Doesn't it seem likely that Jesus would have surely mentioned it in some of His sermons? Doesn't it seem likely that Peter, James, John or Paul would have mentioned it in one of their Epistles? Despite all of these false claims by these modern spiritual leaders, no one, not even the Lord Himself, made mention of such an important event. If not, then we are forced to ask ourselves, "Why not?".

To me, the answer is rather obvious. As I stated in the third part of this series, rather than pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh in some great, final American revival as some of these deluded religious leaders would have us to believe, it seems to me that the Lord might actually be withdrawing His Spirit from the Earth, as more and more people turn away from Him in rebellion, sin and disbelief in our dark times. Isn't this the true pattern that we have seen throughout the Bible? I have clearly supported this view with many Scriptures.

Tragically, that is not the end of the story. Let me remind you of a point I made earlier. When God's Spirit is removed -- thus creating a spiritual vacuum -- something else must come in to take its place. While neither Jesus, nor His Apostles, spoke of an outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all flesh, or of a wonderful appearance of many Prophets and Apostles who will perform mighty miracles during our current times, the New Testament abounds with verses which clearly describe and warn us about an extremely evil and totally deceptive presence upon the Earth. Following are some of the key verses which ought to wake up some of you to the real Gospel truth, whether you can receive it and believe it or not:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that

bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Matthew 7:15-20, KJV

"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

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away . . . But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13, KJV

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

This evil, deceptive presence has been on the Earth for the past two thousand years, and even before that. However, it is clearly evident from political and social developments in the United States, and around the world as well, that this

force of darkness is becoming bolder by the year. In fact, it doesn't even try to hide itself anymore. We can see it in the attitudes of so many people today who openly defy and rebel against God, and who engage in all manner of wickedness. They may think that it is funny, but God is watching and taking it very seriously, I have no doubt. As I mentioned earlier, we can only wonder how much more time will pass before the Lord reveals His wrath from Heaven.

This is the real picture of our current times. It isn't this phony, pie-in-the-sky scenario which is being preached by these false prophets of peace who talk about a revival and another outpouring of the Spirit. Why does there even need to be a second Pentecost? Did God's Spirit just run out, or run low somewhere during the past two thousand years so that we His children now need a refill? Hasn't the Holy Spirit been freely available to us ever since the day of Pentecost almost two thousand years ago?

Isn't this whole idea of a second outpouring of the Spirit starting to sound contrary to the Scriptures to you, not to mention being rather silly as well? These misguided people who preach these things are in essence saying that the Holy Spirit is not currently available to us. They are basically saying that this is why we need another outpouring of the same. Well, I am sorry to disagree with them, but that isn't what Jesus Christ taught by any means. Quite to the contrary, He said the following:

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Luke 11:13, KJV

The Scriptures make it very clear that while the Holy Spirit had previously been limited to selected people whom the Lord could trust with it, such as Moses, Aaron and his successors, King David, the many Prophets of the Old Testament, Mary, Elizabeth, Ana, Simeon and John the Baptist, following Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross, and the day of Pentecost, exactly as the Prophet Joel had written, it became freely available to all flesh. That is, to everyone who accepted the Lord Jesus Christ; beginning first in Jerusalem, and then spreading out to all around the world. We see this throughout the Book of Acts. Consider the following examples. There is no doubt in

my mind that the Spirit was indeed poured out upon all flesh exactly as had been prophesied by Joel:

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Acts 2:4, KJV

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38, KJV

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

Acts 4:31, KJV

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

Acts 5:32, KJV

"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:"

Acts 6:3-5, KJV

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Acts 8:14-17, KJV

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be

filled with the Holy Ghost . . . Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,"

Acts 9:17, 13:9, KJV

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 10:44-45, KJV

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."

Acts 11:15-16, KJV

"Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord."

Acts 11:22-24, KJV

"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."

Acts 13:52, KJV

"And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;"

Acts 15:8, KJV

"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

Acts 19:6, KJV

Now, if God truly stopped pouring out His Spirit somewhere along the way since the day of Pentecost, so that we need a new outpouring, I would like to ask those of you who believe in this totally unScriptural doctrine, to tell me exactly when and where this occurred. Furthermore, since I have now conclusively shown that the words of the Prophet Joel have

indeed already been fulfilled, and continue to be fulfilled to this present time, what other verses can you point to in order to continue supporting this wayward belief? Because of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost so many centuries ago, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has in fact been preached for the past two thousand years. Not only that, but due to the technological innovations of our modern times, the Good News of God's Kingdom is being preached more, and further, than ever before.

Anyone who pays close attention to the news and to different evangelical endeavors, can readily tell that the Gospel has indeed been preached to the entire world by many different means. If anything, I would dare say that the world has been glutted with the Gospel. In fact, world evangelism has been so successful, that in our current day, it appears that the situation is now in reverse. From the stories and reports I have read, it seems that Christian missionaries are being persecuted to some degree, and even killed, in more nations than ever before.

As different nations succumb to fanatical religious elements within their societies, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is being less and less welcomed in some of these countries. This is particularly true in countries where Islam is the predominant religion. It is now claimed that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today -- even in the United States of America -- and not Christianity as one may be led to believe. The tide is truly changing. As the Light of the Gospel slowly extinguishes, spiritual darkness will prevail in the vacuum.

This poses a very interesting question. Considering the true state of Christianity today, and the true state of the world in general, why is it that some of these charismatic leaders continue to express belief in this outpouring of the Spirit of God? While I cannot prove it beyond a shadow of a doubt, could it possibly have something to do with the fact that some of these powerful leaders, who have set up themselves as Apostles and Prophets in some of these churches and organizations, need a reason to keep their followers under their control?

