

'Demon-Possessed' Prostitute Rejects Candace Owens' Prayer After Debate

Has Christianity withdrawn so far from recognizing and confronting the spiritual aspects of the world that it now is incapable of recognizing someone who is under the oppression of a demon?

In many cases yes, as pendulum swings can go from an over-spiritualized mindset that accuses anyone and everything of having a demon, to completely absolving someone of having a spiritual issue and instead focusing on the physical side of things.

Recently, conservative commentator Candace Owens joined the now infamous "Whatever" podcast. The show is a debate-style format that usually has one or two conservative-minded individuals discuss topics with women who participate in activities such as legal prostitution and OnlyFans created content.

While on a press tour for her newest series for the Daily Wire, "Convicting a Murderer," Owens was confronted by a prostitute who believes that she "saves" marriages with her career choice.

Owens may have correctly placed the source of the woman's deceived sense of reality as being from a spiritual source. This is made an even more likely possibility since the woman sitting to the prostitute's left was wearing a tank-top that read "Made in Hell." A bit on the nose, but quite revealing considering the spiritual powers at work behind the scenes.

"I honestly felt like, and I never say this, that she was possessed by a demon," Owens said. "She really was. And she

was growing frustrated in me remaining logical and explaining to her that obviously, her career was going to follow her for the rest of her life. And she tried to, I guess, trigger me as she was explaining how she 'saves marriages' and she tried to trigger me by creating a 'what if' scenario regarding my own husband."

The 22-year-old woman presented Owens with a scenario that Owens deemed perverse and completely unrealistic influenced by the fallen world in which we live.

"It would probably indicate to me that my husband was involved in some perverse world, whether it was through pornography, that something else was happening on the side. These aren't normal things that people just think of when they wake up," Owens responded.

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This is where the recognition of a deeper issue really took hold in Owens' mind. Something very wrong had taken up residence in this woman's life and led her further into a life devoid of hope, love and healthy relationships with men.

"I realized that her entire reality had been warped because she works in a brothel and she sees up to 10 clients per day," Owens says. "And you have to imagine that she thinks that this must represent what all men are like. It never occurred to her that actually, she is seeing the most debased, pathetic men that are in this society today. She is seeing men who have drug addiction. She is seeing men who have a sex addiction. She is seeing men who have gone so far into their perversions that they might actually be requesting this from her. It is not the average man that goes into a brothel."

Joining this podcast, which was not something Owens originally wanted to do, reinforced her determination to call out the

perversity and pornography that are polluting society and culture in today's world. It also gave her an up-close and personal view of those directly affected by the deceptive spirits pulling many young women into the grasp of perverse career choices.

"This is why I spend so much time talking about perversity, talking about pornography, talking about the ills, not just of graphic pornography, which her mind is utterly polluted by because it's a facet of her every single day, but also the soft pornography that we have all become accustomed to, the pornography that we see when we scroll Instagram," Owens says.

"And you have Instagram models with their butt cheeks and their chests out. This is the stuff that is desensitizing us, right? It is desensitizing all of us. We're all victims to it. I say this all the time when I see an ad, I don't even flinch ... because we have become accustomed to seeing it everywhere. It's leading to women that are quite literally prostituting themselves in and out because they know that they can make a quick buck, and you can do that, it's true."

At the conclusion of the interview, Owens disclosed that she extended an offer to pray for the sex workers she believed were possessed, but the young woman on the show declined the prayer.

"She said she didn't want me to pray for her. What kind of person rejects a prayer? You might not believe in prayers. You might not pray yourself, but if any person walked up to me, no matter what phase they were in, and they said that they were going to pray for me, I wouldn't reject it," Owens shared.

"I think that what the Whatever podcast taught me is that we are definitely facing a possession in America. People are possessed by the concept of fame. We are possessed by perversions; we are possessed by sexuality. And all of these things are destroying peoples' souls, honestly, genuinely. And

when I left that podcast, I still prayed for those young women because I think they need it.” {eoa}

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.

