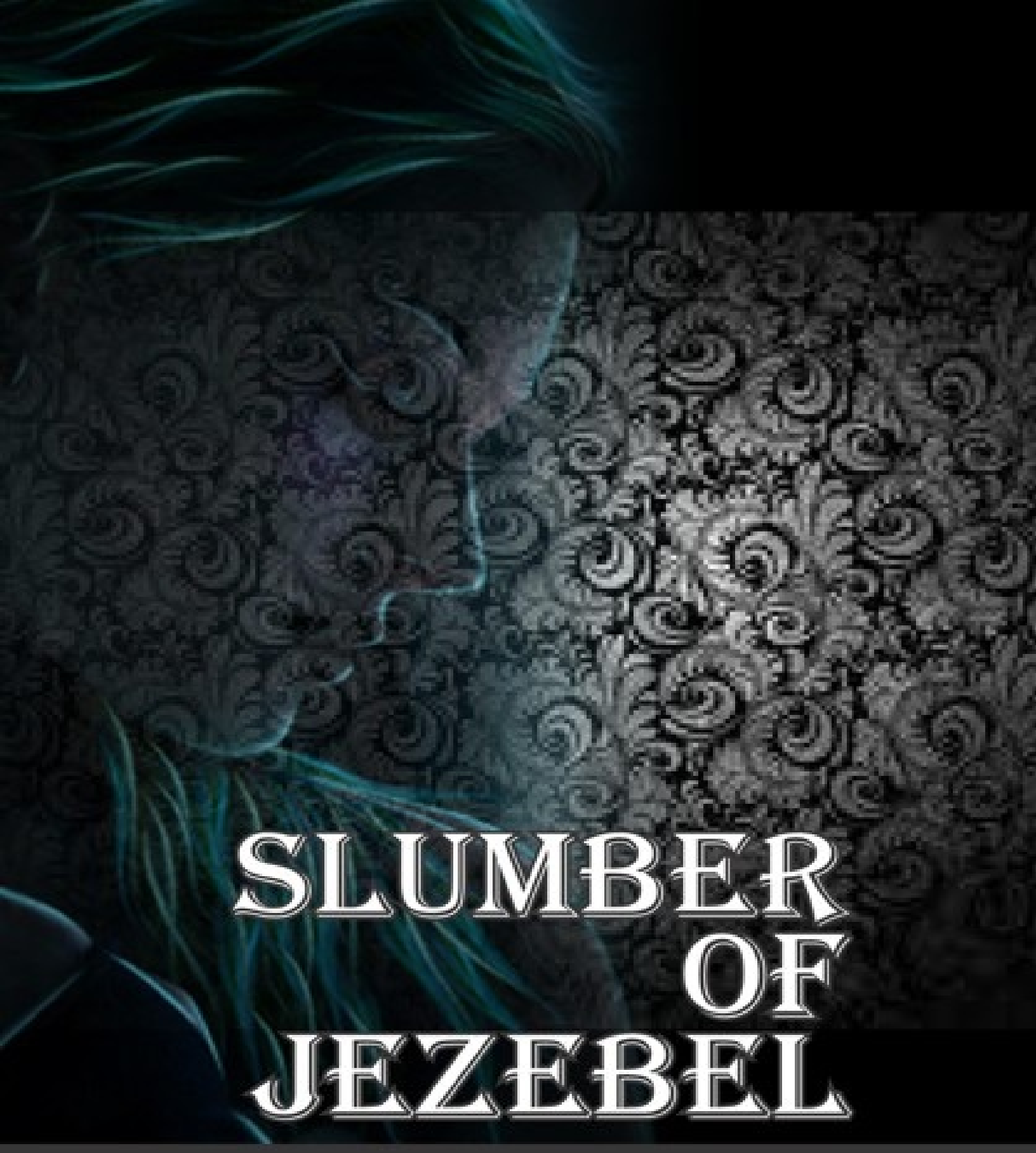


MIKE CONNELL

The Slumber of Jezebel

Mike Connell

Sermon Audio Transcripts

Smashwords Edition
Copyright 2012 Mike Connell Ministries
http://mikeconnellministries.com

The Slumber of Jezebel

Jezebel set out to destroy all messengers of the Lord. She destroyed prophets wherever she could find them; and raised up instead her own prophetic messengers.

They brought a message which they called Prophecy, but it was actually speaking words that were demonically-empowered, and seduced the nation. The nation came under it, literally fell asleep spiritually.

In the Old and New Testament, the same spirit power, the same kind of operation, to lead people astray, so they don't walk in the destiny that God had for them.

Slumber of Jezebel (1 of 3) The Bible is very clear: there is an invisible spirit world, in which spiritual powers operate (Eph 6:12).

The nation of Israel got into an alliance with another nation, the Sidonians, by marriage. He married Jezebel, and immediately opened his life to the influence of the spirit power behind her. Her father was a priest of Baal, and so she introduced the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.

Spiritual Slumber (2 of 3) The church in the West, on the most, is in a state of spiritual slumber - unaware of the powers at work in the nation, to destroy the legacy that's been built over years. God is speaking to us, to 'wake up' out of that spiritual slumber.

Jezebel was a woman in the Old Testament, and also a woman in the New Testament, but I want to get your eyes off 'woman'. I want you to get your eyes on 'spiritual power' - entering and oppressing a nation.

Recognising and Withstanding Jezebel's attack (3 of 3) This kind of spiritual attack seeks to shut down the prophetic flow; and remove any Godly authority out of their position. You become fearful, isolate, or lose perspective.

God just got Elijah to have a good long sleep and rest, gave him a bit of food, took him into a place of relationship and connection - started to put anointing

back into him, re-fired him and commissioned him. Elijah was a loner, and God got him out of being a loner, made him connect, and actually get into a team flow.

Paperback

- Createspace(1)
- Createspace(2)
- via Amazon

Audio

- Slumber of Jezebel (1 of 3).mp3
- Spiritual Slumber (2 of 3).mp3
- Recognising and Withstanding Jezebel's attack (3 of 3).mp3

Notes

- Slumber of Jezebel (1 of 3)
- Spiritual Slumber (2 of 3)
- Recognising and Withstanding Jezebel's attack (3 of 3)

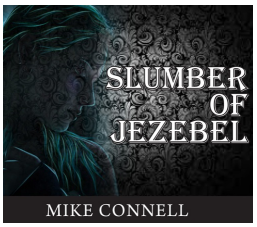
Slumber of Jezebel (1 of 3)

Sun 25 Oct 2009 AM « Back to Top

Notes» Audio» Paperback(1)» Paperback(2)» Website»

The Bible is very clear: there is an invisible spirit world, in which spiritual powers operate (Eph 6:12).

The nation of Israel got into an alliance with another nation, the Sidonians, by marriage. He married Jezebel, and immediately opened his life to the influence of the spirit power behind her. Her father was a priest of Baal, and so she introduced the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.



I want to share something with you that the Lord has just put on my heart. I've been in a season, Joy and I both are in a season of fasting, can't remember how long it's been now, probably a couple of weeks or something like that. You just lose track after a while, but we're just having a sense it's a new season, new season in our lives, new season in the church.

When it's like that, you have to stir yourself up, you have to get near to God so you're listening to God. The Lord has been downloading a number of things to me. He spoke to me just over a whole number of areas recently, and He spoke to me on one thing particularly, and I want to read this scripture here, then show what He showed me.

Isiah 52:1: “Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! For the uncircumcised and the unclean shall come no longer to you. Shake yourself from the dust, rise up; Sit down, O Jerusalem! Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!”

God is speaking through the prophet, telling the church of the day: Wake up! Wake up to what's happening. Wake up spiritually, wake up on the inside, wake up - begin to arise back to become the people of God! Shake off the things that have held you down. Arise and begin to take your rightful role and positioning.

God is speaking strongly to a church, which was in a place of defeat, to awaken

the church.

I recently received an article showing how the Islamic faith was spreading like wildfire through the world, and how it's emerging in Europe all over the place. The call for the church was: wake up! Wake up! Don't you see what is going on all around you?

God spoke to me, not directly, but through this verse. He spoke a personal word around a whole lot of other things, speaking to me and to the church. He said: “awake, awake from the slumber of Jezebel. Put on your strength O Zion”.

I thought - I know that verse, but that doesn't sound like the way I read it. I remember that many times, Jesus and the apostles quoted verses; and then they would alter them a bit, to actually just expand what was going on, or to give an additional insight. I thought: ‘Slumber of Jezebel’ - I'd never heard of such a term, never read it anywhere. I got my concordance out and looked it up - couldn't find it anywhere! Well, I don't know about that. Where can I find it in the word?

I began to look, and then the Lord just began to open up, just story after story, illustration after illustration. I encourage us to just be open to what God wants to say, particularly if it relates to you.

He's saying: awake, awake, awake! Awake church! Rise up. I believe it's a word to the church in our own nation; it's a word to us as a people - it's time to awaken, and to arise with much greater strength in God, strength in prayer.

I want to open up what this term ‘Slumber of Jezebel’ is, and some Bible examples. I don't want you to get hung up on what you may know about that particular demonic power. Just be open to what I feel the Lord's unravelling to me.

First of all, 1 Kings 16. The word ‘awaken’ means: to open your eyes; wake up out of sleep; rise into your proper place of operation. When the Bible is talking about awakening, it's referring to a sleepy condition, where people are not operating or functioning as they ought to.

In 1 Kings 16:30, you'll find the first reference to this person called ‘Jezebel’. I

don't want you to label any woman, or anything like that - I want you think in terms of spirit powers, unseen spirit powers, which operate in the spirit world.

“Ahab, the son of Omri, did more evil in the sight of the Lord than all the kings that came before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took as a wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which was built in Samaria. And he made a wooden image. Ahab did provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger more than the kings of Israel that came before him.”

So this is the first mention of this name Jezebel, and the name means literally, if you look at the roots of it, it means ‘Baal’, or ‘Baal exalts’. It means: one who has the favour of Baal upon her. It means: one who is un-husbanded; or operates independently. That's the meaning of the name.

The nation of Israel got into an alliance with another nation, the Sidonians - they came into alliance by marriage. The king of Israel, who should have stood up and led the nation of Israel to walk with God, and trusted God for prosperity - instead he entered into an unholy or ungodly alliance. He married this woman Jezebel, and immediately opened his life to the influence of the spirit power behind her. Her father was a priest of Baal, so she introduced the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.

Baal means literally ‘husband’ or ‘lord’ - so if you said the word ‘Lord’, it's the word ‘Baal’. Baal means: Lord, husband, one who provides.

Baal worship was a problem right through the Bible. Baal was a god of war; and Baal was a god of fertility. Whenever you see the god Baal, there was an introduction of violence, of war, of the slaying of innocent children, of sexual promiscuity, temple worship, temple prostitution. All of those things lay behind that spirit of Baal, so wherever Baal was worshipped or lifted up, the nation became corrupted with the spirit of idolatry, and a spiritual heaviness settled over the nation.

Jezebel was the daughter, and she introduced worship of Baal (worship of Ashtaroth) into the nation. Instead of the nation having an open spiritual heaven,

miraculous provision, miracles of God, there was a brass heaven over the nation - no prophetic flow.

Jezebel set out to destroy all messengers of the Lord, so she came against the prophet. She destroyed prophets wherever she could find them, and raised up instead her own prophetic messengers. They brought a message which they called prophecy, but it was actually speaking words that were demonically empowered and seduced the nation. The nation came under it, literally fell asleep spiritually.

In the New Testament, the name Jezebel turns up in Revelations 2:21 - another era in history, another generation, another people - a different person, but the same spirit. It talks in there about that spirit operating prophetically within the church: seducing, causing an influence that drew people away from God, and drew them into sexual sin, and all kinds of independence of God.

God has spoken in the Old Testament, and the New Testament, of same spirit power, the same kind of operation - literally to lead people astray, so they don't walk in the destiny that God had for them. They don't fulfil the plan God had for them. That spirit power is operating, to cause the people of God to be drawn from what they should be doing.

The Bible is very clear - there are spiritual powers. Ephesians 6:2 - there is an invisible spirit world, in which spiritual powers operate. I think anyone who's got any sense or sensitivity, recognises spiritual atmospheres when you go to different places. Some places are very heavy, oppressed, cold; some places you can literally feel the corruption there.