Consider this possibility. By promising them some kind of a revival, and a coming baptism of the Holy Spirit in which their flocks will also be wonderfully transformed into great

Apostles and Prophets just like their leaders, these people give their followers a reason to keep believing in them as anointed shepherds of the Lord, whether they truly are or not. In other words, the idea seems to be, "Keep believing in us, because it is going to happen! A great outpouring of the Spirit is coming!"

As I have already clearly shown, the problem with this is that it has already happened; and it has continued to happen for the past two thousand years. God has been pouring out His Holy Spirit upon His evangelists, missionaries and other faithful servants for almost twenty centuries now, in order that they might take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the four corners of the Earth. This is precisely what Jesus said the Holy Ghost was for, and this is exactly what has happened, as we see by the following two verses:

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15, KJV

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8, KJV

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART FIVE

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

Is It Because Of A Lack Of Faith?, Is It A Holy Or An Unholy Spirit?, Does It Bear Positive Fruit?, The Lord Liberates And Lifts Us Up, Is It Godly Conviction Or Satanic Condemnation?, My Personal Experiences, Lift Up Your Hands In Praise To The Lord, Judas Iscariot And Incident In The Garden Of Gethsemane

As we concluded in part four, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh -- that is, upon all believing flesh -- on the day of Pentecost almost two thousand years ago; and the Lord has continued to pour it out upon those who love Him and obey Him ever since. It is by the power of the Holy Ghost that we have continued to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this very day. Thus, it should be evident to you by now that there is absolutely no need for a second outpouring of the Spirit. There is really no need for a second day of Pentecost event, as occurred in the second chapter of the Book of Acts.

As I mentioned in part two of this series, I suspect that one of the reasons why some of these people want this supposed second outpouring to happen, is because they want and need to see the signs. They need to see something physical, because they have lost their faith, and they need something to boost their faith once again. They need physical proof, physical signs, and feelings in the flesh in order to help them to keep believing. However, as the Apostle Paul wrote on three occasions in his Epistles:

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
Romans 1:17, KJV

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."
Galatians 3:11, KJV

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."
Hebrews 10:38, KJV

Aside from the reasons that I have already mentioned in this series, as I point out in "Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?", if we are not currently seeing many great miracles, signs and wonders being performed by God's children, it

might not be due so much to the absence of God's Spirit in our lives, but rather due to our own lack of genuine faith. For as the Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Hebrews:

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen . . . 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 11:1, 6, KJV

If we truly have the faith, then one would think that He would reward us with the miracles. For as the Lord said, if we have the faith of even a grain of mustard seed, we could remove mountains and cast them into the sea. Of course, metaphorically-speaking, we have already done this, because many nations -- or mountains -- have indeed been moved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, if we are not seeing very many genuine miracles, such as instant healing, then this seems to answer what Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke, as we see here:

". . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:8, KJV

I think it would be absolutely great if all of a sudden the Lord's children around the world began to perform all kinds of miracles due to a renewing or a refreshing of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I think it would be fantastic if I could walk up to a sick person, or to someone missing an arm or a leg, and immediately heal them on the spot. Just think of how many people could be won to the Lord, or how many people would re-dedicate themselves to the Lord, by such a wonderful miracle and testimony of the Power of the living God.

So, in my opinion, if these things are not happening, either it is due to our own lack of faith, or else because, as I pointed out in part two, this is simply not what the Lord has in store for the world right now. Instead of pouring out His Holy Spirit in great quantities, perhaps He is beginning to withdraw it in order to allow the final manifestation of evil. It is this very possibility that makes this desire for a second day of Pentecost event all the more dangerous. The

time may be coming -- and in fact may already be here right now -- when there will indeed be a great outpouring of the spirit. However, it won't be the Holy Spirit. It will be an extremely deceptive, unholy spirit with manifestations which will deceive many people. Does this sound familiar?

Are we perhaps already seeing this with such things as being "slain in the spirit"? If some of these leaders are preaching a false, deceptive message, could it be that their so-called spiritual manifestations are also false? After all, in order to prove that God is really with them, and that His anointing is upon their particular ministry, they would require all of these "wonderful" signs in order to convince their flocks of this fact, regardless of the true source of these different manifestations. The question we all need to ask ourselves then is which god are we really talking about here? Which one is causing all of these odd manifestations to happen at some of these tent revivals and in some of these churches?

As I have repeated over and over again in my articles, the acid test is in the fruit. This is the criteria that Jesus Himself gave us; and it is the one which we should follow without a shadow of a doubt if we really want to stay out of spiritual trouble. For those of you who are convinced of the Divine Nature of being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit", allow me to ask you a few questions. When you have these experiences, what kind of positive remaining fruit is it bearing in your life and in the lives of others? After all, this is our whole purpose for being here. That is, to love God and our fellow man, and to bring forth fruit that remains, as we see by this verse:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:16, KJV

Are these experiences drawing you closer to Jesus? Are they drawing you closer to His Word? Are they drawing you closer to other Christians? Do they help you to be a better witness to others? Are they bearing positive fruit by bringing more souls to Jesus Christ? How are you feeling inside after these strange incidents occur? Please clearly explain to me what falling down, or being pushed or knocked down to the

floor by some preacher, does for you that is in any way positive, because I just don't see it.

These very same questions can likewise be applied to any of these other odd experiences and manifestations that some of you have been having. As I have already shown quite clearly, Scripturally-speaking, the act of falling down, or being knocked down, cast down or pushed down, is not a positive experience. It in fact involves some form of rebellion, and is usually a chastisement from the Lord. However, there are a few rare exceptions where falling down has been the result of a positive experience. I will be discussing these in the final part of this series.

On the other hand, as I point out in the article entitled "The Lord Will Lift You Up!", when we are close to the Lord and we are obedient to His Word, rather than knocking us down to the ground, and in some cases even being held there by some unseen force as we see occurring with some of these charismatics, the Bible very explicitly tells us that He will lift us up. God's Spirit is not a heavy, oppressive or suppressive force. It is an uplifting, liberating force. It frees us mentally, emotionally and spiritually, and it fills us with joy unspeakable. Allow me to share a few verses from the aforementioned article with you:

"Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great . . . He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man."