Is God Sending Us a Message for This Hour?

Jonathan Cahn's Latest Book Issues A Warning To America And A Blueprint For Overcoming In The End Times

We are living in unprecedented times. We've seen a pandemic, dramatic cultural changes, social unrest, fires and storms, more wars and rumors of war. There's a lot of fear and concern in the hearts and lives of people everywhere. We are worried, angry, confused, frustrated, and crying out for help and hope.

But in his latest stunning bestseller, *The Josiah Manifesto*, author Jonathan Cahn shines a beacon of hope for America. And while the book certainly contains a warning, it also reveals God's plan for His people in these last days – a blueprint for every Christian, the answer for what to do and how to live in view of what we face in the coming days.

“I am known for opening these things up and giving warning,” says Cahn. “But I never write a book without hope. To me, we are living in the most exciting time. The Bible said these things were going to happen, so we can't complain or be surprised when they do. It tells me that God's on the throne – that the challenges are great and if the dark is getting

darker, the light has to get brighter.”

A GUIDE FOR THE END TIMES

☒ Cahn reminds us that Jesus’ own followers did not live in a Christian culture. “They lived in an anti-Christian culture, and yet they were the most powerful witness we’ve ever seen. So I believe that’s what God wants. We are not to fear because we, of all people, know who’s on the throne, we know the end of the story, and we know the power we have.

“When you’re watching a movie, what’s the most exciting part? The last 15 minutes. God put us in the last 15 minutes. I’m excited about that. We have to become the people God called us to be.”

Basing *The Josiah Manifesto* on an ancient biblical pattern, Cahn opens up stunning mysteries that lie behind the dramatic events of recent times that have changed our world – then he takes some of the mysteries he’s revealed in past books and goes further than ever before. He says this book is a guide for the end times.

“What if God was sending us a message, a revelation for this hour?” Cahn asks. “What if, behind the events of our time, things aren’t really out of control but there is an ancient mystery behind it? What if there is an ancient calendar that is so specific, it actually ordains the events of our times down to the exact year, month, week, dates, and in some cases, the exact second? What if there is a way, from the Bible, that God is highlighting, to overcome and prevail—not only now, but in the days ahead?”

After seven explosive New York Times bestsellers, including *The Harbinger*, *The Oracle*, and *The Return of the Gods*, Cahn says *The Josiah Manifesto* is different from any book he’s written before.

“This is like a prophetic journey,” he says, “where the puzzle

pieces all come together to open up this key: the answer of how to live, what to do, what we need to know for the days ahead. In many ways, I believe it's one of the most important things I've written. It's a message for such a time as this, for God's people to know."

A WAKE UP CALL

According to Cahn, this present darkness is based on an ancient biblical pattern, now with a new manifesting. America has departed from her roots, her commitment to God, just as ancient Israel did before her fall.

"Here's a nation that knew God then turned away," he says, "and then these signs began appearing – signs of judgment given to warn that nation. *The Josiah Manifesto* takes that forward. America and Israel are very much joined – they're the only two civilizations that were founded specifically for the purposes of God. And America is now reenacting what happened to ancient Israel. When you turn away from God, it's a dangerous thing."

At the beginning of the book, Cahn speaks of the Valley of Hinnom, where the prophet Jeremiah prophesied that because Israel sacrificed their children, judgment would come (Jeremiah 19). In parallel, abortion in America has also sacrificed children. "You cannot do that without judgment coming," says Cahn. "So it's a warning and a wake-up call. Israel was in deep trouble, and America is also on that verge. We are a nation in danger because of what we have done."

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THE MYSTERY OF THE JUBILEE

At the heart of *The Josiah Manifesto* is the biblical precedent of Jubilee.

“In the Bible, the year of Jubilee comes every 50 years – it’s the 50th year, the year that everything gets reversed or undone,” says Cahn. “In some ways, it’s a great thing. If you are enslaved, you are released, it’s undone. If you lost your land, you get it back, it’s restored. So for many, Jubilee is the year of restoration, a year of blessing.