There is a resident atmosphere or spiritual power operating; but they don't just operate from the spirit realm - they find expression through the lives of people. When you look at the woman Jezebel, there was an invisible spiritual power - but it found an expression through a person who had yielded to that.

2 Corinthians 10:4 it tells us that there are ‘strongholds’. Strongholds are positions in our life that allow demonic powers to influence how we think, how we behave, how we act, even how we view life. They gain access if your life is broken and damaged. That's why people need deliverance - to get your life cleaned up of demonic influence. Why do you need restoration and healing? To

close the doors in your heart and soul, so they don't operate any more.

Spiritual powers gain their influence by seducing people to believe a lie, and begin to yield to them. In this particular nation, at this time, there was like a spiritual heaviness, a lack of the flow of the prophetic, a lack of the miraculous, a lack of the supernatural. A spiritual power was resident, operating in the nation, through people.

God hates that spirit operating. He hates it because it destroys the identity of His people, it destroys who the people of God are - it shuts down the church from being supernatural. It comes as heaviness, an oppression; that causes loss of destiny, purpose, identity, and strength.

I want to show you three portions of the Bible - three distinct, separate, situations - where this spirit gained access to a man of God, or a group of people, and it shut them down from operating supernaturally, and began to draw them away from what God had called them to do. I want you to learn from it. In each of these situations the same thing happened - there was a different doorway of entry; but in each of these situations, God intervened - to help that person step back up into the place of identity, positioning that God wanted them to flow in.

What a wonderful thing! It may be, as we read this, that you discover – I've opened my life, I've opened my inner man; I've allowed control to operate around my life, and shut down the anointing, shut down the flow of the spirit of God. In that case, I've got good news - God gets you out of it, if you respond to Him.

I didn't finish explaining what I meant by the 'Slumber of Jezebel', so let me explain it...

Jezebel was a person who introduced a spiritual power into a nation. The word 'slumber' means: to be dormant; to be in a state of inactivity; or passive. When you're slumbering, you're sleeping - you're unaware of what's happening around you. You're not doing anything, so a spiritual slumber means spiritually you're just unaware. You haven't got a clue what spiritual influences are operating. You can't see what's happening, you can't hear what is going on, you can't understand. You're living in a state of confusion, and lack of awareness of the spiritual powers afflicting your situation.

Because you're unaware of it, you can't do anything about it. It's like what I'd call living in a trance. You think you're living life, but actually this stuff has shut you down, and you don't even know it. You're not operating like you ought to operate, so ultimately it leads to a loss of hope and destiny. So that's slumber - a spirit of slumber is a spiritual fall.

The ‘Slumber of Jezebel’ is simply a spiritual power of witchcraft operating, that causes you to become unaware of spiritual operations, to shut down prophetically - shut down in the flow of the Holy Ghost - and not see what God is doing, or hear what God is saying. You actually shut down. You're no longer standing where God wanted you to stand, functioning like God wanted you to function. You no longer have strength, you become quite weak.

Now let's have a look at the condition across our nation. Across much of the western world, church is like that. It's like the church is slumbering. It's like something put everyone to sleep, and you sort of feel the apathy, the indifference and passivity, the shut-down-ness.

I find it over groups of pastors, when I go to talk with them. About a decade ago, about 12 or 13 years ago, God spoke to me to go through the nation speaking about this spiritual power, so we arranged meetings in about six different cities. We called men together, and we had something like 300, 400, 500 men in different cities in the nation. One of the things I did was expose this power, and how it operates, and get men to stand up, begin to pray strongly, begin to throw that heavy thing off their lives, begin to arise back into their position. Oh, we had some deliverance! My goodness, we had deliverance like you can hardly believe. There wasn't a single time where there wasn't an outpouring of deliverance, and then a fresh releasing of anointing.

The last city we were going to go into was Auckland, and the year that we were going to go into Auckland, there was a parade in that city. Now our conference was called ‘Heroes of the Nation’. The year we planned to go into Auckland, there was a gay or homosexual parade called ‘Hero Parade’. After that it was in the news, it was everywhere - you just could not run a conference called Heroes of the Nation. It literally shut us down - just like that - just taking, stealing what we wanted to do I've come into this spirit before - anyway, I felt God saying: stir up again - it's time to rise up.

We looked in 1 Kings 16 - now I want you to go with me to Judges. I want to show you three stories of people who come under the influence of that spirit.

1) Judges, Chapter 16:19. You know the story of this man - a mighty deliverer, born supernaturally by the spirit and power of God. In Judges 16, we find this man in a very bad position...

“Delilah lulled him to sleep on her knees (notice: he fell asleep) then she called for a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. She began to torment him - and his strength left him. She said: Samson, the Philistines are upon you! And he awoke from his sleep, I'll go out as before as at other times, I will shake myself free! Be he did not know the Lord had departed from him. So the Philistines took him, put out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. He became a grinder in the prison”.

Samson forgot his identity. He was born to be a deliverer in the nation. He was called of God, supernaturally, to be a deliverer - to arise as one who would bring deliverance to the nation from the Philistines. His purpose was to break the yoke of the Philistines - to deliver the nation from that wicked bondage, that evil spirit power - and yet here it was, he opened his soul to the demonic power of Jezebel - or that spirit, that witchcraft spirit.

He opened his soul through finding comfort in the arms of Delilah. Her name means the one who ‘empties you out’, the one who ‘creates emptiness in your life’. He exposed his soul. He was drawn into sexual sin. He found comfort apart from the living God, and as he found comfort in her arms, he progressively opened himself to her influence.

Verse 9 - What he didn't realise: there were men lying in wait, staying in her room. What he didn't realise is - the five lords of the Philistines, the demonic power that had ruled the nation - had bribed her, and were waiting there. They were using her to draw him away from his calling, from his identity, from what God called him to do, and she drew him into sin.

When he fell into sin, he fell asleep - and then his strength left him. He was spiritually unaware of the danger in his life that his sin presented to him - so very soon he lost his crown of dominion. He lost his anointing, and strength to rule,

he lost his power to destroy the enemy's yokes - and instead ended up in slavery. He lost his vision, he lost his destiny, he lost his hope, his freedom. He ended up enslaved - that is what that spirit power does to people.

When that spirit of witchcraft operates unchecked, it takes away vision, your hope, your destiny, your identity, any kind of strength that God would give you - and you end up in bondage, instead of living the life God called you to live.

Believe me, if you want to fulfil the destiny God has for you, you will have to rise against that spirit; and not let that spirit have access to your life, to shut down the anointing, control how you think, and steal the dreams.

It doesn't just steal your dreams - it steals your inheritance, and the legacy of the next generation. You cannot compromise with that spirit power. There is a war that must be engaged in, if any person's going to win over that.

When control powers come against you, the goal is to control - it's a fight for your freedom. You have to recognise it. It's not people, although it operates in and around people - it can even operate in your own life.

It is a spirit power, and so it requires spiritual weapons. Recognise the enemy, and how it comes.

In this case, it entered the door of his soul (through sexual sin); but here's the very, very positive news... When Samson repented - I guess when he found himself in that ‘low place’, he did the one thing that will get you out of that hole. If that thing's got a grip around you, there's one thing you need to do, and that is: turn to God! Turn to the living God, who's gracious and merciful!

He turned and he said: “oh God, remember me and restore my strength”. He felt the power of God come around him again. His life became to change. The Bible says: “in his last day he took down more than he'd taken in all his life”. Your ‘last days’ can be better than anything that went before, if you can connect with the living God, and His strength gets into your life! Oh Holy Ghost!

Here's the wonderful thing about Samson - in the New Testament, there's no record of his failure. There's just a record he was ‘a mighty man of faith’ - and we may fail, and fall over, but God wipes away the record when we repent. It

just says: mighty man of faith, mighty woman of faith - you broke out of it, and finally ended well!

2) Turn to 1 Kings 19:1-5 - we find here another prophet, another mighty man of God.

1 Kings 19:1 - “Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how Elijah had executed all the prophets with the sword”.

Oh I wish I could have seen all of that. My mind imagines it sometimes. There's a ruling power in the nation, all hope seems to be gone, but there's some people there who are crying out to God, some people who are in prayer and intimacy - and finally Elijah emerges out of the darkness, out of obscurity. There he is - and he shuts up the heaven, and then hides for three years. Then when they're getting desperate - he comes out, says to the prophets of Baal: come on out, let's see what you guys have got.

They set up an altar, and he sets up an altar. He says: let's see which God is the real God, by calling fire down from heaven - so they had this challenge. At the end of the day, he calls fire down from heaven - what a glorious thing to see.

Then he rises up, and with the sword he slays 450 prophets of Baal. Oh, that's men of God, men of God! Men of God! Using the sword of the spirit to destroy spirit powers, tear down ungodly beliefs, bringing the truth to the nation. What a great day! Then he brings rain. In fact he's had a wonderful time. He went home happy that night - but look what happens the next day...

1 Kings 19:2 – “Then Ahab told Jezebel - and Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah”.

It doesn't really tell us exactly what that was, but it says he “saw it”. Normally if someone sends a message, if they tell you something, you “hear it”. Instead it says he “saw it” - so undoubtedly someone was sent in, but I believe demonic powers and cursings were sent against him. When people curse you, they release spirits against you.

When they falsely accuse you, they release spirits against you - and she still had 450 prophets of her own, who ate at her own table and did what she said, so she

sent a messenger. I believe she sent a demonic spirit - a spirit of hate, a spirit of murder, a spirit of death - to destroy the voice of God in the generation; to shut down the only thing that could threaten her kingdom. She sent the messenger.

Now here's the problem - he opened his heart to that message. He got wounded. He received that message of fear - he allowed it to get into his heart.

I believe it was a demonic messenger, and so he felt his heart gripped by fear and panic, his mind froze. He forgot he's the man of God who called fire from heaven. He forgot he's God's man to save the nation; he forgot what he was called to do. His strength sapped out of him, as he came under attack from that spirit.

Some of you may have had a similar kind of thing come - it sits around and over you - and you feel shut down with fear. You can't function, you can't even think clearly. This is what happened to him - and when he saw it, he ran for his life - left his servant, and he ran to Bathsheba, which is he ran right clear out of the nation. I'm getting out of here! He panicked.

Finally it says, he sat down under a broom tree, and he prayed he might die; saying: “that's enough Lord, take my life, I'm no better than my father. Then he lay and he slept”.

Look at the big picture. He stood up against that power - and it retaliated (important to notice that). When you stand up - it pushes back on you.

I talked to one man about how to stand up in his spiritual governance, and prayer in his home. I came in a week later and said: how are you getting on? He said: oh, I've stopped. I said: why is that? He said: well it didn't work. Oh really, it didn't work? What happened? He said: it got worse - everything got far worse when I started to pray - so I stopped praying. I said: everything got worse, because you're stirring up resident spirits, which are controlling what is happening. Keep up the prayer; and get ready to engage the people.

Notice what happened is: attacks come against him – fear. He's listened to words of accusation, murder and death - they get into his heart and shut him down. He comes under the control, filled with fear - and he runs.

Notice that: he forgot who he was, forgot his calling. His strength left him, and he fled from his position, that God had assigned him in the nation. He ran, he got isolated, then he sat down with discouragement, and loss of perspective.

This is what happens when this spirit comes around you. Fear, you withdraw, shut down, want to isolate, want to be on your own, feel hurt, feel discouraged, want to sit down.

Interesting - the tree he sat down under - a juniper tree, means: ‘to bind’, or ‘put under a yoke’. So he's sitting there, and this mighty man of God, who's got a move of God going, is now sitting under a tree, shut down, wanting to die - and he's sleeping. A spirit power had shut him down.

It doesn't finish there, fortunately. He lost his courage in the face of that attack - but his strength returned when God touched him supernaturally. The angel came and touched him, spoke a word to him, gave him nourishment.

When we get the touch of God again around our life, when we get the word of God prophetically flowing into our hearts - the Bible says “he got up, and he ran for 40 days and 40 nights”! He's still hiding though – he hid in a cave until God spoke to him: “Elijah, what are you doing here? You're a man of God! You're a man called to change a nation. Why are you in the cave?”

“Leave me alone!” He was shut down by that power - but God speaks to him, calls him out, and in a gentle voice encourages him, and sends him back. He says: anoint this man, and anoint that man, release them - and they're going to tear that wicked spirit power down.