Psalms 18:35, 48, KJV

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock . . . When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."

Psalms 27:5, 10, KJV

". . . I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me."

Psalms 30:1, KJV

"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in

adversities; And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly."

Psalms 31:7-9, KJV

". . . I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

Psalms 40:1b-3, KJV

"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them. By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me. And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever."

Psalms 41:9-12, KJV

"But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

Psalms 69:29-30, KJV

"Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up."

Psalms 94:17-18, KJV

"Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."

Psalms 119:116-117, KJV

So you see, while the Lord will knock us down if we become too proud and rebellious, He is primarily in the business of lifting up His children, and not knocking them down, either spiritually or physically. If we are knocked down, it is either because of our own pride and personal sins; or else it is because of the condemnation and the oppression of the

enemy. As I have explained on other occasions, there is a very big difference between Godly conviction which points out our errors to us and then encourages us to do better, and satanic condemnation which only condemns and criticizes us and makes us feel like we have done something wrong which can never be forgiven. The Lord's Spirit will convict our hearts through His Word, and then it will give us hope. In contrast, Satan just harshly condemns and accuses us, and fills us with despair. The Devil never offers any positive solution. If you are having this problem, consider the words of the Apostle Paul:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Romans 8:1, KJV

To reiterate that point, God wants to inspire us and lift us up in a spiritual sense. He desires to encourage us in our walk with Him. I do not believe for a minute that He is in the business of pushing or knocking people down to the floor for no apparent reason. If some invisible, overpowering, oppressive presence is doing that to you, it certainly isn't God, in my view. So as I said, the strange practice of being "slain in the spirit", or "falling in the spirit", just does not seem very Scriptural to me in the least. Maybe some of the people who experience that are getting inspired, but are they really getting inspired by God's true Holy Spirit? Or is it merely some fleshly, or even demonic, spirit?

While I am not in the habit of discussing my personal walk with the Lord, I do feel that the following might be of a help to some of you. Just like many other Christians, there are times when I also get extremely inspired by the Spirit. This is particularly true when I am working on a certain article, and the Lord is giving me all kinds of great verses and showing me some precious truths in His Word. When this happens, do you think that I am all of a sudden knocked or pushed to the floor by some unseen force? Do you think that I get all giddy as if I am drunk? Do you think I start howling like a dog or stomping my feet or laughing uncontrollably? Definitely not!

My natural reaction, my automatic reaction, is to get up out of my chair and walk around the room in utter amazement as I

say "Wow! Thank-you Lord!" a few times. Then I lift up my hands and praise the Lord a bit in thankfulness for the wonderful things He has just shown me. Those few minutes of praise are so refreshing. It is like being lifted up and transported to some other place. When I open my eyes again, I think to myself, "Oh, I am still here". That is how real and out-of-this-world it can be at times. But I am sure that some of you have probably experienced the very same thing, haven't you?

My point is, I do not get knocked down to the floor. Quite the opposite. I stand up and lift up my hands in praise to Him. That is my natural reaction, and not being pushed down by some unseen force. I am not "slain", I am lifted up in a spiritual sense. I am both edified and rejuvenated. I sit back down with new strength and inspiration to keep working until the project is done. In short, my praise sessions with the Lord bear good, positive fruit. This practice of lifting up our hands in praise is precisely what the Scriptures tell us to do. As we lift up our hands to the Lord in praise, He strengthens and encourages us. Consider all of the following verses:

"Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle."
Psalms 28:2, KJV

"Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name."
Psalms 63:4, KJV

"Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul."
Psalms 86:4, KJV

"Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD."
Psalms 134:2, KJV

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!"
Isaiah 40:9, KJV

"Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the

heavens."

Lamentations 3:41, KJV

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

Psalms 68:13, KJV

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Isaiah 40:29-31, KJV

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;"

Hebrews 12:12, KJV

This is the kind of praise that the Bible speaks about. We are clearly told that it will strengthen us, encourage us, and lift us up. Godly praise does not attract a spirit which knocks us down, or pushes us to the floor as if it is trying to oppress us. Whatever spiritual force is causing that kind of reaction and behavior is simply not of the Lord, and it should be rebuked immediately, and the preachers who promote it should be rebuked and exposed as well.

After making the original version of this series available to my readers, I received a response from a fellow who is part of a small charismatic church in the state of Arizona, U.S.A. To be honest, from the moment that I first came in contact with this man and his church, I became troubled by some of their beliefs; and I didn't hide this fact from him. You see, some of the very things which I have discussed in this series, are things in which they fervently believe.

For example, they refer to their leader as an Apostle. They believe in a coming second Pentecost event. They believe in the coming of a second Elijah. And sadly, they also believe wholeheartedly in being "slain in the spirit". In fact, this man claimed that the Holy Spirit has placed being "slain in the spirit" in the church. This man was also kind enough to send me what I believe may be a lesson which they share with

their church members, in order to show them that being "slain in the spirit" is a Scriptural practice.

In this short lesson, the man stated that the only verse in the Bible which is generally cited when referring to this act of being "slain in the spirit", is the following verse which is found in the Gospel of John. I personally find this verse rather interesting; and on several occasions I have also wondered what it means. It wasn't until this man sent me his response that I finally took a closer look at this verse, and asked the Lord to give me a proper understanding concerning it:

"As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground."