“But at the same time, there’s another side of it – it’s a year of reversal and restitution. If you took land that didn’t belong to you, then in the year of Jubilee, it’s all reversed. What you took is taken from you. It’s also a year of restitution. And this mystery reveals some incredible things about what’s been happening in America and in the world.”

THE MYSTERY OF THE PLAGUE

The Josiah Manifesto continues to connect the puzzle pieces as it reveals a chilling comparison between America’s sin of abortion and the Covid-19 pandemic.

“As Jeremiah said, the death of the children is answered by death,” says Cahn. “And so the question comes up: what about the numbers? How many babies were killed in the initial three-year period between when abortion entered America in 1970 until *Roe versus Wade* in 1973? The answer is 1.3 million. Then 50 years later – the Jubilee – we have another three-year period and it’s the period of the plague from 2020 to the beginning of 2023. How many Americans died of the plague? The answer is 1.3 million, *the exact same number.*”

The Josiah Manifesto draws another stunning comparison. “There was another day, in the middle of March, where everything shut down,” Cahn says. “A quarantine came on America. The stock market crashed. Everything went into lockdown. President Trump went on the television to announce it, and the media called it ‘the day that everything changed.’

“That day was March 11th, 2020. So what if you go back 50 years to March 11th, 1970? That is the exact date that

abortion actually began in America. And so the exact day abortion began in America, 50 years later the plague fell on America.”

THERE IS HOPE

Those are just a couple of the mysteries revealed in this captivating new book, *The Josiah Manifesto*.

“It opens up the mystery of appointed days, an ancient calendar that actually gives the exact days, the times when the shakings of America happened,” says Cahn. “It looks into a mystery behind Donald Trump and January 6th, the storming of the US Capitol. It looks into the overturning of *Roe versus Wade*. And it talks about revival, how there is hope for America.”

After revealing so many stunning biblical parallels, *The Josiah Manifesto* book ends on a high note. “There are a lot of mysteries, a lot of puzzle pieces coming together,” Cahn says, “and it all leads to what do we need to do? God wants us to know an ancient key that instructs us how to survive, and stand, and prevail in the days to come. And that’s what *The Josiah Manifesto* is about.” {eoa}

Jonathan Cahn is known as a prophetic voice to our times. He leads Hope of the World ministry and Beth Israel/the Jerusalem Center, his ministry base and worship center in Wayne, New Jersey. He is a much-sought-after speaker and appears throughout America and the world. For more information go to

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Shocking Theory: Was Biblical Sin City Destroyed by Asteroid Stronger Than Nuke?

In a groundbreaking revelation that could attempt to rewrite history, theologian Dr. John Bergsma has put forth a theory that the ancient city of Sodom, infamous for being destroyed by God for its sinful inhabitants, met its fiery demise not by divine wrath alone but by the cataclysmic impact of an asteroid stronger than a nuclear weapon.

A distinguished scholar in biblical studies, Dr. Bergsma contends that excavations in Jordan provide compelling evidence for the authenticity of the biblical tale of the destruction of Sodom.

Archaeological findings in the southern Jordan Valley, particularly at Tell el-Hammam, point to a city that suffered a fate mirroring the biblical account. The once-thriving city that eclipsed the size and strength of Jerusalem and Jericho, seemed to vanish suddenly, without signs of a military siege. Instead, evidence of extreme heat on skeletons and pottery fragments suggests an extraordinary event occurred, possibly an asteroid impact, Bergsma contends.

The biblical narrative in the book of Genesis describes God's punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah with a rain of brimstone and fire due to the grievous sins of the city's people. Bergsma's theory draws parallels between the archaeological discoveries and the biblical story, highlighting the intense heat experienced by the city's residents.