What a shame that Elijah didn't do that - but he did impart to a next generation - and they did it. They finished what he couldn't finish. God wants a new generation, and Jehu finished the job. He had an apostolic, militant, governing, confronting spirit around his life, and he shut that thing down in the nation.

3) I want you to have a look at another one with me, in Luke 22, and here's the third situation I want to draw your attention to.

Here's the wonderful thing - that even if that spirit has entered in, through compromise, lukewarmness, sexual sin, false comforts or whatever - when we

repent, God restores us, and wipes away the record.

We may have drawn back in fear, drawn back and felt pressured, overwhelmed and isolated and alone; but when God touches our life and speaks - our spirit comes again.

Luke 22, these are the apostles, the mighty men of God, called to change a nation – “Come, follow me - I'll make you fishers of men”. “Lord, we're with you right until the end!” That sounds good doesn't it aye, but look what happens when pressure comes on...

Luke 22:40 – “Jesus came to the place (Gethsemane), and he said to them: pray that you enter not into temptation”. This is where we're going to - Prayer.

Luke 22:41-46 – “and He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw. He knelt down and prayed and said: Father, if it's Your will, take this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done. And an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground. He rose from prayer, he came to His disciples, and He found them sleeping from sorrow. He said: why do sleep? Rise and pray - lest you enter into temptation.”

These are the mighty men of God, apostles of the Lamb, called to change the world, called to be history makers, called to make a difference. They flowed in the Gifts of the Spirit. They'd seen miracles and healings. They'd boldly declared: “Lord, we're with You” - and now Jesus faces His greatest hour of spiritual pressure and attack.

It's the threat of imminent death - and we know it had to be a spiritual conflict, because it says that “He prayed earnestly, being in agony”. There was a tremendous turmoil, as all the powers of hell unleashed on Him in the garden. He was under immense spiritual pressure, and He stood and prayed.

The pressure was to control Him. The pressure was to shut Him down. The pressure was to knock Him out. The pressure was to get Him off course, and He prayed: “Father, not My will. Father, let Your will be done” - that's what He was wrestling for.

Why was He wrestling for that? Why is that so significant? Because witchcraft attempts to impose a different will. Witchcraft attempts to impose a different governance. Witchcraft tends to impose its own kingdom. Witchcraft tries to shut down the will of God, and impose another will upon you - so you feel rejected, shut down and you feel in despair.

Jesus wrestled against that pressure. He did it in prayer. I'll show you in another session what you have to do, to stand against that demonic power, and ensure you come out the other side on top. He prayed.

I want you to notice what the disciples did. The disciples forgot who they were. They forgot their commitment to the Lord. They forgot their bold statements they'd be “with Him until death”. They forgot their destiny, forgot the purpose. Under the face of that spirit, they lost all strength - and they fell asleep.

It's not a coincidence that in three cases in the Bible, mighty men of God fell asleep. That's what that slumber is. It's actually a sleepy, lethargic, passive state - created by yielding to a spiritual power that you can't see - until the church becomes passive, half-hearted, and lukewarm; instead of having the fiery presence and power of God, a spirit that's alive, hearing from God.

They shut down, and they went to sleep. What was the doorway into their heart? The Bible tells us that too, it says: sorrow, emotional pain, hurt.

We've now seen at least three doorways this spirit uses to get access to people's life: false comforts, turning to things which are not of God, turning to addictive things, turning to things which comfort you, turning to sexual sin, turning to all kinds of things that provide a comfort, apart from the comfort God provides.

We saw that fear - listening to the wrong words, and letting them get into your heart, and allowing fear to arise and not conquering it - allowed this control to come. Whatever you're afraid of will control you.

Finally, the sorrows, hurts that have never been fixed, areas of the soul with: bitterness, grief, disappointments, and setbacks that were never addressed properly. Demons come into there, and use them as an open door. They shut you down when at the very point of time you should be standing strong in prayer.

Jesus words tell it all. He said" rise, pray, ARISE, PRAY, ARISE, PRAY, ARISE, ARISE, ARISE O daughter of Zion. Put on your beautiful garments, O daughter of Jerusalem. Shake the dust off you. Arise, sit down in the realm of the spirit; break off your captivity. Become the mighty people of God.

Here's the thing that rose them out of their sleep - Jesus touched them, spoke to them: rise up and pray!

Every time that people fell asleep, under the influence of a spiritual power - it was a prophetic word from God - a call to change, repent, step up, re-engage.

Sure enough, on the day of Pentecost, we find the disciples there. Jesus said: Peter, I've prayed for you, that your faith won't fail. I've been praying for you, I've been praying for you that your faith won't let go - that whatever you go through, you won't fail in your faith. You'll still believe.

Peter failed massively. He wept over his failure - but Jesus was praying that his faith wouldn't fail - just like He's praying right now, that your faith won't fail when you're under pressure. When we're under pressure, He's our intercessor, He's the apostle of our faith - He's praying that our faith won't fail. He's praying we'll stand up. He's praying for us! He's praying!

A few days later, 50 days later - those same men that had been asleep and fled - spent 10 days in intense prayer, and the mighty power of God was on them, and they broke out, began to change nations, and become history makers. Whoa! They had to break through; in the very same city that thing shut them down and got them to sleep. Elijah had to go back to the very same spirit that had shut him down, and raise up people to confront it. Samson stood up again.

Here's a very simple key: just repentance, leaning on God, and rising up into strong prayer.

I'll share with you other things related to this. I've got such an immense amount of download on it right now, I'll share the other half of this message, because there's at least another three very, very vital situations that I want to draw your attention to, which give keys how this thing has been beaten.

Two of them are in the New Testament church, yet that power comes to shut it

down, and it comes under it, but God shows them how to get out of it. Even in the Old Testament when we look in the story of Jehu - go reading about Jehu, find what he did, and look for the keys. Look beyond the story, to the spiritual insights of how he dealt that thing, and you'll see how we can deal with it too. God's calling us to arise.

Closing Prayer

Let's just stand right now, and just lift our hands to worship the Lord. Wonderful Jesus.

Maybe already as I've prayed, and as I've been preaching, perhaps you've felt: whoa, I'm like Samson - I've gone to sleep. I never had much strength, and what I had is gone! I don't want to be like that - I want to finish well. I don't want to finish weak, I want to finish well!

Is that in your heart? Is there compromise, sin? Just repent of it quickly right now. What's been filling your time? What's been filling your heart? What have you been using to just fill yourself up?

There can be all kinds of things that comfort you and make you feel better, but at the end it's all the same. We become asleep and don't realise demons have come into our life - then they ruin us. They ruin our legacy, they ruin our lives. I've seen it over the years, never quite understood why it happened - it's a spirit power.

Stand up. Just come back to the Lord. Why don't you say (like Samson): “oh Lord, remember me - REMEMBER ME!”

God remembered him. Or like Elijah - you go back and face that situation.

Perhaps you've yielded to fear - yielded to words of accusation, murder, hate, death. They've come around your soul and life and shut you down. Lord, you need to break the power of those words, need to cancel those words, need to rise up and forgive those people, get that hurt out of your heart.

Maybe it's more like the disciples - you've had a lot of sadness, and various things have disappointed you, and you've just shut down inside. That thing's have got control of you - you're no longer the person you used to be, because

something wounded you.

I've got good news: Jesus died and carried our sorrows on the cross.

Let's just pray together. I believe this is a fresh word. I never read about this anywhere. I felt it's something God just showed to me, and I believe it's spiritually present across our nation, and it's affected us as a church. It definitely affected me, probably for about a decade. I can see it now, and I'm after it. I'm going to rise up - God will help.

Summary Notes

Formatted » Back to Top »

Introduction:
· Isaiah 52:1-2 - “Awake, awake, put on your strength oh Zion, put on your beautiful garments oh Jerusalem, the Holy City”
- Call to the church to awaken from sleep and to arise into its’ proper place of operation
- Awake = 5782 = to open the eyes, stir self up, arouse from place of sleep
- Prophetic call to the church that requires a faith action – response
- Personal Word: “Awake, awake from your slumber of Jezebel…”

What is the Slumber of Jezebel?
a) Jezebel: 1 Kings 16:31-32
· Jezebel = Baal exalts, under the favour of Baal, not cohabiting with
· The 1st portrayal in the bible as a wicked queen who killed prophets and established idolatry
· Next portrayed in the Bible – Revelation 2:20 – as a person with the same evil character and intent
· Two different eras – same spiritual power exercising a destructive influence on the people of God
· Operates to seduce = 4105 = to wander away from safety, from truth, go astray
· Operates to intimidate and control
i) External Spiritual Pressure – ‘Outer Space’ Ephesians 6:12
ii) Internal Spiritual Pressure – ‘Inner Space’ entering through personal strongholds 2 Corinthians 10:4
- How we think and behave
- Spiritual powers seducing people, and the people beginning to yield to them

b) Slumber Romans 11:8
· Slumber = to sleep, be in a state of in activity
· Spiritual Slumber
- Spiritual sensitivity dull
- Cannot see or hear spiritually
- Unaware of spiritual influences at work, can’t do anything about it
- Living in a ‘trance’ – unaware what is happening
- Ultimately it leads to a loss of hope and destiny

c) Slumber of Jezebel – spiritual power that shuts you down, no strength, become weak:
· State of spiritual dullness and the lack of awareness brought on by yielding to the invisible activity of the Jezebel power
· One of the major causes of this is spiritual laziness
· Proverbs 19:15 - “Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep”

3. Bible Examples:
· There are several examples of people who came under the influence of this invisible activity of the Jezebel power

i) Judges 16:19-21 - Samson: “she made him sleep on her knees”
· Samson forgot his identity, forgot his calling as a mighty deliverer
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit through sexual sin, false comforts

· He was spiritually unaware of the danger, focused comfort on Delilah – v 5,9 – 5 lords of the Philistines waiting there
· He lost his crown of dominion, and he did not know it v20
· He lost his vision, his strength, his destiny and was brought into bondage
· The Jezebel spirit strips people of strength, vision, hope => bondage
· When Samson repented his strength was restored. The power of God came around him again
· Arise to this spirit, don't let it steal your dreams, inheritance and legacy of the next generation
· Spirit power requires spiritual weapons
· If you get connected with the living God you will be stronger than ever

ii) 1 Kings 19:1-5 - Elijah: "he lay and slept under a broom tree"
· A mighty man of faith
· Elijah forgot his identity, forgot his calling as a mighty deliverer
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit when he received Jezebels messenger v2,3
· The messenger (demonic) wounded him, stripped him of confidence and fear entered
· Fear = abandoning position, isolate, discourage, loss of perspective, desire to die
· Juniper tree = to bind or put in a yoke
· He lost his courage that came from the anointing flowing, he forgot who he was, loss of perspective, withdraw, hurt and discourage
· When people curse and accuse you a spirit is send out to destroy you
· v7,15 His strength returned through the touch of God and the prophetic word

iii) Luke 22:45-46 - The Disciples: "…he found them sleeping for sorrow"
· The disciples forgot their identity, forgot their calling as mighty Apostles of God
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel Spirit through sorrow – emotional grief and pain
· Sorrow = grief, heaviness, pain, sadness
· They lost their confidence that came from the anointing flowing
· Matthew 26:40-46 "They were awakened from their sleep by Prophetic Confrontation from Jesus"

iv) Galatians 2:11-13 - Peter: "…he separated himself fearing those who were of circumcision"
· Peter forgot his identity, his calling, he forgot his personal revelation he had received
· He let go the personal revelation he had received from the Lord re the Gentiles Acts 10:15
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit through fear
· Fearing = 5399 = to frighten, put to flight, score away, shrink back, conceal self
· The Jewish Christians kept the law and introduced the pressure of legalism
· Disemble = 4942 = to act a stage player, pretend to act out of one motive when another motive inspired the action
· The church came into great conflict as Peter withdrew, out of fear
· v11 Paul confronted Peter – Apostolic Confrontation with truth

v) Galatians 3:1-2 - Galatian Church: "did you receive the spirit by works of law or hearing by faith"
· The Galatian Church forgot their identity, the calling as Gentiles, they forgot the liberty of the Holy Spirit
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel spirit through wrong belief and performance beliefs
· Foolish = 453 = lacking spiritual understanding, mind not being exercised
· Bewitched = 940 = to fascinate, charm, cast spell over, captivate, place under power rt = wicca - sorcerer
· The Galatians had opened their soul to spiritual influence of the Jezebel spirit by allowing legalism – religion based on performance not faith
· They began in the spirit with miracles and ended in flesh striving
· Galatians 3:1 - Paul confronted the church – Apostolic Confrontation with the truth

vi) 2 Kings 9:11-13 - Captains of Army: “Jehu is King”
· The Soldiers (captains v5) had forgotten their identity, they forgotten their calling
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel spirit over the nation by ‘need for security’
· The Spirit of Jezebel had cast influence over the whole nation of Israel
· The King of Israel: Jehoram = ‘The exalted One’ = Pride
· They were spiritually asleep and could not recognize what was happening v11
· v12,13 Apostolic declaration of Prophetic Word broke the demonic influence