John 18:6, KJV

If we accept this man's interpretation of the above verse, it means that the Spirit of God was so heavy upon Jesus, that it overpowered these men and caused them to fall backwards to the ground. This man specifically states that "they all fell backward like dominos". I should also note that while the Authorized King James Version of the Bible states that Jesus replied "I am he", the word "he" is in italics in order to indicate that it was actually added by the translators for the sake of clarity. This man takes advantage of this point by stating that Jesus really said "I am", as in the "I AM" which is found in the Book of Exodus.

In other words, it appears that he is using this fact to emphasize the overpowering presence which forced these men to fall "backward like dominos"; that is, to be "slain in the spirit". In order to really understand what might be going on in this verse, I believe that there are two things that we need to do. First of all, we need to back away from the picture a bit, and see the whole thing. Second, we need to examine the original Koine Greek words from which these English words are derived. Here then is a fuller account of the event:

"Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of

Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,"
John 18:3-12, KJV

The very first thing that I wish to call to your attention is the fact that it seems that these particular men did not physically know the person they were being sent to arrest. In other words, while I am convinced that they had heard of Jesus, and had heard of the wonderful miracles He had done in the Temple and elsewhere, they apparently did not personally know what He looked like. This is very easy to see for two reasons. First of all, we are told that Jesus asks them who they are seeking. Now, if they already knew what Jesus looked like, would there even have been any need for this question? It doesn't seem likely to me. They would have simply seen Him, recognized Him, grabbed Him, arrested Him, and that would have been the end of it. In order for you to see the second reason why I believe that they didn't know what Jesus looked like, allow me to also share with you some verses that are found in the Gospel of Matthew:

"And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him."
Matthew 26:47-50, KJV

While this account may at first appear to contradict the first one, I believe that Matthew simply fills in a few

details which John did not include in his narrative. While John informs us that Judas Iscariot is with them, he doesn't specifically mention the traitor's kiss. However, what I wish to call to your attention once again, is the fact that these men who were sent by the chief priests and the elders did not know what Jesus physically looked like. If they did, then why did Judas have to give them a sign so that they would know who to arrest? I think you will agree with me then, that while they had heard of Jesus, and knew of the wonderful powers which He possessed, they did not know Him in person; at least not well enough to recognize Him up close. Perhaps they had seen Him from afar in the Temple while they were performing their duties. We really don't know.

Another interesting question to ask yourself is this: Why was a heavily armed "great multitude" necessary to arrest one man? Judas was familiar with Jesus' habits. He knew that the Lord would be alone in the Garden with the rest of His Apostles. Could this be an indication that they did indeed know of Jesus, and of the powers that He possessed, and thus they were truly afraid of Him, and what He might do to them?

Let us proceed now to what happens next. Notice that they are all standing there with Judas, and nothing unusual is happening. Then, possibly right before Judas gives Jesus the traitor's kiss, Jesus asks them whom they are seeking. They reply "Jesus of Nazareth"; and then Jesus says "I am he". It is at this point that we are told that "they went backward, and fell to the ground". What is really going on here? Were they suddenly "slain by the spirit" as some of these people would have us to believe? I don't think so.

That phrase "went backward" is derived from two Greek words. The first of these is "aperchomai". The primary definition of this word is to go away, to depart, to go away in order to follow any one, to go after him, to follow his party, to follow him as a leader. The word "backward" is derived from the Greek word "eis" which means into, unto, to, towards, for, or among. This immediately tells us that these people didn't just all of a sudden bend backwards like reeds in the wind, and fall down like dominoes, as this man would have us to believe.

It sounds very much to me like the minute Jesus identified

Himself, they physically withdrew themselves. They followed their leader and backed off away from Jesus. They retreated. As they retreated, what happened to them? They fell to the ground. This word "fell" is derived from the Greek word "pipto". Notice carefully the following definitions which are found in the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) to descend from a higher place to a lower
 - 1a) to fall (either from or upon)
 - 1a1) to be thrust down
 - 1b) metaph. to fall under judgment, came under condemnation
 - 2) to descend from an erect to a prostrate position
 - 2a) to fall down
 - 2a1) to be prostrated, fall prostrate
 - 2a2) of those overcome by terror or astonishment or grief or under the attack of an evil spirit or of falling dead suddenly

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

Notice that one of the meanings of this Koine Greek word is to descend from an erect position to a prostrate position. The man who wrote to me seemed to believe that this heavily armed multitude who came to arrest Jesus, inexplicably and suddenly prostrated on the ground before Him in adoration.

Does that make any sense to you? They didn't come to worship Jesus. They came to arrest Him. As I will prove in a minute, these people were not prostrating in adoration because of the overpowering presence of God's Spirit upon Jesus. Notice that the lexicon also says that this falling down might be due to terror, astonishment or grief. Personally, I believe that this particular definition might be what we are looking for to explain this incident. In other words, as soon as Jesus identified Himself, these people suddenly lost their nerve. They knew of the things of which Jesus was capable of doing. Remember; they had been deluded by the temple priests into believing that Jesus was a devil, and not the Son of God. He was simply a powerful sorcerer in their eyes. Let me remind you of the following verses:

"But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils."

Matthew 9:34, KJV

"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

Matthew 12:24, KJV

"The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?"

John 7:20, KJV

"Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? . . . Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil.

Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death."

John 8:48, 52, KJV

So the picture that I am given is that this "great multitude" which was armed with "swords and staves" was standing right next to this supposed "devil". However, they did not realize it, because they had no idea what Jesus physically looked like. The minute that Jesus informed them that He was the one they sought, they quickly followed their leader -- as per the Koine Greek word which is used here -- and they retreated. It sounds to me like maybe they fell all over each other on the ground in terror as they retreated, because they were afraid of what Jesus might do to them. As far as I can tell, there was no powerful spiritual presence here knocking them down backwards like dominoes.