Tell el-Hammam's chief archaeologist, Steven Collins, shared some remarkable findings with Bergsma. Pottery shards coated with trinitite, a glassy substance formed during nuclear explosions, were uncovered, pointing to a catastrophic event.

Moreover, human remains with skeletons intact up to the mid-spine, above which only scorch marks remained, indicate that a massive burst of heat from the sky engulfed the city, resembling the aftermath of an asteroid impact.

Collins likened the destruction of Sodom to the Tunguska event of 1908, an enormous asteroid impact that devastated the Siberian wilderness. He noted that the proposed airburst that obliterated Sodom would have been even larger than the Tunguska event, having 1,000 times more energy than the atomic bomb that devastated Hiroshima.

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Intriguingly, the catastrophe also left behind significant quantities of salt, as noted by James Kent, an associate professor of earth sciences at the University of California. This peculiar detail may remind some of the story of Lot's wife, who, according to the Bible, turned into a pillar of salt as she looked back upon the destruction of Sodom.

While discoveries made present a compelling case, some archaeologists remain cautious, accusing Collins of prematurely drawing conclusions without sufficient field evidence. The connection between the archaeological findings at Tell el-Hammam and the biblical narrative of Sodom's destruction is intriguing.

The story of Sodom and its sister city, Gomorrah, has long captivated readers and scholars. It recounts the tale of Abraham's negotiations with God to spare the sinful city of Sodom, which was filled with wicked inhabitants. God's resolute response was to turn these cities into smoldering ruins, leaving behind nothing but desolation and smoke.

Dr. John Bergsma's theory challenges conventional wisdom and biblical narrative. As excavations and research continue, the

mystery of Sodom's fate deepens, offering an intriguing glimpse into the intersection of history, archaeology and faith.

But the Word of God, as true Christians know, is inerrant, and many have tried to discredit that assertion over the centuries. {eoa}

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Shawn A. Akers is the online editor at Charisma Media.

Number #1 Book in America Sounds an Ominous Warning

The Josiah Manifesto Opens up an Ancient Mystery with Chilling Ramifications – Can we afford to ignore it?

After seven New York Times best sellers, The number one nonfiction book in America is sounding an ominous warning. *The Josiah Manifesto: The Ancient Mystery and Guide for the End Times* by Jonathan Cahn opens up an ancient mystery that is replaying on American soil and before our eyes.

Cahn remarkably and superbly answers questions like: What does the future hold? Is America heading for calamity? Is there hope? Have we been given a last chance? Is it possible to change history? And is there a blueprint to guide us in light of what is next to come?

Like his other books, Cahn dives into ancient mysteries as he shares the warning signs America has been given for our future. However, with this book, Cahn is providing the key,

the answer, the blueprint, for how we can survive in the end times.

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☒ One of the keys that the book opens up with is a narrative from when Cahn himself visited Cuba in 2008 where he had a face-to-face meeting with Fidel Castro. Just as America has been warned, Castro himself had been warned of his downfall by God. It was here that Cahn presented Castro with a prophetic message and object.

“The first was the shofar, the herald of the Jubilee, the sign of freedom throughout the land, restoration, return, reconciliation, liberty, and redemption, a message for the Cuban ruler,” Cahn writes.

This prophetic gift had more to it than meets the eye: it was a sign of the things to come.

“Its meaning and mystery would be manifested in the years to come,” Cahn writes. “It was a sign of the rise and the fall of Fidel Castro.” **It would mark out the exact year that Castro’s reign would end, the exact day – and the exact hour.**

The stunning revelations that are unlocked in The Josiah Manifesto go beyond even the rise and fall of the Cuban dictator. Cahn shines a light into the darkness that is hovering over our nation in regards to both the pandemic that gripped our nation at the onset of 2020 and the fifty-year crisis of abortion that has slaughtered millions of unborn babies in America. Cahn says that America has been warned of what is yet to come.

“When New York legalized abortion in 1970, it was only the beginning,” Cahn writes. “Because of its expansive abortion law, because of the multitudes who came to the state to have

abortions, New York became the primary gateway through which abortion came to America.”