4. Awake, Awake!
· Mark 13:33-37 - “Watch … lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping”
· Doorkeeper = watcher, sentry, guardian of door, portal, gate to Kingdom
· Watch = 1127 = to keep awake, rouse from sleep, proactive, diligent attention
· Watching is connected to:
i) Strong Prayer Mark 14:38
ii) Be sober 1 Peter 4:7
iii) Repentance and Strengthening self Revelation 3:3
iv) Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit Habakkuk 2:1

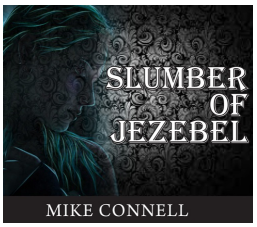
Spiritual Slumber (2 of 3)

Sun 8 Nov 2009 AM « Back to Top

Notes» Audio» Paperback(1)» Paperback(2)» Website»

The church in the West, on the most, is in a state of spiritual slumber - unaware of the powers at work in the nation, to destroy the legacy that's been built over years. God is speaking to us, to 'wake up' out of that spiritual slumber.

Jezebel was a woman in the Old Testament, and also a woman in the New Testament, but I want to get your eyes off 'woman'. I want you to get your eyes on 'spiritual power' - entering and oppressing a nation.



Review Isaiah 52, the prophet is speaking to the church, speaking to the Israel of his day. He says: wake up, wake up! If he's telling them to wake up they must have been... asleep!

You're not aware what goes on when you're asleep. That's when thieves come into your house, if you've left the door open. When you're asleep, things can be happening, that can be affecting you; but you don't know, because you are asleep.

There's a natural sleep: when you fall asleep naturally, you're unaware of what's going on around you. But you can also fall into a spiritual slumber, and clearly here God is speaking to the church: “Wake up! Wake up!” He's speaking and stirring the church to wake up.

God is speaking to the church of New Zealand: wake up! Wake up! Look what's happening! Look what's going on in the nation! Look what's happening in families - look what's happening to the next generation. Wake up church! I've called you to do something! I've called you to make a difference.

He says: wake up! Wake up! “Put on your strength” - the strength that a believer has is the anointing power and life of the spirit of God. Put on the Holy Ghost! Get fresh anointing around your life. Wake up out of this slumber, and get back into a life flow of God.

Then He says: “Put on your beautiful garments” - garments of praise, garments

of righteousness. Jerusalem - you're a holy city, a holy people - that's who you are.

Then He said: “the uncircumcised and unclean shall no longer come to you”. Let purity come round your life. Become focussed - you're called to do something.

Then He challenges them: “Shake yourself out of the dust”. Many times, you want someone to pray for us; but God says: shake yourself - shake yourself out of living at such a low level. Begin to live a life of purpose, passion and commitment to Jesus Christ.

He says: “Sit down, O Jerusalem!”. Take your positioning, that God has given to you - a positioning where you can exercise spiritual authority; and then loose the restrictions that you've lived with.

We read that, and it's as relevant for today as it was 2000 or 3000 years ago when it was first written. God's speaking to us to wake up out of unawareness, to wake up and begin to shake ourselves, begin to rise up in a new strength of God.

This is a great new season. I love this season we're in. It's a challenging season; but God wants us to strengthen the personal foundations of our life. It’s a time to awaken inside, to what is happening around us. Clearly the church there was asleep. Another part of the Bible says: “wake up the mighty men!”. They're mighty men - but they're asleep, unaware.

Spiritual slumber can come on people. How would you know if you were in a spiritual slumber? There'd probably be a number of signs - your disconnection from God, lack of life in the spirit; increasing problems you can't get dominion over or deal with, a lack of revelation, compromise. There'd be a whole number of ways that you could recognise spiritual sleep in your life.

Usually though, you're unaware of it - someone has to wake you up. Ever had someone come and wake you up? Grumble... Ever had your alarm go off in the early, early hours; or someone rang you at a very early hour of the morning - you hang up the phone, grumble... You can hardly even talk straight - waking up; but there's such a thing as a ‘spiritual slumber’.

When spiritual influences push down on your life, you actually stop becoming,

or being, what God called you to be. You accept something much less than what God has - and you actually think it's normal.

Church in the west, on the most, is in a state of spiritual slumber - unaware of the powers at work in the nation, to destroy the legacy that's been built over years. God is speaking to us: wake up out of that spiritual slumber.

I talked about the ‘Slumber of Jezebel’. Jezebel was a woman in the Old Testament - also a woman in the New Testament - but I want to get your eyes off 'woman'. I want you to get your eyes on 'spiritual power’ - entering and oppressing a nation.

In the Old Testament, Jezebel was a queen, who worshipped the gods of Baal and Ashtaroth - and she came into an alliance with Ahab, who was a king. You and I are called to be kings, but we have to be careful what alliances we form in our life, and what spiritual influences we allow to come over our life. This man married this woman, and through her, spiritual influences came around his life - the worship of Baal, the worship of Ashtaroth. They were gods of sex and fertility; they were the gods of war.

They introduced new value systems into the nation. They abandoned the ways that God wanted the nation to be built. The whole nation came under that spirit, under that influence: sexual sin; promiscuity; prostitution; pornography. Those kinds of things abounded under the spiritual influences in the nation - and they thought it was quite normal. They didn't realise they were spiritually, and financially, and in every way impoverished, and oppressed. God's word was to wake up out of that sleep.

I began to speak about a spiritual atmosphere that puts people to sleep. When people are spiritually put to sleep, they become very passive. Everywhere I go in New Zealand, I find it: an incredible passivity sits over people.

The Bible says that, to take hold of the promises of God – why the violent press in and take hold - by persistent, energetic, fervent, passionate prayer. That's how you get hold of the things of God; but when there's passivity - we're under a spiritual influence, and there's very little passion, very little fervency.

You can see it at a football match; but when people come into a spiritual

environment - suddenly they shut down. There's something sits over them. It's something that you and I have to fight to push off - to push it off! I don't want to be shut down! I don't want to be passive! I don't want to be asleep and unaware - I want to be awake and hearing God and moving in what He's doing!

I shared with you three situations, of people who fell asleep; and what it was in their life, that opened the door for that spiritual power to put him to sleep.

1) Samson had a great call to change a nation, a call to go and to bring deliverance, freedom, salvation - to represent the living God, and to open up the nation, to bring freedom from its enemies. Instead he got sidetracked with sexual sin. He got sidetracked with Delilah, and the result: “he fell asleep on her knees”. While he was asleep, he was unaware of the danger he was in. He lost the anointing on his life, and the strength of God on his life. He lost his eyesight, he lost his freedom, he lost his character and dignity, and he ended up a slave. They took him down there into the Philistine camp, and they just mocked him and belittled him.

That's the condition of many Christians: no vision, no strength in anointing, in bondage, being mocked and ridiculed by the enemy through people, because they're not fulfilling the destiny that God called us to.

But here's the great news... When he repented, God heard his prayer - and that mighty Holy Ghost came on him again. The most wonderful thing, when we repent, is: God does restore us.

2) Elijah was a great prophet of God. We saw in 1 Kings 18 - he'd called fire down from heaven, he challenged the prophets of Baal. There'd been a mighty slaughter of the prophets of Baal. The old religion of Baal was beginning to be challenged and shake. The Fire of God fell out of heaven!

Then Jezebel came against him, sent messengers against him. He became afraid, he ran away. Fear opened his life for this oppression to come around him; he isolated; then he sat down under a tree and just wanted to die. The Bible says “he fell asleep”.

When you come under, and yield, to spiritual oppression because of fear - you go into a state of sleep. You don't really see what's going on - what it costs you to

give way to fear, what it costs you to give way to sin. Neither Elijah nor Samson realised what it was costing them.

For Elijah, he lost the momentum of revival. God had to reposition him back again; and entrust revival to the next generation. “A little bit of sleep, a little bit of slumber, a little bit of folding of the hands to the rest - and then poverty comes upon us like an armed man”. Through laziness, spiritual laziness - sleep comes (Proverbs tells us).

If we don't keep ourselves vibrant, alive, energised, vitally connected to God - listening to Him, responding to Him, flowing with Him; then we slumber - can't be bothered, tired, weary.

3) The disciples, in Luke 22. Jesus was facing one of the greatest challenges of His life. He knew He was about to go to the cross; all the powers of death and hell were pushing against Him, and He said to His friends: I am sorrowful - exceedingly sorrowful under death. Please come and pray with me in the garden.

They came into the garden, and that power and that pressure came on Jesus - and He stood firmly in the place of prayer. He broke through, yielding to the will of God. He brought salvation for you and for me; but the disciples fell asleep for sorrow, under the same spiritual pressure. They yielded, and fell asleep. They were unable to be a part of what Jesus was doing, because they fell asleep.

Sin - sexual sin in the case of Samson; fear on the case of Elijah; sorrows and hurts and grief in the case of the disciples - all of them allowed that spiritual power to shut them down and put them to sleep, where they could not be of any use.

It cost them something. Fortunately, Jesus came and restored them. The mighty Holy Ghost came upon them - they woke up; and when they woke up - my, what a difference it made! Timid, fearful men became bold men!

[Main Message]

Peter came back under a spiritual influence again. He didn't literally ‘fall asleep’; he became ‘unaware of what was happening’. He lost something God had given to him.

Galatians 2:11 (Paul opposes Peter) – “Now Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed.”

Galatians 2:12-13 - “For before ‘certain men’ came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came - he withdrew. He separated himself. He feared those who were ‘of the circumcision’. And the rest of the Jews, also played the hypocrite with him - and even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy” (taken in by it, came under the influence of it).

Galatians 2:14-15 - But when I saw they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all...” (He confronts Peter).

Peter was raised in the Jewish culture. They had a paradigm, a mindset, that the Jewish people were ‘the people’ - God has entrusted everything to us. Wisdom starts and ends with us - we're the people of God. They had a mindset: we're the people of God. It was an exclusive mindset, it excluded the Gentiles. They considered the Gentiles to be unclean.

One day Peter is praying, and he receives a personal revelation of the heart of God for lost people. As he's in this time of prayer, he receives a vision - he sees these unclean animals descending from heaven; and he hears God speak to him, saying: rise and eat. He says: no, no, no, no, no. Three times it comes, and the word says “rise”; and he says: no, no, no, no, I don't eat unclean stuff.

Then the word comes to him – “What God has called clean, no man should call unclean”. He realised then, that the vision he had received was the heart of God - to reach all men, not just the Jews. That God's original plan was: the gospel would go every nation of the earth - that the good news of Jesus Christ would go to every person - that there was a breakdown of the war between Jews and the Gentiles, between men and women, Greeks and Jews.

God broke the wall down with the death of Christ, and the gospel was to go to the whole world. He received it by revelation - the heart of God is to go to the Gentiles; but when they invited him to come... When he got there, he made this kind of speech: you know - us Jews aren't supposed to eat with you Gentiles. That's not a very polite way to address people is it?

Just think about it. Cornelius has got the whole household there waiting to hear

him: God appeared to us! He said: he's going to send you to us. We've been all waiting for you to come! Then he says: it's not lawful for us Jews to mix with you Gentiles. Can you see how steeped he is, in a paradigm, that causes him to be separate from the Gentiles - unable to connect with them; causing him to avoid them, and distance himself from them?

But as he began to preach the word of God, God just interrupted the preaching. The Holy Spirit fell on them, they spoke in tongues, prophesied, magnified God; and his conclusion: since they got the Holy Spirit, like us - we should water baptise them.