Please go to part six for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART SIX

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

Incident In The Garden Of Gethsemane, Danger Of Basing Any Doctrine On One Solitary Verse, Diligently Compare Scripture With Scripture, King Solomon The Temple And The Cloud Of Glory, The Prophet Daniel's Otherworldly Encounters, John's Encounter With Jesus In The Book Of Revelation, Interactions Between Flesh And Spirit, Peter James And John And Jesus' Transfiguration, Deceptive Dreams And Visions Of "Jesus", The False Angel Of Light And Satan's Deceptions, Trust Only In God's Holy Word, Be Fully Persuaded In Your Own Mind

Continuing our discussion from part five, it is right after this, that Jesus again asks them "Whom seek ye?"; and they again reply "Jesus of Nazareth". Now why did Jesus have to ask them a second time when He already knew the answer, and they already knew who He was? After this, the Lord says to them "I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." I think the real spirit of what is being said here is "Well, you came for me, so why don't you arrest me now? Just take me and leave these others alone."

In other words, I think He was telling them, "Look, I am not going to do anything to harm you. I am not the big bad devil that you think I am. Just arrest me and let's get this over with." They needed some assurance that this man, whom they had been told was a powerful sorcerer, wasn't going to hurt them. It is right after this, that Peter cuts off the ear of the servant of the High Priest, and Jesus heals him with His admonition to not take up the sword. After this, they arrest and bind the Lord. I discuss this incident in more detail in some of my other articles.

If these people were "slain in the spirit" as some people would have us to believe, then they certainly made a quick recovery, don't you think? One minute they are flat on the ground supposedly worshipping the Lord; and the very next minute they are ruthless criminals again tying Jesus' hands in order to take Him to the High Priest. Are these people

schizophrenic or what? Doesn't something seem a bit wrong with this picture?

To add to this odd interpretation which is proposed by the supporters of the "slain in the spirit" doctrine, here is another point which I think you need to consider. If this crowd of people was suddenly overpowered by the Spirit of God so that they were prostrated on the ground worshipping Jesus -- instead of arresting Him as they had come to do -- doesn't it also seem strange that Peter would suddenly pull out his sword and cut off the servant's ear? It just doesn't fit the picture, does it? Therefore, the word "prostrate" cannot be the proper interpretation of the Koine Greek word "pipto" for this verse. So again, I believe they may have suddenly retreated in fear for their lives upon realizing that Jesus was the one whom they sought.

Of course, I cannot prove any of these things conclusively. All I can do is provide you with the definitions of the original Koine Greek words, and show you the inconsistencies which I personally see which make this idea of being "slain in the spirit" utterly false. If you do not wish to accept any of these possibilities, then I suppose you will just have to accept that this "great multitude" which was armed with swords and with staves was indeed "slain in the spirit".

It is interesting to note that Matthew, Mark and Luke all basically describe the same scenario of Judas arriving with the great multitude, then kissing Jesus, and then the Lord's arrest. John is the only one who describes these men falling down in this way. The fact that these "slain in the spirit" supporters base their whole belief primarily upon this one verse should cast doubt in anyone's mind. Don't you agree? It is very dangerous to base a doctrine on a single verse alone, because that one verse can be interpreted in so many ways by so many different people.

On a final note regarding this group of verses, what I also find rather odd is the fact that, according to what I have read and been told, this act of being "slain in the spirit" is supposed to be something which only falls upon devout Believers in the Lord. Yet, strange enough, here we see a large group of ungodly men -- nonbelievers in the Lord -- experiencing the very same thing. Does this make any sense to you?

After sharing the previous verse from the Gospel of John, the person who wrote to me then explained that in order to properly establish any doctrine, there must be a minimum of two or three verses of Scripture to support it. As many of my regular readers will know, I also follow this technique, and I frequently encourage you to compare Scripture with Scripture in order to hopefully arrive at a proper Biblical understanding regarding any given matter. Thus, I can most certainly agree with this man in this regard. However, when it comes to the practice of being "slain in the spirit", the problem that I see, is that because this man has already misinterpreted the previous verse from the Gospel of John, his attempt to confirm the event in John with the following verses falls flat on its face:

"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."

1 Kings 8:10-11, KJV

"It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God."

2 Chronicles 5:13-14, KJV

In my view, the previous verses describe something completely different. To provide you with some background, after King Solomon had completed building the Temple, it was necessary to bring the Tabernacle -- or tent -- the Ark of the Covenant and the various other holy objects into the Temple. It was right after the priests had placed the Ark of the Covenant containing the Tablets of Moses inside the Holy of Holies -- which was the most sacred place inside the Temple -- that the previous event occurred. Please note that those two groups of verses are not describing two separate events. They are the very same event being described by different writers in the

first Book of the Kings, and in the second Book of the Chronicles of the Kings.

This must have been one truly amazing event! As soon as the priests had come out of the Holy of Holies, the Cloud of the Lord's Glory began to fill the Temple. Some Believers have referred to this Cloud as the Shekinah Glory. However, please note that this term is not specifically used in the KJV Bible itself. But the point is, this was a very real, visible event. Whatever this Cloud was, the people actually saw it; just as their ancestors had seen it before -- or something similar to it -- during their forty long years of wandering through the wilderness, and during the times that the Lord appeared to Moses in the Tabernacle.

On a side note, I discuss all of these related verses in the series entitled "Under the Cloud: UFOs and the Holy Bible". Personally, I tend to believe that this Cloud might possibly be the very same bright, luminescent Cloud that is mentioned in the Gospels when Peter, James and John witness the Lord's Transfiguration. I will discuss that event in just a moment.

As can readily be seen, there are some very big differences between what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, and what occurred here in the Temple. In the former, we have a group of ungodly men coming to arrest Jesus. But in the latter we have devout servants of the Lord giving glory and praise to the Lord, after placing the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies.