However, Cahn goes even further, saying that this legalization of abortion did more than just come to America—it allowed the power of death and destruction to later invade in 2020.

“The same primary gateway of death through which abortion came to America would now become the primary gateway of death through which the plague would come to America,” Cahn writes.

The Josiah Manifesto stunningly shows the mysteries and solutions that we need to stand guard and prevail in this hour and light of things that are to come in a way no book has yet done. {eoa}

The Josiah Manifesto: The Ancient Mystery and Guide For the End Times is available wherever books are sold, online and in bookstores.

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Is This What Jesus Looked Like? AI Generates Depiction of Christ Using Mysterious Shroud of Turin

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been used on the famous Shroud of Turin to reveal the image of the man on the cloth that some believe is Jesus Christ.

According to those who say it is a religious artifact, the shroud is the actual piece of cloth that was wrapped around Jesus's body after his death on the cross. The resulting faint image left on the cloth was the result of an energy burst that happened at the time of Christ's resurrection.

According to Relevant Magazine, the AI-produced image from the Shroud reveals a man with long, presumably dark brown hair and a beard. His eyes are open and looking straight at the viewer. The man's neck is clearly defined, along with the top portion of his body which includes the shoulders.

The outlet noted, "While this is still simply a modern interpretation by a modern device, the results are stunning."

In a social media post on Wednesday, *The Case for Christ* author Lee Strobel wrote: "According to Artificial Intelligence, this is what Jesus looked like if the Shroud of Turin is authentic."

Strobel also included the image in his X post.

Critics pounced on what the resulting AI image appears to be.

Author Clinton S. Thomas wrote, "The AI, depending on the access it had, was likely to reference several popular images of Jesus in addition to the Shroud before making a picture. The Shroud gives no specific indication of eye color, skin color, hair color or clothing—this image includes all which indicates it is pulling from various images."

Filmmaker Christian Newlands replied, "Interesting. There's no confirmed historical record of Jesus having long hair though. The long hair descriptions stem from early depictions of Him from paintings of people in that time. In addition to His depiction, the description of Him in the book of Revelation is a description of Jesus resurrected, not living. No matter how accurate AI may like to be, it can't be that accurate if the information that gets processed are only depictions."

Others also pointed to the image's hair. In the Bible, there are no verses describing Jesus's hair. But there are verses in the Old Testament that describe how Jewish men were to take care of their hair, which was the law.

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Based on these verses, noted in an article in 2019, that it is likely that Jesus had neatly trimmed black hair, long sideburns, and a beard.

Another user wrote, "Shroud history is fascinating. For instance, there is a reason why so many of the early icons of Christ look similar... even though different artists painted them in different regions."

Several users also noted the image looked "too feminine" or "too soft" due to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was a carpenter by trade, a man described in scriptures as determined and strong.

Scientific Evidence Sheds Light on Ancient Mystery About the Shroud of Turin

Since it first popped up on history's radar hundreds of years ago, the Shroud has captivated scientists, the public and people of God worldwide. The linen is viewed by some as the burial Shroud of Jesus Christ and others as an incredibly complex medieval forgery.

The story of the piece of cloth is an age-old tale that threads together a centuries-old debate about a religious artifact that has survived fires and a series of perils across a journey through history.

In an interview with CBN News last year, Brian Hyland, an exhibit curator at the Museum of the Bible said, "There have

been questions about the veracity of this image ever since its first documented appearance in the late 14th century.”

In 1988, carbon testing dated the Shroud back to medieval times. But that test has repeatedly been called into question by various experts.

As CBN News reported in June 2022, a modern scientific procedure dated the fabric from the Shroud to roughly 2,000 years ago. That Italian study was the latest in a long series of scientific testing, including studies of pollen plucked from the Shroud with a scientific tape dispenser.