Can you see the reluctance, in his mentality, to shift out of a narrow world-view? It's very true in the church, that there's a problem of shifting out of a narrow world-view – to one that can encompass, and love, and reach people at every level of society - and celebrate them as wonderful, valuable people to God.

The tendency is to separate, to exclude, to keep apart - in case something bad might happen to me; but Jesus never did that. The biggest complaint His enemies had was: He mixed with the sinners and the prostitutes. He mixed with everyone! He mixed with them - He was never defiled by them, He just loved them. He was able to love the unlovely, He was able to open His heart and celebrate people.

Now notice what Peter did.... Peter was now walking with the Gentiles, he was relating with them, fellowshipping, sharing with them; but then these Jews come down from Jerusalem. They are legalists. They have no heart for the Gentiles, they're just legalists - and everyone must keep the laws: you've got to do this, you've got to do this, got to do this, this, can't do that, can't do that, dress like this, go here, do this, do that. They had a whole list of laws, and they came with all of that legalism.

Peter the apostle, it says: “he withdrew and separated himself”. He was afraid of them, because he was still so steeped in that old paradigm, that when they came, he was torn between what God had revealed to him, and the old culture, the old behaviours, the old ways. When they came, he was caught - he became afraid, fearful of them.

He come under spiritual pressure, and instead of holding true to his revelation,

he began to yield to the pressure, to please the people who'd come. He began to withdraw from the Gentiles that he'd been fellow-shipping with.

When this controlling spirit comes, it causes people to fragment and separate. We become caught up in what's right and wrong, judgemental, accusing and divisive - that's what that spirit does. He came under its influence. Even Barnabas came under its influence - and there's this whole turmoil going on.

The one thing that broke it was when an apostolic voice rose up and said: “stop, that's wrong!” Peter was confronted before everyone.

A spiritual influence was about to create division, and separation - and he couldn't even see it. He was asleep to what was going on.

Imagine if had continued in that course of action, and separated from the Gentiles. Legalism would have come around the Gentiles. They would‘ve had to submit to the Old Testament laws. Instead of the liberty that Christ had brought them into, they'd have come under religious legalism. They'd come under the shadow of something God was trying to remove, to bring people into freedom.

That's what a spiritual influence can do to people. It causes you to separate from the people God wants you to connect to, to divide from the very people that you should love and be united with. Where God has brought people together in the spirit - that spirit pressure, when it comes, causes you to be unaware. You start to separate and divide, and haven't got a clue why you're dividing. When you sense division taking place, when you sense that separating is taking place - there's no real reason for it, it’s just some spiritual influence at work, but you just can't see it.

God calls us to walk in that unity; so Paul confronted him, to stop that spiritual influence working through his fear, to divide the church.

It was a spiritual influence, but it found root in a man's fear. Fear is a gateway for control in our lives. What you fear, you will surrender to - and it will control you, stealing the liberty that God has.

So he changed. It doesn't say it here, but he must have repented. He must have come to the acknowledgement of the truth; repented - and that whole thing broke

when he repented.

Now look at Galatians 3:1 - Paul is writing to the Galatians Church. The whole book is a book of Paul, an apostle - “not of men, nor through men, but through Jesus Christ and God our Father - to the churches in Galatia’.

So he's writing, not just to one church, he's writing to a whole lot of churches. They had become ‘shut down’ in the spirit. The New Testament church was birthed in the spirit. It was birthed with a move of God. It was birthed with the Holy Ghost moving; and now he's writing to these Galatians Churches, which once were birthed in the spirit - now something's happened to them. Lovely apostolic writing - it's not at all pastoral, you notice. “Let us come alongside you, and comfort you, with all your hurts” - he didn't say that!

He said: “You foolish Galatians! (means: lacking understanding, being ignorant of what's going on, or virtually spiritually asleep). “Wake up! Wake up!” He said: “Something has bewitched you!”

That word ‘bewitched’ means to ‘cast a spell’ over, to ‘bring sorcery’ over, to bring a ‘spiritual influence’ over. He says: something has come over you, and brought a spiritual influence over you.

He said: Tell me now - how did you get saved? Did you get saved by trying hard to be a good person? Did you get saved by working hard to keep this rule - don't do that; do this? Is that how you got saved? Is that how you get to heaven? Clearly not!

It's by the ‘Hearing of Faith’. You heard the word of God - you believed - and because of your faith in Christ, and resting solely on the work of Jesus, you became acceptable to God, and entitled to the blessings of heaven. Is that not true?

I know lots of Christians - they start off that way; but pretty soon it's all about a struggle to be ‘good enough for God’. That's foolish! That's moved away from the gospel.

Have you moved away from the gospel that: you're made right with God - by faith in Jesus Christ?

Then he placed a second question, in Galatians 3:5 - “How does He work miracles, and how does He minister the spirit among you - by working hard, doing the works of the law?”

In other words: how do miracles happen? Is it because you really work hard at it? Is it because you try - you do this, you don't do that - you keep this law, don't keep that law? Is it that way?

He said: no way – “by the Hearing of Faith. So he said: “You foolish Galatians” - something got over you. There's a spiritual atmosphere got over you. What got over you? Legalism, performing, trying to work hard to get God's pleasure in your life - trying to work hard, do it right, don't do this, don't do that. It's a whole thing about performance.

Religion worldwide is about doing something to please God, and get right with Him.

In Christianity - Jesus did the work, and the Father was pleased. We trust in what He did, and we're free to enjoy the benefits – relationship; and to walk by faith, motivated by love for God – it’s totally different.

How easy it is to move from: that position; to now it becomes: all of these things I have to do - and if you do them, you feel proud; if you don't do them, you're condemned.

When that spirit is operating - liberty, freedom, joy, love, vitality goes out. What comes in is a heaviness and oppression; and mental thoughts of: I’m not good enough, there's something wrong with me. I need to try harder. I'll never make it. That is a demonic accusation!

Romans 8:1 – “There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, and who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.”

Set your mind towards the word of God, and the spirit of God. With legalism, your thoughts are on your behaviours; rather than on the promises - the blessings that God has promised to give us.

Galatians 5:1 - Something came in, so he said: “Stand fast in the liberty, where Christ has set us free”.

Liberty, unrestrained freedom! When you get used to living like a slave - it's hard to know what that freedom is like. You've got to learn to express it - the freedom to laugh, freedom to love, freedom to enjoy life, freedom from condemnation, freedom from the guilt of the past, freedom from demonic powers, freedom to be myself! Freedom to walk with God, freedom to follow the calling of God in my life, freedom to explore what God has called me to do. Free!

He says: “stand fast in that freedom”. There is a spiritual contention, to remain in a place of freedom that God has given you; and not get wrapped up and tangled in “the yoke of bondage”, that rule-keeping gives.

It's an issue everywhere. I go to churches all over the place, and I see in so many places, particularly New Zealand, where heaviness settles over people. Underneath, it's a rejection root - I'm not good enough. If I just do enough things, I'll be good enough - but that's not righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ.

I can “come boldly to the throne of God” - so I watch how people come. I watched a group of men, 200 or 300 men come to get the Holy Ghost, and this is what they did: (solemn, head bowed). I don't know where they got that from - they didn't get that from the Bible.

The Bible says: “Come into His presence with thanksgiving, into His gates with praise!”

It says: “Come boldly to the throne of grace.”

That’s biblical protocol; so where did you get this other stuff? Where did that come from? It didn't come from the Bible, but it looks good. I'm not saying there's any reason we shouldn't put our head down, or bow. The Bible says: after we've entered His gates, after we've praised Him, then we bow and worship – but it’s not some kind of ‘been condemned’, ‘not good enough’, ‘unworthy’ kind of deal.

God has made us worthy! You need to stand on what the word of God says: I am made righteous! That means: I am right with God - I can walk into His presence. The only thing to keep you out is if you've got sin. Quickly repent of it, stand

again in righteousness of Christ - rise into that liberty.

Liberty needs to be expressed - the liberty to dance, to be yourself, to break out. Can you see what happens when we accept bondage, as though it's normal, when it isn't?

People go to the pub and drink, so they can get free. They take drugs so they can feel better. It's all about feeling better.

God says: I've put something in you that'll make you buzz - but you have to believe, and express that life. Stand fast in the liberty! What came over you, that took your freedom? Whatever you let take it – that is the issue.

Everyone's responsible for our freedom - and holding our freedom – individually and corporately. We have to maintain our freedom - freedom to express, freedom to be alive; instead of being passive and shut down.

There's nothing in heaven that responds to passivity. Passivity is of the devil. Passivity means: there's a heavy thing has come over you; and now instead of taking ownership and responsibility, persevering and pushing to get what God has said is yours - you shut down, become passive, and actually get soulish and melancholic, and you're not in the spirit. People get so used to living that way, they think it's normal - think it's just ‘good Christian’ - but it isn't!

When David got the Ark of God - he danced and rejoiced before the Lord. There was great joy in the city, in the presence of God. The Bible says: “Rejoice! Rejoice!” That's liberty - you have to be free to do that. What thing has been allowed to take your freedom? That's a spiritual power that’s got a hold of your life.

People go into a spiritual slump - and they don't even know. I was with this group of men, and it was the first night of a men's conference. We got in there, and they did their singing, and the guys got up and did their stuff. I said to the man who was helping me organise it all: I don't know whether the saddest thing is - that they haven't got any freedom; or that they actually don't know it - and they think this is really good. They were as shut-down as you could imagine - I've never seen a group of men so shut-down. I said: that's a spirit power. If we don't address that, and get these men free, so they stand up and be what they're

called to be, then this thing is going to be just a fizzer, all weekend. So we revved it up, and had a great deliverance session - got the demons out of them, set people free, and away they went. It was much happier after that!

Mark 13:33 - Jesus is talking to His disciples. He's talking about the end time, the time of His coming, and He says: “now take heed - watch and pray”. Watch, keep awake, keep awake - don't fall asleep! Watch, watch, watch, watch! Keep alive, keep alert. What are the spiritual influences around your life?

“Watch and pray. You don't know when the time is for the man, it's like a man going to a far country”. That's Jesus who left His house (the church), gave authority to his servants - that's us – every believer his work, and commanded the doorkeeper. You and I are doorkeepers of our life - doorkeepers of the spiritual atmosphere we're in - watch!

Mark 13:36 - “Watch - lest, coming suddenly, he finds you sleeping.”

He says: what I say to you disciples, I'm telling everyone who's a follower of Me, Watch! Watch! Don't fall asleep spiritually!

Watching is always connected with being alive, and aware of what spiritual and relational influences are operating. Watching is always connected to being sober. Be sober! Don't let some kind of addictive things get around your life, or you become unaware how much bondage you have. It says to be sober!

1 Thessalonians – “be sober; watch”.

What relationships are confusing me? What compromise is confusing me? What kind of fears am I yielding to, that's causing me to come under bondage? What kinds of things are coming around, that is shutting me down from being what I could be?

If you could do whatever you wanted to do - if you could break free, and fulfil a dream of your heart - what would the dream be? What is it stopping that? Aah - that's what's got you asleep. That's the thing you'll have to face!

Stand fast in the liberty! Liberty doesn't mean you do anything. The Bible says: “by love, serve one another” - we get liberty so we can: serve the Lord; love people; fulfil our destiny.

He says: you've got to watch; you've got to pray; you've got to keep alive - sensitive to the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 25: you know the thief comes - he takes everything out of the man's house, because the man didn't watch. The devil can come and steal what God has entrusted, and given to you - if you don't watch.

Peter had a revelation from God - but he nearly lost it, because he didn't watch what was happening. You can go to a seminar and learn how to flow in the Holy Spirit - and two months later, have lost it. It was stolen from you, because you came under a spiritual influence. They're very real. That's why the Bible says: wake up! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up the mighty men!

In order to wake up, you've got to recognise: I've been asleep! I need to come out of that sleep, begin to pray, fast - begin to push into God. Begin to express hunger and passion towards God. Begin to let the word of God come out of your mouth. Begin to start to let the dreams come alive in your heart again. Begin to stir yourself, so you're energised.

Don't measure yourself by the person next to you; measure yourself by the word of God. Are you in a place of fervent, passionate prayer - or has your life shut down?

Just ask these questions:

1) Do I have a strong and a passionate prayer life?

2) Am I in compromise with some issue in my life?