While the ungodly men went back and fell to the ground in what I believe was an act of retreat and terror, here we are told that these servants of the Lord were unable to stand because of the presence of the Lord's Cloud of Glory. Exactly what do these verses mean? Do they mean that the priests were knocked down, or that they were forcibly pushed down to the ground, or that they suddenly lost consciousness and fainted? The answer is definitely not; and I can prove it to you right from the Scriptures.

Unlike the misguided people who believe that the priests were "slain in the spirit" and fell to the ground like feathers, what really happened is that they simply walked out of the Temple as the Cloud continued to fill it. Once the priests had entered the courtyard where the sacrificial altar was

located, the very next chapter -- that is, 2 Chronicles 6 -- begins with King Solomon giving a long exhortation to the congregation of Israel who are assembled there. Everyone was perfectly conscious and knew exactly what they were doing. No one had been "slain in the spirit".

About a third of the way through the chapter, kneeled before the altar, Solomon offers a prayer to the Lord. Once he has finished, the Lord sends a fire from Heaven to consume the burnt offering. These devout people are so humbled, and so awed by the wonderful appearance of this Cloud which has now filled the Temple, as well as by the fire which has consumed the altar sacrifice, that we are told that they voluntarily prostrate themselves on the ground in reverence to the Lord as they praise His Name. To prove that this is so, instead of just reading a few verses which can give us a distorted view of what happened here, let's read a few more of them so that we can fill in the rest of the picture:

"And he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven . . . Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD."

2 Chronicles 6:12-13, 7:1-4, KJV

Please notice that in the very first verses that we looked at, the priests were inside the Temple, and were placing the Ark of the Covenant inside the Holy of Holies. It was right after that, that the Cloud of Glory began to appear. However, in the verses you just read, not only are they now outside in

the courtyard, but they are unable to re-enter the Temple due to the presence of the Cloud of Glory. As can easily be seen, no one was "slain in the spirit" inside the Temple, or even outside in the courtyard. They were fully conscious of their every act.

So both the priests and the congregation listened attentively while King Solomon gave his exhortation, and likewise when he followed it with his sincere prayer to the Lord. After this, they all followed Solomon's lead and bowed themselves to the ground as they worshipped the Lord. After they praised God for a while, they offered their sacrifices to the Lord. If you still doubt that this is precisely what happened, then I encourage you to read chapters five through seven of Second Chronicles, so that you will be convinced of these things for yourself.

With this event, we have now looked at the main verses which are used by some Christians to supposedly support their false belief of being "slain in the spirit". Now, if you accept my explanations, then you too will agree that being "slain in the spirit" cannot possibly be based upon these verses. There is only one way to believe otherwise; and that is by purposely twisting and distorting the meaning of the previous verses. I don't advise anyone to do that.

In addition to the previous verses, the very next verses that this man used to try to convince me of the validity of being "slain in the spirit", are the following ones which are found in the eighth chapter of the Book of Daniel. Similar to John the Revelator and the Prophet Ezekiel, Daniel witnessed some rather amazing things during his lifetime. He was a man truly loved by God. Thus the Lord blessed him with some of the most powerful visions and prophecies which are found in the entire Bible. I discuss the interpretation of his dreams and visions more in depth in some of my other articles. In addition to the verses which are found in the eighth chapter, I am also including some verses from chapter ten in order to give you a complete picture of some of Daniel's encounters with these Beings, as well as his reactions to them:

"And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and

said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright . . . And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it."

Daniel 8:15-18, 27, KJV

"Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling . . . And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me."

Daniel 10:5-11, 15-19, KJV

As can be seen, the Prophet Daniel's encounters with these Celestial Beings were extremely powerful, and very dramatic. In the first set of verses, the Angelic Messenger is clearly identified as being Gabriel. If we compare the second set of verses above with similar verses which are found in the Book of Revelation, it seems quite possible that Daniel's second encounter may have been with none other than Jesus Christ Himself. It is hard to ignore the similarities between what Daniel describes, and what John the Revelator writes below:

"And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:"

Revelation 1:13-17, KJV

While we may sometimes imagine how great it would be to see the Lord, or to be visited by one of His Angelic Agents, in all honesty, I sometimes think that we are foolish for even thinking such things. Our human flesh is simply not made to directly interact with Beings from the Spirit World. Our weak, human flesh simply cannot endure such encounters very well. Perhaps this is one reason why the Apostle Paul wrote the following. As Jesus Himself said to Nicodemus, flesh is flesh, and Spirit is Spirit:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

1 Corinthians 15:50, KJV

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

John 3:6, KJV

When a body of human flesh meets a body made of the Spirit, it is a tremendous clash. Consider carefully the words that Daniel used to describe his awesome encounters. We are told that he was afraid and that he fell upon his face. We are told that he was in a deep sleep on his face toward the ground. We are told that there remained no strength in him. We are told that his breath left him. We are told that he stood trembling. We are told that he became dumb. And we are even told that when these experiences were over, that Daniel fainted and was sick certain days.

The question we each need to ask ourselves is why this was happening to Daniel. Was it because he was being "slain in the spirit"? Was he being knocked down by an invisible force? Clearly, that is not what Daniel tells us whatsoever. He says quite plainly "I was afraid". Even though what was happening to him was truly wonderful, his poor flesh just was not able to cope with it; so he kept fainting. He fell flat on his face and was unconscious. When it says that he was in a deep sleep, that is precisely what it means. He fainted and was unconscious. It is derived from the Hebrew word "radam".

It seems that fainting is a mechanism that the Lord has built into our bodies to protect us from trauma. Poor Daniel could only look at those wonderful Beings and listen to their words for a few minutes before his flesh collapsed under him again. That is why they had to keep helping him up off the ground. That is why he was told "fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong". If he was purposely being "slain in the spirit", why would he be told this? Daniel was trying to be strong, but he just wasn't able to do it on his own. If you look at the previous verses from the Book of Revelation, you will see that, as with Daniel, the Angelic Agent also had to touch John -- who fell down as one dead -- and tell him not to be afraid. Clearly, these men were merely fainting due to the strain on their bodies brought about by their own fear.