“The pollen samples that were gathered, they, a lot of them, are from plants that are native to not just the Middle East, but specifically the area around Judea, Palestine, and Syria and stay where it was in that time period,” Hyland told CBN News.

“There’s also pollen from the area around Constantinople. There’s a lot of pollen from Europe,” he said.

The pollen samples suggest a journey of thousands of miles from Jerusalem, through modern-day Turkey, France and now Italy, where the artifact has been kept since the 16th century.

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Morning Rundown: In Your Elder Years, Are You Still Ready to Run for Jesus?

Here's a quick summary of the top stories on :

In Your Elder Years, Are You Still Ready to Run for Jesus?

This past Saturday, I had the joy of attending the 50th anniversary reunion of my high school class of 1973.

On the one hand, it was sobering to see pictures of 50 of our fellow classmates who have passed away. On the other hand, it was great to hear about the careers and adventures and families of the grads that were there.

One was an accomplished surgeon; another an accountant; another a craftsman; another a lawyer; another a full-time grandparent. Quite a few were on the verge of retiring or had just retired.

Did an Art Museum Encourage Families to Partake in This Demonic Activity?

An art museum in Minnesota recently hosted what they termed as a "family-friendly" event, but it turned out to be a ritual where museum officials instigated the "summoning" of a mythological demon where families were encouraged to "befriend" the entity.

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In August, Walker Art Center in Minneapolis put on an event in its Sculpture Garden publicly touted as a day to "celebrate our plant teachers" and inviting "inspiring green thumbs."

During the event, however, the art center revealed that artist Tamar Ettun—and the website made sure to use “proper pronouns”—presented a performance about Lilith, a mythological entity whose dark origins lie in Babylonian demonology where “amulets and incantations were used to counter the sinister powers of this winged spirit who preyed on pregnant women and infants,” according to .

Are You Engaging in Spiritual Warfare God’s Way?

How do you engage in spiritual warfare? If you’re like most, you suit up in the whole armor of God.

Maybe you raise your volume. Then you engage in combat! Certainly, that was me for many years before God revealed a different way. And He used the words of an atheist to do it.

What Spiritual Warfare Isn’t

I was preparing to write a chapter on the whole armor of God for my book, “Silence Satan,” when the comment of an atheist on my Facebook page began to play through my mind. “You talk so much about the love of God,” the man noted. “But then, you’re always talking about weapons and warfare. If God is so loving, why are you talking about fighting all the time?”
{eoa}

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‘Demon-Possessed’ Prostitute

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Morning Rundown: Pro Football Legend Jim Kelly Boldly Expresses His Faith Through Baptism

Here's a quick rundown of the top stories on :

Pro Football Legend Jim Kelly Boldly Expresses His Faith Through Baptism

In a powerful display of his unwavering faith, Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly made headlines this summer as he took a bold step, getting baptized.

This significant moment was shared with the world through a video and photos posted on Instagram by Jim's wife, Jill. The imagery captured Kelly in a red shirt bearing the words, "God's real." In a poignant exchange during the baptism, he was asked a simple yet profound question while immersed in the water, "Do you love Jesus?" To which he emphatically responded, "Yes I do!"

Jill, in the caption of her post, expressed her deep belief, saying, "Jim's t-shirt says, 'God's Real.' He is! I have witnessed God at work in this man's life for over 30 years...and I can tell you that God isn't just REAL, He is faithful, trustworthy, kind, loving, compassionate, powerful, gracious,

GOOD, merciful, forgiving...and so so much MORE. He is immeasurably MORE than we can imagine! He is EVERYTHING!

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The Torment of Unforgiveness

Unforgiveness is the biggest kink in the hose in American Christianity. It's why this nation is in such a mess right now. It's why our churches are dead and dying. It's why the lukewarm spirit of the age has destroyed our congregations. It's also the number one reason why people do not receive freedom and deliverance.