3) Am I hearing God speak clearly? When did you last hear Him? What did He say? Did you do it?

Think about that, because heaven goes silent when you don't do what God says. You go into a slumber.

4) Is there any negative influence around my life? Is it some fear; some pressure; some relationship; some compromise; some ungodly soul-draw? Is there something pushing me; that if I stop, and listen to God - I'd become aware:

actually I don't feel too comfortable about what's happening there.

5) Is there something I'm avoiding? Inevitably there's a fear - and that's bringing control over your life. Is there some person I'm avoiding; some situation I'm avoiding; some situation I don't want to face?

There's a spiritual atmosphere come around you, and you're yielding to the fear. Paul wrote to Timothy: “God hasn't given you a spirit of fear”. It shut down your gift, when you yielded to it. Fear allows control; it shuts your gifts down.

You have to war against those things. You have to break out. That's why God says: awake! Awake! Shake yourself! Rise up out of the dust, and begin to put on the beautiful garments: praise; worship; and the authority Christ has given us.

Are you passionately doing what God told you, or is it a long time since God spoke? Think about that; then ask yourself: I wonder what spirit has pushed against me - and I've allowed it to do so. Like Samson, it's taken my vision and my destiny, and I need to repent.

Closing Prayer

Father, we thank You Lord that You are challenging us to become spirit people - aware of the spiritual atmosphere around us; sensitive to the Holy Spirit; and strongly rising up to take dominion.

I was just reading an email from Andy Mason this week, and he was talking to me about people we sent out. He said: people have gone out to nations from this house. He went to Bethel, and within a year and a half he's risen up, he's now having influence at a top leadership level at Bethel. We sent someone else, now they're a top influence in IHOP (International House of Prayer). We sent people to Hillsong in Australia, who rose right up the top. I got one of them back, and I said: why is it you rose to the top? What was different about you that caused you to be chosen out from everyone else? They said: I've got some grunt - I've got some horsepower in me. I've got some life inside of me. I said: exactly, how did you get it? He said I got it here. How did you get it?

He said: we had to learn how to stand up and push against heavy atmospheres. Learn how to stand up, and push back what comes around us, to depress, defeat

us, and make us negative. We had to learn to STAND UP in the spirit, and stay awake! I said: exactly. That was the training ground God used to launch you, to now where you have great influence.

Always appreciate where God brought you from. Always appreciate how God got you there, and then teach others to do the same; but we're here now, and you and I need to rise and stand up!

Are there any people here today, and you're living under heaviness, living under oppression, living under fear, living under compromise?

Like Samson there's something gone on in your life, and it's blinded your eyes. You need to say: “God, forgive me” - I want out, and I want to get back into my place of strength again.

Perhaps you're like Elijah (and Peter) - fear got around your life; you've yielded to things; and you've let go. You say: “God, I want to get back into that place of freedom again”.

Maybe like the disciples - you're full of sorrow; and you've just fallen asleep. Your prayer life's stopped, you're not even aware that you've entered into that pressure, that you've surrendered to it. Say: “God, I want out - I want to get up out of this thing. I want to rise up, become a man of prayer, woman of prayer.”

Maybe there are others, and for different reasons - there's oppression, heaviness come around you. We can pray with you, and help you, and stand with you. You'll get a momentary and a brief release - but you must decide to fight.

“The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent (those who are assertive - those who know what God's word says), and will hold onto heaven until it comes about”.

There was a woman did that - Jesus ignored her, but she held on and a miracle came. Jesus said: that's what faith looks like!

There was a blind man - he shouted out, and they tried to stop him; but he said: “no way, I'm not stopping”. He shouted louder - He got a miracle! He knew what it was to press into the things of God.

There's a woman who had a flow of blood. Everyone would’ve held her back and rejected her; but she said: “I know what I want” - she pressed in and got a miracle.

Are there any others today, and that heaviness sits over you – you’re feeling the isolation come around your life? Perhaps you're shutting down, and gone down into a hole (like Elijah did); or into a place of weakness (like Samson did); or into a place of sleepiness (like the disciples did); or into a place of confusion (like Peter did) - or perhaps you're just flat as a pancake?

Listen - you don't have to tolerate that; but you do have to decide to be different. Today's choice, will make tomorrow different. Yesterday's choice brought you where you are. Make a choice today. Make a decision today: I will stand, I will not sleep, I will get into God. I will break out of what's around my life!

Summary Notes

Formatted » Back to Top »

Introduction:
· Isaiah 52:1-2 - “Awake, awake, put on your strength oh Zion, put on your beautiful garments oh Jerusalem, the Holy City”
- Call to the church to awaken from sleep and to arise into its’ proper place of operation
- Awake = 5782 = to open the eyes, stir self up, arouse from place of sleep
- Prophetic call to the church that requires a faith action – response
- Personal Word: “Awake, awake from your slumber of Jezebel…”

What is the Slumber of Jezebel?
a) Jezebel: 1 Kings 16:31-32
· Jezebel = Baal exalts, under the favour of Baal, not cohabiting with
· The 1st portrayal in the bible as a wicked queen who killed prophets and established idolatry
· Next portrayed in the Bible – Revelation 2:20 – as a person with the same evil character and intent
· Two different eras – same spiritual power exercising a destructive influence on the people of God
· Operates to seduce = 4105 = to wander away from safety, from truth, go astray
· Operates to intimidate and control
i) External Spiritual Pressure – ‘Outer Space’ Ephesians 6:12
ii) Internal Spiritual Pressure – ‘Inner Space’ entering through personal strongholds 2 Corinthians 10:4
- How we think and behave
- Spiritual powers seducing people, and the people beginning to yield to them

b) Slumber Romans 11:8
· Slumber = to sleep, be in a state of in activity
· Spiritual Slumber
- Spiritual sensitivity dull
- Cannot see or hear spiritually
- Unaware of spiritual influences at work, can’t do anything about it
- Living in a ‘trance’ – unaware what is happening
- Ultimately it leads to a loss of hope and destiny

c) Slumber of Jezebel – spiritual power that shuts you down, no strength, become weak:
· State of spiritual dullness and the lack of awareness brought on by yielding to the invisible activity of the Jezebel power
· One of the major causes of this is spiritual laziness
· Proverbs 19:15 - “Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep”

3. Bible Examples:
· There are several examples of people who came under the influence of this invisible activity of the Jezebel power

i) Judges 16:19-21 - Samson: “she made him sleep on her knees”
· Samson forgot his identity, forgot his calling as a mighty deliverer
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit through sexual sin, false comforts

· He was spiritually unaware of the danger, focused comfort on Delilah – v 5,9 – 5 lords of the Philistines waiting there
· He lost his crown of dominion, and he did not know it v20
· He lost his vision, his strength, his destiny and was brought into bondage
· The Jezebel spirit strips people of strength, vision, hope => bondage
· When Samson repented his strength was restored. The power of God came around him again
· Arise to this spirit, don't let it steal your dreams, inheritance and legacy of the next generation
· Spirit power requires spiritual weapons
· If you get connected with the living God you will be stronger than ever

ii) 1 Kings 19:1-5 - Elijah: "he lay and slept under a broom tree"
· A mighty man of faith
· Elijah forgot his identity, forgot his calling as a mighty deliverer
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit when he received Jezebels messenger v2,3
· The messenger (demonic) wounded him, stripped him of confidence and fear entered
· Fear = abandoning position, isolate, discourage, loss of perspective, desire to die
· Juniper tree = to bind or put in a yoke
· He lost his courage that came from the anointing flowing, he forgot who he was, loss of perspective, withdraw, hurt and discourage
· When people curse and accuse you a spirit is send out to destroy you
· v7,15 His strength returned through the touch of God and the prophetic word

iii) Luke 22:45-46 - The Disciples: "…he found them sleeping for sorrow"
· The disciples forgot their identity, forgot their calling as mighty Apostles of God
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel Spirit through sorrow – emotional grief and pain
· Sorrow = grief, heaviness, pain, sadness
· They lost their confidence that came from the anointing flowing
· Matthew 26:40-46 "They were awakened from their sleep by Prophetic Confrontation from Jesus"

iv) Galatians 2:11-13 - Peter: "…he separated himself fearing those who were of circumcision"
· Peter forgot his identity, his calling, he forgot his personal revelation he had received
· He let go the personal revelation he had received from the Lord re the Gentiles Acts 10:15
· He opened his soul to the Jezebel spirit through fear
· Fearing = 5399 = to frighten, put to flight, score away, shrink back, conceal self
· The Jewish Christians kept the law and introduced the pressure of legalism
· Disemble = 4942 = to act a stage player, pretend to act out of one motive when another motive inspired the action
· The church came into great conflict as Peter withdrew, out of fear
· v11 Paul confronted Peter – Apostolic Confrontation with truth

v) Galatians 3:1-2 - Galatian Church: "did you receive the spirit by works of law or hearing by faith"
· The Galatian Church forgot their identity, the calling as Gentiles, they forgot the liberty of the Holy Spirit
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel spirit through wrong belief and performance beliefs
· Foolish = 453 = lacking spiritual understanding, mind not being exercised
· Bewitched = 940 = to fascinate, charm, cast spell over, captivate, place under power rt = wicca - sorcerer
· The Galatians had opened their soul to spiritual influence of the Jezebel spirit by allowing legalism – religion based on performance not faith
· They began in the spirit with miracles and ended in flesh striving
· Galatians 3:1 - Paul confronted the church – Apostolic Confrontation with the truth

vi) 2 Kings 9:11-13 - Captains of Army: “Jehu is King”
· The Soldiers (captains v5) had forgotten their identity, they forgotten their calling
· They opened their soul to the Jezebel spirit over the nation by ‘need for security’
· The Spirit of Jezebel had cast influence over the whole nation of Israel
· The King of Israel: Jehoram = ‘The exalted One’ = Pride
· They were spiritually asleep and could not recognize what was happening v11
· v12,13 Apostolic declaration of Prophetic Word broke the demonic influence

4. Awake, Awake!
· Mark 13:33-37 - “Watch … lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping”
· Doorkeeper = watcher, sentry, guardian of door, portal, gate to Kingdom
· Watch = 1127 = to keep awake, rouse from sleep, proactive, diligent attention
· Watching is connected to:
i) Strong Prayer Mark 14:38
ii) Be sober 1 Peter 4:7
iii) Repentance and Strengthening self Revelation 3:3
iv) Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit Habakkuk 2:1

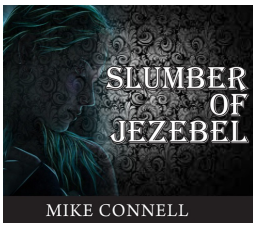
Recognising and Withstanding Jezebel's attack (3 of 3)

Sun 15 Nov 2009 AM « Back to Top

Notes» Audio» Paperback(1)» Paperback(2)» Website»

This kind of spiritual attack seeks to shut down the prophetic flow; and remove any Godly authority out of their position. You become fearful, isolate, or lose perspective.

God just got Elijah to have a good long sleep and rest, gave him a bit of food, took him into a place of relationship and connection - started to put anointing back into him, re-fired him and commissioned him. Elijah was a loner, and God got him out of being a loner, made him connect, and actually get into a team flow.



Review We talked about a particular power, a spiritual power, that impacts people, impacts believers, impacts us - by shutting down our gifts and operations. It's a very real power, a very real presence. The Bible says that there are spiritual powers in the atmosphere that are arrayed against the church of Jesus Christ. We'd be silly not to actually realise that's a great reality. The Bible also tells us that there are strongholds, holds inside our life, places of brokenness, sin or other kinds of things - where spiritual powers work through our lives, to manipulate us.

I shared about a particular phenomenon called the ‘Slumber of Jezebel’, where a spiritual power puts people to sleep - they can't see what's going on all around them; they don't see what's really taking place.

Main Message

Ecclesiastes 4 - Today I want to share with you about recognising and withstanding Jezebel's attack.

Jezebel was a woman in the Old Testament, but we need to understand that there was actually a spirit power that operated behind her. So it's not about women; it's about this spiritual power - call it a ‘spirit of witchcraft’.

Witchcraft is a spiritual power that seeks to do a number of things:

1) It attacks your identity - who you are - to try and shut you down, so you become passive. When a person experiences a witchcraft attack over them, they may not see what's going on naturally. You may be uncertain where it's coming from, but inside you feel a number of sensations. You feel knotted in your stomach, with no apparent reason; a feeling of dread; a feeling of pressure coming on you; or feelings and thoughts coming in your mind you don't belong (get out of here – go - you don't belong, you're not wanted).