One point I would like to emphasize again, is that while those people who support the "slain in the spirit" doctrine would like us to believe that these various incidents are all closely related, as a closer study of them has now revealed, this is not the case whatsoever. They are all very different from each other and involve different elements. The first was an act of quick retreat out of fear of what Jesus might do to them. The second event was a matter of leaving the Temple as

the Cloud of Glory filled it so that they could not return. The third and fourth events are cases of fainting, due to a natural fear of things not commonly experienced by mortal men.

As I mentioned earlier, I suspect that the Cloud of Glory which filled Solomon's Temple, may possibly have been the very same Cloud -- or at least something similar to -- what was experienced by the Apostles Peter, James and John during the Transfiguration of our Lord. While I can only theorize here, I wonder if this amazing Cloud might possibly be some kind of side effect resulting from the Lord opening a vortex in the time/space continuum between our physical world, and the world of the Spirit. As you read the following account, you will notice the exact same elements which are found in Daniel's encounter, and in John's encounter in the Book of Revelation as well:

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."

Matthew 17:1-8, KJV

Notice again that the Disciples fell on there faces out of fear of the unknown, and not because they were "slain in the spirit". As with Daniel and John, the Lord had to physically touch them with His hand in order to revive them; and then He says "Arise, and be not afraid". In other words, He knows that they have fainted out of fear, and for no other reason. In this incident, the word "fell" is derived from the very same Greek word, "pipto", we saw earlier in the incident in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is a fall which results from

natural terror or astonishment. It has absolutely nothing to do with being overpowered by the Spirit of God so that one is "slain in the spirit". It was simply their body's natural reaction to protect itself from trauma.

In Luke's account of this same incident, it appears that this event may have occurred very late at night, because the Disciples were fast asleep. It is upon waking up that they see Jesus accompanied by Moses and Elijah. The Apostle Peter is so shocked by their presence, that he begins to babble like an idiot. Notice how Luke describes it. Their fear only heightens as they actually enter the Cloud and hear the very Voice of God the Father. The true nature of this Cloud has always puzzled me. If it was the Shekinah Glory, we can only wonder why they weren't "slain in the spirit" as one would expect according to this false doctrine. Luke writes as follows:

"But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

Luke 9:32-35, KJV

With all of these examples that I have now given you, I hope that you can honestly see that this doctrine of being "slain in the spirit" is false. While this man provided a few more Scriptures to support his claims, I feel that they are even less convincing than the verses which I have already shared with you. In my opinion, short of experiencing a powerful encounter with a Spiritual Being like that of the Prophet Daniel, or like that of Peter, James and John, there is no reason for anyone to be fainting and falling to the floor, as is reported in some of these testimonies I have read. And let us not forget all of the strange jerking and twitching that some of these people do while under that influence, as if they are possessed by something evil.

Let me remind you again that even when the Cloud of Glory

filled the Temple -- which must have truly been a much more powerful Presence than what these churches are claiming to experience -- no one fainted or fell or were pushed to the ground as if they were "slain by the spirit". The Presence in the Temple was real. It was visual; just like the Cloud that was seen and entered by Peter, James and John. It wasn't some invisible force knocking people to the floor. This fact alone should worry any sincere Christian who witnesses such things happening in their church or fellowship. As I stated earlier, when God's Spirit is present, it lifts up and inspires us. It doesn't throw us to the floor and then not allow us to get up as some of these people have reported.

On a related note, there are some people today who actually believe that they have seen Jesus in dreams or visions. They will tell you all about their visions and the things that the Lord has supposedly said to them. Some of these people have even claimed to have been lifted up to Heaven, similar to the Apostle John, where they have met the Lord. Frankly, while I honestly do not wish to offend anyone, based upon all of the information we have covered in this series, which describes what it is like to encounter a Spiritual Being, I must really question those Christians who make such claims. While they are no doubt sincere in their beliefs, I must truly wonder if perhaps they haven't been deceived, and have actually been visited by the false "angel of light"; that is, by the Devil himself, or else by one of his spiritual partners in crime who have tried to impersonate an Angel of the Lord. Let us not forget the following warning that was written by Paul:

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

When Daniel, Peter, James, and John saw the real Jesus in His true Spiritual Body, He had white hair, eyes of flame, a face which shone like the Sun, shiny luminescent skin like brass, a golden girdle around his breast, and His voice was totally out of this world! As we have already seen, when they saw Him this way, their flesh was just not able to cope with it. As a result, they fainted on the spot. Despite these facts, I have read testimonies of people who say that Jesus has appeared to them dressed in white with a smile on His face. Sometimes He never speaks a word to them. They say that they are overcome by a feeling of love and warmth, and an assurance that all is

well.

Based on the Word of God, if you are one who has had such an experience, don't you think that it is time for you to really question these visions of yours? Be honest with yourself. Are you really seeing what the Bible tells you that you should be seeing; that is, assuming that it is actually the real Jesus? Furthermore, is your flesh reacting in the same manner as the people who have really seen Jesus in the pages of the Bible?

Don't fall under the misguided notion that just because you are a Christian, you cannot be deceived, because you most certainly can be. Satan has been around a lot longer than all of us. He has had a long time to perfect his tricks. Don't be so foolish as to overestimate your own wisdom and spiritual discernment, or your strength. As this series clearly reveals with the issue of being "slain in the spirit", there are many Christians in the world today who are sincerely deceived, and they don't even know it. The only way to avoid these things is by staying close to the Lord, as well as by carefully and prayerfully studying His Word. If you do this, then you will not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Consider this verse:

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

Don't just trust in the words of a man; whether he is your priest, pastor, minister or Sunday school teacher. In fact, don't even trust in me. Trust only in God and in His Word. If you have doubts about something that I teach, then pray over the Scriptures I share. Ask God if I am revealing the Scriptural truth to you. Be led by His Holy Spirit. If you honestly believe that the Lord has shown you something different, well then believe it. After all, you cannot and should not operate according to my faith. You must operate according to your own faith, and be persuaded in your own mind regarding this, and any other issue. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5, KJV

Please go to part seven for the conclusion of this series.