We sit in church with absolute unforgiveness in our hearts, glorying in the fact that we've been forgiven of all, yet we forgive so very little of those who have grieved us. People say, "Oh, but you don't know what they did," or, "You don't know what they said." I will never minimize what they did or said, but it pales in comparison to what we've done and what we've said to Jesus.

Ephesians 4:32 says God has forgiven us of all our sin for Jesus' sake. We deserve death, but through His forgiveness we have been given life. We deserve hell, but because of the baptism of God's love and forgiveness we've been radically set free from our rebellion and our grievances. Forgiveness is simply setting people free who don't deserve it. From a deliverance standpoint, what we most have to learn about forgiveness is that it's not about the person who wronged you being right—it's about you being right, in your spirit. In that respect, forgiveness isn't initially for the other person; it's a gift you give yourself.

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Are You Engaging in Spiritual Warfare God's Way?

How do you engage in spiritual warfare? If you're like most, you suit up in the whole armor of God.

Maybe you raise your volume. Then you engage in combat! Certainly, that was me for many years before God revealed a different way. And He used the words of an atheist to do it.

What Spiritual Warfare Isn't

I was preparing to write a chapter on the whole armor of God for my book, "Silence Satan," when the comment of an atheist on my Facebook page began to play through my mind. "You talk so much about the love of God," the man noted. "But then, you're always talking about weapons and warfare. If God is so loving, why are you talking about fighting all the time?"

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What if an Entire Congregation Came to the Altar to Humbly Repent?

I stood in synagogue on Yom Kippur this week and recited prayers of repentance along with our entire congregation. I joined in praying the Al chet (For the sin of...) and I beat my chest while asking for forgiveness as each sin was spoken aloud.

Afterwards, I listened to a message about repentance which included the narrative we read about in Luke 18:10-14:

“Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘O God, I thank You that I am not like other people—thieving, unjust, adulterers or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and tithe on all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, wouldn’t even lift his eyes toward heaven, but beat his chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ I tell you, this man, rather than the other, went down to his home declared righteous. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

As I reread these words, I first wondered if this event that we read about here happened on Yom Kippur. Even if what we read about in Luke didn’t happen on Yom Kippur, the heart of the message surely relates to the day. On Yom Kippur we gather together as a community and pray together for the atonement of Israel.

As the congregation prays the A1 chet mentioned above audibly in unison, we ask for forgiveness for a long list of sins. We name sins such as adultery, murder, sexual immorality, theft and the list goes on. Each person asks for forgiveness for every sin listed even if they individually didn’t personally commit that particular sin.

The reason for this is that we understand that while we are each individuals who need personal forgiveness for those sins we commit, we are also part of the greater body known as Israel, and as such we understand that when one part of the body is sick, the whole body is sick.

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I know that when most people read the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector above, they generally look at the

comparison between the way they prayed in this light. The Pharisee stood praying in prideful thankfulness that he was not a sinner like other people, while the tax collector prayed from a place of humility, acknowledging that he was a sinner who needed forgiveness.

However, I think that the lesson goes much deeper than the two individuals standing in the Temple praying on that day. Imagine, if you will, that the Pharisee had come to the Temple that day and stood humbly before G-D and prayed like the tax collector. It may be true that the Pharisee was not a thief, was not unjust, was not an adulterer or even a tax collector.

However, he knew that within Israel, his people, there were those who were. Just think how different this story would have been if the Pharisee had stood together with the tax collector and they both prayed as we do on Yom Kippur, asking for G-D to be merciful and forgiving to Israel, who have sinned against Him.

I listened to the message that was being shared on Yom Kippur and wondered what would have happened that day if these two men had prayed together instead of apart. It made me think about our synagogues and churches today.

What if instead of being divided between the saved and unsaved, the righteous and the unrighteous, we were unified as part of an imperfect community of faith praying for each other with the intensity and fervency of the tax collector?

What if an altar call wasn't just a few people praying for themselves, but rather an entire congregation coming forward with the few and humbly repenting with them? The truth is, they are us.

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Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians *and* Galatians in Context. *Visit his website at* .