Those kinds of pressures come out of the spirit realm, and into our mind and heart. We can feel turmoil and confusion, where you can't think clearly. Your mind just doesn't think clearly; or you don't even hear things, or see things - you just become unaware.

When spiritual witchcraft works against us, it has several goals. When we look into the Old Testament, and look at how this particular spirit power operated, there are a number of things it did, which it still does.

The first thing is - it seeks to shut down the prophetic flow - the flow of hearing God, the flow of the spirit in your life. When Jezebel ascended into the throne, she immediately set out to kill all the prophets of the Lord - to actually come against, and shut down, the prophetic gifting. I have seen prophetic gifting shut down on men and women of God; I've seen it shut down in churches; I've seen it shut down even in whole movements - the prophetic flow, literally stripped out, by witchcraft attack. We should have no doubt about it - this is a very real power.

God is calling the church to rise up and become apostolic. That means to take a missionary mindset - the mindset that you and I are called to be kings - to go and bring influence around us: spiritual influence; natural influence; finance/economics; in the family area; in the political area. In every area of the community, God is calling the church: “rise up and go forth”.

You have to be aware, when you do that - all apostolic advance faced spiritual resistance. You find in Acts 13, when the apostles advanced, they ran into sorcerers and witchcraft, all kinds of things. We saw how Paul had to confront a spirit of witchcraft - which had come, not only over the apostles, to actually confuse them - but over whole churches, to shut down the supernatural and

miraculous power.

The apostles, or the apostolic movement, will always confront, and end up in conflict with, spiritual power. When witchcraft attacks, it shuts down the prophetic flow of hearing from God; and if you don't hear from God (and see), you become blind spiritually.

2) It seeks to do is to remove any Godly authority out of their position, out of their place of governance - by diminishing their influence. or literally overthrowing and displacing them.

A spirit of witchcraft will try and cause a man to feel inadequate for the role of headship in his home - to withdraw, and become shut down and passive. A spirit of witchcraft operating in a business will disempower the business leader, the boss, and will cause him to feel shut down, unable to operate.

3) Witchcraft operating in your life will seek to disconnect you from God; to shut down the gifts of the spirit; shut down the flow of God - and push you out from what God called you to be in (a spiritual positioning).

That's why we have to recognise it - because when witchcraft comes against us, if you don't understand what it is, and how to stand up and push against it – then it will push back on you, down on you, until in the end you become stripped of the life, the glory, the goodness that God has for you.

When Jezebel ruled in the nation of Israel, when she had influence over it - there was: ungodly authority, confusion, financial turmoil, drought, spiritual poverty – in every kind of way, the nation became stripped. It began to serve other gods; so God raised a man called Elijah.

We're going to look at two people, and both of them came under witchcraft attack. One of them was incredibly sad - he blew it. He made strategic mistakes, which cost him his positioning in the spirit, and nearly cost him his life. The Bible also tells us of someone else, who recognised and understood what he was up against - and actually positioned himself to win!

Ecclesiastes 4:9 – “Two are better than one, they have a good reward for their labour. If one falls (or they fall), one can lift up his companion. Woe to him who

is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up."

Ecclesiastes 4:12 - "Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not easily broken."

There is strength in unity - when you stand together with other people; when you have relationships, where you are in agreement, and flow and walk together - there is great power and strength in that. If something happens that knocks you down - if you're in relationship with someone else, they can lift you up - together you get a breakthrough. There is tremendous power in unity.

When God designed us, He designed us to walk in unity. When sin entered, separation and isolation took place. If you're in a place of isolation, sin will be there somewhere.

Proverbs 18:1 – "Whoever isolated himself, is consumed with his own desires" - has his own agendas, his own plans. When people isolate, they become separated - you know that something has come in; there's something going on that's not right.

Look at Elijah, in 1 Kings 19. This is an amazing story, because Elijah was a great prophet from God, a powerfully anointed prophet from God - yet he nearly got totally taken out by this particular spirit.

Elijah was called by God to confront witchcraft in the nation. The nation was full of idolatry and witchcraft, which had been brought in when Jezebel married the king. The king was seduced out of his role and positioning, he came under her influence, and the whole nation fell over. The whole nation became passive, the whole nation became shut down, and confusion was everywhere. A spirit of witchcraft was operating. The characteristics of that spirit are: confusion; passivity; and ungodliness and unlawfulness abounds.

In 1 Kings 19, Elijah had stood up to the spirits. He called for a drought on the nation; then after three years, he challenged all the prophets of Baal and Jezebel to come out - as many as he could - 450. He also got all the nation of Israel out; and he said: you sacrificed a sacrifice, and if your god's a real god - call fire from heaven; but if the Lord is the real God - He'll bring fire from heaven.

All day, the prophets of Baal worked hard, and worked up a sweat – they jumped and cut themselves, because Baal is a god of performance; they tried hard, struggled, but nothing happened. At the end of the day, Elijah set up the altar of the Lord; prayed, came to God, confessed the sin of the nation - WOOSH! Fire from heaven! With that, the mind of the people became clear - the Lord is God! Then Elijah killed 450 of prophets of Baal - so from a ministry perspective, that was highly successful! Fire from heaven - a glorious day; but there was a little problem in there...

There was one part that wasn't quite right: the king never really repented. I think Elijah may have got discouraged, but certainly there was an opening in his heart - and then he comes under tremendous retaliation and spiritual attack.

1 Kings 19:1 – Ahab told Jezebel all Elijah had done; how he'd executed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying: “let the gods do to me - and more also - if I don't make your life like one of them, by tomorrow, about this time.”

She said: I'm going to get you! I'm going to kill you - just like you killed those prophets! You're a dead man! You're as good as dead - so she came with a murderous spirit, sent a messenger.

“When he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, went to Beersheba which is Judah, left his servant there and he himself went a day's journey to the wilderness, sat down under a broom tree or a juniper tree, prayed that he might die, saying: it's enough now Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers! Then as he lay he slept, he fell into a deep sleep” - characteristic of people under spiritual pressure - who can't see anything, and are unaware what's going on.

When Jezebel saw that her kingdom was under attack; that God was about to restore the nation; revival was about to take place - she arises immediately, with murderous intent. This spirit - murderous intent - came against him, with hatred and murder. She got her prophets together, and they did some witchcraft - they launched demonic spirits against this man Elijah to terrorise him. He literally had a major spiritual attack, a major challenge - threats of death - quite a big deal really.

She sent a messenger - and there's many ways that messenger comes. It can come through criticism, gossip, people blaming you or falsely accusing you - all kinds of ways; but behind it is a hate spirit - and when that thing came against him, it affected him very deeply. When witchcraft comes against you - you feel things very deeply.

He felt fear, gripping fear. He felt confused. He'd just done this great thing; and now he's in the face of a tremendous attack. He became indecisive about what he should really do. The Bible said: “when our heart is set on the Lord, and we trust in the Lord, then we dwell safe from all evil” - so he became indecisive, overwhelmed, by looking at what was there. He'd done his best, but it looked as though that hadn't worked. He became overwhelmed, he got quite disoriented and disheartened - and very lonely in the middle of it all.

When a major spiritual attack comes, you feel very alone, disheartened, overwhelmed - like it's all too big, and you're afraid of what may happen – a fear of death. It starts off with the fear of death, and threats of death; but it ends up with him agreeing with it, saying: “I want to die”. He was threatened with death - and he ends up in agreement, wanting to die!

The spirit that came against him was a spirit of hatred and murder, wanting to kill him. He came into agreement, and his whole ministry was shut down. He ends up under a tree – suicidal - that is the power of the spirit! Notice the steps of progression, how he behaved - he had many of these feelings.

You can recognise when spiritual attack or witchcraft is operating - you feel these feelings of dread, but there's nothing there to see, or anything that you can come up against, you just feel it. You feel overwhelmed, confused, pressure, loneliness - all these kinds of things. It's a spiritual pressure - something from the spirit realm pushing against you - to reject you out of where God wants you to be.

He actually made some bad choices. The first choice he made was: he yielded to the fear of death. He yielded to that messenger. He gave in to the feelings of fear, to the spirit of fear - and he drew back from the role God had called him into. He drew back from the place of the revival that he was supposed to bring. He drew back from the place of spiritual authority. He began to shut down, under the spirit of fear.

The second thing he did was: he ran for his life. He took flight to save himself. He ran away, avoided the problem, withdrew from the challenge, withdrew from the situation, withdrew from the assignment God had given him. When you're under pressure - never withdraw from what God called you to do; stay in the place God called you to stay, hold your ground - let God clarify what He wants you to do.

The next thing he did was: he isolated. He left his servant (verse 3). Under spiritual pressure, there is a tendency, for us to draw back inside ourselves, to shut down, and begin to isolate. We cut off connection from people, we draw away into a cave. In fact he ends up in a cave. Where he ended up physically, is exactly what was going on emotionally and spiritually inside him - he was in a cave, cut off from God. He'd let go of God in the face of this spiritual attack.

The next thing was: he lost perspective. He couldn't see the big picture. 1 Kings 19:14 –"I've been very zealous. I alone am left. They want to kill me". He comes up with this thing constantly: I'm the only one left. I'm the only one on the Lord's side; the only one who's serving God; the only one who sees it right. God has to tell him: I've got 7,000 on my side - you're not the only one at all; but his perspective is totally distorted. When you come under spiritual attack, your perspective gets distorted. You think you're the only one, you think you're very alone, and you begin to start to shut down.

Next, he went a day's journey into the wilderness. He actually left the region, the place he was supposed to be - he was trying to flee out of Israel. He fled completely, and he was actually leaving the place of his assignment. Left the land, left Israel altogether, left the country; ran as far away as he could get. Having yielded to fear, yielded to the spirit, yielded to the confusion, losing perspective, becoming isolated... He sat down - sat down under a tree.

The other place you find someone sitting under a tree is Saul, in a place of defeat; sitting down under the tree, a place of defeat. The spirit tends to make people passive - shut down on the inside. A passive person feels they've got no options left except to just: withdraw; sit down; do nothing.

Passivity is a major problem in our nation. Passivity is across many men in our nation. Passivity sits in many churches in our nation. I go around to many places, there's no vibrant energy and life of the Holy Ghost. There's just people that are

passive, shut down; not alive, dynamic and forceful in their spirit.

Matthew 11:12 – “The kingdom of heaven suffers violence”. You've got to be fervent in pressing in - fervent in prayer, fervent in praise. You've got to have something inside you; but when this spirit gets around you, you shut down, withdraw, and you're just going through the motions. You look like you're alive, but you're dead. You're shut down inside by the spirit – it’s a horrendous thing when this happens. I've had it happen to me a few times, made some mistakes...

He ‘sat down under the tree’ - one of the major feelings associated with this, is a deep feeling of being rejected - pushed out, rejected, unwanted. It comes against you, and you feel rejected. It says that he's “overwhelmed with hopelessness” - no sense of hope for the future. When he comes to that place, all he wants to do is die. He's now in agreement with the spirit of death.

Isn't that amazing - that a man of God like Elijah, who could: bring fire from heaven; hold the rain; start the rain going; outrun a chariot - a man of prayer, a man who walked with God - now he is sitting under a tree, in agreement with the spirit of death, wanting to die. How on earth did that happen? How did he get there?

A spirit of witchcraft attacked him - and he didn't adopt the right strategy to win the victory over it. I've seen that happen to individual ministers. I've seen some ministers literally driven out of the country, but flourishing in other countries, because witchcraft came against them, to shut their gift down in our own nation.

I've seen churches shut down in our own nation, they once moved in the spirit of God and now... I can think of one major church in our nation - absolutely gone. At one time, it touched the whole nation - then it's gone; no sign of it, nothing left - just a history. I've enquired into it, and I know some of the things that went on: a witchcraft attack divided people up; it separated people that God had covenanted to stand together, and caused the whole thing to collapse. Next thing you know, the whole thing was gone!

I've been working alongside some movements in the nation, and we found that a major supernatural dimension of one whole movement of churches had been stripped out - and we could actually identify what it was, and when it was - and it's a spiritual witchcraft attack, that took out the flow of revelation. This is a

very real thing - and it happened to Elijah.