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HAVE YOU BEEN SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT? : PART SEVEN

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : June 29, 1998

Last Updated : May 2, 2018

False Deceptive Spirits, God Is Not The Author Of Confusion, Joy Of The Lord, Test The Spirits, Gifts Of The Spirit And Fruits Of The Spirit, A List of Questions To Evaluate Your Church Or Fellowship, Closing Remarks, Suggested Reading List

Concerning these current issues regarding being "slain in the spirit" -- or "falling in the spirit" -- a second day of Pentecost event, an Endtime Elijah and other great Apostles and Prophets arising in our midst, and America's supposed coming greatness, all I can say is that I have truly and honestly done my best in this series to give you the pure, simple, straight Word of God. I have endeavored to lead you to Scriptural truth, and away from the false doctrines and practices of men which find no basis in the Bible.

To reiterate an important point which I made earlier in this series, my impression is that as people reject God and His Word more and more in their lives, not only does His Spirit begin to depart, but as occurred in the story of Micaiah, King Ahab and his false prophets, God will purposely allow a lying spirit to enter in and deceive people. I believe that this is what we're now seeing in some of America's churches, as well as abroad. These evil spirits have entered in full force, and are deceiving so many Christians with all kinds of strange, false manifestations -- such as being "slain in

the spirit" -- and likewise with false doctrines, such the so-called "Prosperity Gospel", which profits no one but the shameless preacher himself.

Now, lest some of you get the erroneous impression that I don't believe in the Gifts of the Spirit, or in the presence of God's Spirit in our lives, allow me to also encourage you to read the article called "Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?". As you will see, yes, I most certainly do believe in the Gifts of the Spirit. However, I likewise very strongly believe that God is not the author of confusion, and that all things should be done decently and in order. Being "slain in the spirit" is certainly contrary to this Biblical doctrine. Please consider the following two verses:

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints . . . Let all things be done decently and in order."

1 Corinthians 14:33, 40, KJV

Let me also state for the record, that I also fully believe in expressing our joy and thankfulness before the Lord, as I explained earlier. Following are a few more verses regarding the joy of the Lord for your personal encouragement:

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Matthew 25:21, KJV

"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."

Luke 6:22-23, KJV

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

John 15:11, KJV

"And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh

from you."

John 16:22, KJV

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

John 17:13, KJV

"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."

Acts 13:52, KJV

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Romans 14:17, KJV

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Romans 15:13, KJV

"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

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:"

1 Peter 1:7-8, KJV

"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

1 Peter 4:13, KJV

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,"

Jude 1:24, KJV

As I have already said, there is a balance to be found in the Scriptures; and there is a proper time and place for

everything. My primary message to you is to simply try -- or to test -- the spirits and the spiritual influences in your personal life, and in your congregation as well, and to make absolutely certain that they are of God, and not a demonic counterfeit. As we learned in part one of this series, this is precisely what the Apostle John admonishes us to do in his first Epistle, as we see here:

"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

Simply look at the fruit in your own life, as well as in the lives of those around you. Do you see God's blessings being manifested in your life? Do you see God's blessings in your congregation? Are not only the Gifts of the Spirit present, but are the Fruits of the Spirit present as well? Consider the following verses:

"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

If your congregation is bearing good, positive fruit such as through lives being changed, and new souls being won to God's Kingdom; and if both the Gifts and the Fruits of the Spirit are present, then perhaps you are in the right church, and fellowshiping with the right people. Following are a few additional questions which may assist you in evaluating your current situation:

1. Does your church's doctrines and pattern highly exalt and adhere to the Word of God; or is it heavily based upon the words, traditions and rituals of men with very little mention of the Scriptures?

2. Are you able to freely approach the elders of your church or fellowship without fear, and talk to them about different issues which affect your faith?

3. Are your elders willing to openly discuss the church's doctrines with you; or do they shun you and tell you that they will talk to you later; or that you are too young in

the faith to understand it?

4. Do your elders have a humble spirit when they share with you, or do they express a self-righteous, condescending attitude towards you?

5. Are you personally convinced in your heart that your church has properly explained the Scriptures to you?

6. Does your church encourage you to study the Scriptures on your own?

7. Do you have a peace in your heart concerning the church with which you are currently fellowshiping?

8. Would you encourage others to join your church or fellowship?

These are all important questions that you should seek to answer for yourself. If you have answered all of them in the affirmative, then you can be at peace with yourself, with God, and with your brethren, knowing that you have found a good church and are in good company. On the other hand, if any of these things are lacking, or if there is a spirit of darkness, or of confusion, or of oppression in your church or fellowship, then I advise you to really pray about your situation; as you may be in spiritual trouble and not even realize it.

With this final counsel, I am going to bring this series to a close. I trust that it has been instructive and a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or any other social network, I would appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server.

Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?

Beholding the Evil and the Good

Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution

Elijah: Where Are the True Prophets?
Exposing the Tactics of the Enemy
Fifty Days Which Changed the World
God's Golden Teeth, Or Satan's Delusion?
Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?
Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?
Mondex and the Mark of the Beast
Nature of the Alien: ETs, Demons or a Government Plot?
Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis
Selfishness: A Prophesied Sign of the Endtime
The Battle is Not Yours Alone!
The Lord Will Lift You Up!
The Office of a Prophet
Under the Cloud: UFOs and the Holy Bible

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