I want to show you the really good news. God never abandoned him because he was under it. God just got him to have a good long sleep and rest; gave him a bit of food; then took him into a place, and started to put anointing back into him, re-fired him and commissioned him.

Notice the interesting thing that He commissioned him to do: Elijah was a loner, and God got him out of being a loner; made him connect, and actually get into a team flow. He raised up Elisha, and he began to flow differently from that point on.

I want to show you how this same pressure came against Jesus, and Jesus handled it completely differently. I've been under that spirit, it’s attacked me on a number of occasions, attacked us both on a number of occasions. It's a horrendous thing when it happens, and I've done exactly what Elijah did. I guess there'd be a few people who've done what Elijah did; felt knocked in the spirit, felt a blow in the spirit; couldn't work out where it came from, struggling to stay out, to stay free; mixed feelings of fear, insecurity and uncertainty, under tremendous pressure. You just begin to withdraw and shut down.

I've had my gift shut down at one season of my life, and it’s a terrible thing when your gift gets shut down. Your gift are shuts down because you are shut down. You are the one who's the subject of the attack; and when you surrender to that thing, you can't flourish and flow.

God is raising the church to become powerful, and to flow in the supernatural, so you've got to be able to withstand this kind of stuff. You've got to get the kind of grunt inside you, to step up, stand up, and be what God has called you to be. We're not to be afraid of this, because Jesus has gone ahead, and shown us how to beat the thing - so we can beat it!

He said: I have overcome! The same spirit that is in me - is in you! Be of good cheer! I've overcome the world, and I can show you what to do - so it pays to have a look...

Matthew 26, and also Luke 22 - we're going to have a look how Jesus handled the same thing.

Matthew 26:36 – “Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples: sit here while I go and pray. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them: My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me. He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will. Then He came to His disciples and found them sleeping, and said what? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. A second time He prayed; O My Father, if this cup cannot pass from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done. Then He came and He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.”

They're under a spiritual attack. They slept, when they should have watched and prayed. Then He left them and went away again, prayed the third time, saying the same words.

Jesus faced an immense spiritual attack, by spiritual powers seeking to remove Him. He faced in His mind the prospect of death the following day - the most horrible death that is known or devised by man: death on the cross - a long, lingering pain.

He went to the garden. Luke 22 says it was His habit. He'd formed a habit of prayer; so when He's under pressure, His first response is: go back to the place of prayer. You need a habit of prayer, or you'll never survive spiritual pressure. You'll remain weak and ineffective - loving God, but not being able to bring forth fruit, that abounds to the glory of God. God wants fruit in our lives.

I want you to see how Jesus responded:

1) He refused to draw back from what was in front of Him. He refused to draw back in fear, to yield to fear. You have to face what it is that's there, and not run from it.

2) He refused to isolate. “He called His disciples to come with Him into the place of prayer” - not all of them, but three of them. He refused to isolate.

Elijah isolated, when he needed to have men standing with him.

Jesus knew that these disciples were immature. He knew that they would run away, He knew they would not be ‘up to the task’. Nevertheless, He still drew them in at this moment - He needed them.

That means it's a principle: when under spiritual pressure, under spiritual attack, don't isolate. Engage close relationships to stand with you.

3) He opened His heart. He refused to isolate, and He opened His heart.

Matthew 26:38 – “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. I am troubled”.

My emotions are in turmoil. Death is gripping Me - all the fears of it are around Me. I'm feeling the sorrows and the pains of what I'm about to face; what I'm in the middle of, and starting to engage.

He shared His feelings and emotions. He shared His struggles with them. How difficult it is, for men to share. How difficult it is to open our heart, and tell others the struggles and pains we're having - and to draw them to stand with us.

Men live in a world that's highly competitive. In a man's world, to show any sign of weakness or vulnerability is to be declared weak and unmanly - so men tend to want to go it alone. You can't go it alone in this kind of battle. You have to walk in unity; walk with someone else; you have to walk with friends.

There are some things we stand in (and we've got to grow up in) - and even with friends, there's a limit to what friends can do - as you see in this story. Nevertheless, Jesus is a man of principle; so he brought James, Peter, James and John (his closer disciples), and He invited them to come with Him, and He shared His heart with them.

A major strategy, when you're in a tremendous spiritual attack, is to: refuse to back down with fear, refuse to isolate; but engage your friends (close friends), and then share your heart with them. Let them know you're strong!

4) He didn't just share - He asked for their support and prayer: I want you to be with Me, I want you to watch and pray - and this is the saviour, knowing the disciples will run eventually, knowing they're going to fall asleep. Even though all those things, He drew them in, shared His heart, and then He asked them and

invited them to stand with Him. These are key strategies to beat that spirit.

Don't back down! Don't isolate! Don't give in to fear! Engage support from close friends, share your heart, pains, struggles, grief, concerns - and show them how they can stand with you, and be supportive of you. That’s the key strategy that Elijah failed to do - when Elijah isolated, he left himself open to the spirit of death, and came into agreement with it.

Jesus did not isolate - He overcame the spirit of death; and the fear of death. He poured out His heart – it’s a real difficulty for men to pour out their heart, and to open up their lives, because of fear. Fear keeps everything secret. What's secret is in a place of darkness, and the devil can come in around the things which are secret. Pride is a big issue. We want to look good, want to have our appearance. We don't want anyone to see us weak and vulnerable, yet true humility is quite vulnerable, quite open.

Shame - when Adam and Eve felt shame about their condition, they withdrew and hid from God. Shame will cause you to hide and run away as well, but God's remedy is not to do any of those things. It's to say to close people - I need you to help me, and stand with me at this time.

What did Jesus do? He didn't back down, He didn't isolate, He didn't retreat. Instead, He gathered friends, shared His heart, asked them to stand with Him - and showed them how He wanted them to do that.

5) Then He got into prayer. He did not lean totally on the friends - He got into prayer. Everyone else did a little bit of praying; but He went further, because this is His life, and He needed to personally break through, so He went further.

As He prayed, He “was wrestling”, because everything in Him wanted to back off, to quit, to draw back from dying - so it was a wrestle to stand His ground, and do the will of God, to fulfil His destiny.

Luke 22 says that as He prayed, it's like He prayed in agony; or literally, He was contending with a spiritual adversary so strongly, that sweat came off Him - and it was a huge emotional spiritual ordeal. He literally contended with what was against Him - fervent, strong, believing prayer.

Hebrews 5:7 - “With strong crying tears, He pushed into God, to bring an answer to earth”.

In Luke 22, an angel strengthened Him. Then He came to the place: “Father, not My will, but Your will be done”. He broke through to the place of rest, and confidence in the will of God.

6) One last thing He did, which is not mentioned here, but it's mentioned elsewhere in Hebrews 12:2 – “For the joy that was set before Him, He despised not the cross and all the shame it brought”.

He kept His eyes set on what lay the other side of the battle. He kept His eyes set on the victory; on vision; on multitudes of men and women - every nation redeemed.

The divine strategy to beat witchcraft is very simple. Don't back down - like Winston Churchill, never, never quit. Don't back down. Don't back down to your fears. Don't isolate and withdraw. Don't shut down and become passive, but do draw friends into your life and share your heart and struggles with them, and share how they can stand with you. Invite them to stand with you. Even if it's not perfect, and it's not complete - it's still a divine strategy. They may not fully understand; they may not fully help - but at least you've drawn them in, and done what God said to do.

Then stand in prayer. The Bible says: “having done all, stand”. Sometimes you're not going forward, but at least you're not going back. At least you're standing there - that word stand is like a couple of WWF wrestlers, and they're in the ring. They put them in the corners, and then they rush into the centre; then they lock like that, and no one's moving. They're waiting for who's going to get the first hold. That's the kind of thing - stand!

If you're facing pressure, make a decision not to go the path Elijah did by isolating; a decision not to ‘go it alone’. Make the decision: that's not going to be my future.

I've looked and had a great privilege this last two or three months, while I've been fasting. Joy's been standing with me, we've been fasting, and we've seen a lot of things. We’ve had the privilege of being able to see what's happened in our

lives (and the church here); seen what's happened in churches around us, and in our nation. It’s been a great privilege, a great insight into what's happening.

I see how spiritual witchcraft in our nation shut down the move of God about a decade ago, so churches are passive and struggling and weak. Now there's some great churches in the nation - ask what supernatural is happening around them, have a look for the miracles, the power, the deliverance, the gifts of the spirit. Have a look for ordinary people flowing in power.

That's what God wants to do - to raise up a great people, strong; but it's no go-it-alone, one-man ministry thing. It's about us; us rising; us standing together, being together, being a family; US agreeing together, being able to be open; US standing up and saying: GOD, WE BELIEVE FOR BREAKTHROUGHS over these kinds of things.

Summary Notes

Formatted » Back to Top »

Introduction:
· Ecc 4:9-12
"…9 Two are better than one…because they have a good reward for their labor….10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. … 11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? …12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord cannot be broken."
· There is multiplied strength when we stand together
· There is multiplied problems when we isolate and go it alone
· Gods' blessing and power flows when we walk together
· One consequence of the fall is isolation in relationships
· Prov 18:1 "A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire, he rages against all wise judgment"

Elijah in the Face of Spiritual Pressure:
1 Kings 19:1-5 "And when he saw that, he ran for his life"
a) Elijah was poised for national transformation:
· Jezebel ruled and influenced the nation
· Jezebel attacked and killed prophets and replaced them with her own prophets
· There was spiritual and relational drought
· Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal and killed them
· Jezebel reacted against him and attacked him

b) Jezebels' Messenger:
…v2 "She sent a massager to Elijah saying…"
· Evil massages can come in many forms
· Criticism, murderous words, threats, manipulation
· Behind the massager are evil spirits that attack
· Their goal was to remove Elijah from his position of influence

c) Elijah's Response to Witchcraft Attacks:
i. Elijah's Feelings:
· Fear •Indecisiveness •Discouraged •Retaliate
· Confusion •Overwhelmed •Loneliness •Rejection
ii. Elijah's Responses:
· Fear of death – he yielded to it, gave in to it. He shut down
· Flight - "ran for his live" v3
- self preservation
- withdraw from challenge, issue, and the assignment God gave him
· Isolation – "left his servant" v3
· Loss of perspective v14 "I alone am left"
· "Sat down" = Passivity v4
· Overcame by rejection
· Despair and hopelessness
· Desire to die – overwhelmed by a spirit of death

· Elijah's key mistake was yielding to fear and isolating himself
· Prov 18:1 "He that isolates himself seeks his own desire"

3. Jesus Response to Spiritual Pressure:
· Matt 26:36-41
· Jesus faced immense spiritual pressure and attacks upon him
· Jesus faced the immanent prospect of a horrible death, spiritual powers wanted to remove him
· How did Jesus Respond?
i. He refused to draw back in Fear v36
ii. He refused to Isolate, he invited good friends to be with him v36
iii. He opened his heart to the v38
Ø He shared openly his feelings and struggles
Ø He became vulnerable to them
Ø People struggle in this area to be vulnerable
a. Fear: Keeps people from being open, keeps issues in the dark
b. Pride: Keeps a front up, a covering to maintain appearance
c. Shame: causes people to hide and avoid relationships
iv. He asked for their support in prayer v38
Ø Indicated to them how they could help him
v. He poured out his heart to his Father v38
Ø Draw into a place of intimacy
vi. He wrestled in prayer to come to a place of rest v39
Ø Luke 22:44 "pray more earnestly" Heb 5:7 "strong crying and tears"
Ø He contended in prayer to overcome spiritual pressure and the human tendency is to preserve or save self
vii. He draw strength from the Father by faith and persevering in prayer
Ø Luke 22:44 "Angel"
Ø Jesus formed a habit of prayer to survive spiritual pressure
viii. He set his eyes firmly on the hope before him Heb 12:2
Ø He kept his eyes set on the end result, he kept his eyes set on the Victory
· What to do when you are facing pressure?
Ø Don't isolate and go it alone, include trusted friends
i. Inform them: Let them know what happened or what is happening
ii. Council: Seek council and help
iii. Question: Ask them for input. What you are not seeing?

http://mikeconnellministries.com

Sermons | Collections |
YouTube | Vimeo | Podcast
eBooks | Paperbacks
Transcripts |
Facebook | Share
Donations