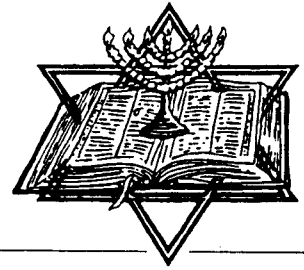


MORIEL

NEWS and PRAYER LETTER

מוריאל
MORIEL - GOD IS MY TEACHER



OCTOBER 1997

No. 13

“Slain in the Spirit” — a Midrashic Perspective

THERE ARE FEW ISSUES TODAY THAT result in as much controversy, misunderstanding and division, as the question of being “slain in the Spirit”.

Some maintain that the phenomena has absolutely no biblical basis. This position is mistaken.

Others who promote such carnal deceptions as Toronto/Pensacola see it as some proof that God is moving. They accuse those who disagree of “Not being Spirit Baptized” or “Repressing The Spirit” or of being “cessationists” (ie, holding to the erroneous opinion that the gifts of the Spirit ended with the Apostles). In fact, many opposing such unscriptural practice are themselves Pentecostals and Charismatics.

Examined biblically, the truth is somewhere other than what either camp seems to realize.

Manifestations

Nowhere in Scripture are “manifestations” or “impartations” associated with being slain in the Spirit.

The manifestations cited in 1 Corinthians, in connection with Spiritual Gifts, bear no relation whatsoever to what we see going on in places like Pensacola.

Toronto/Pensacola manifestations more closely resemble Stage Hypnotism, Eastern Religious Mysticism and demon possession, than they do anything biblical. Indeed, being “slain in the Spirit” in at least one place is connected with Jesus casting a demon out of someone following irrational behaviour.

Several years prior to Toronto, a number of Vineyard pastors associated the same expressions of irrational behaviour, now common in Toronto and Pensacola, with the irrational behaviour of the demoniacs in scripture.

Being slain in the Spirit was seen as evidence of “deliverance” and “exorcism” and demons coming out as in Mark 9.

Now the phenomena once recognized by them as proof of the demonic, is suddenly proof of the Divine!

What is the truth? What has God already said about this subject in His Word?

John on Patmos

We find the term “slain in the Spirit” in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, where the Apostle John is “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” and, after the presence of Jesus overtakes him, John “falls as if slain”.

This is not the first or only time such an experience is recorded in Scripture, but it is the place from where we get the term, and it reveals something about the experience.

These phenomena were unusual in the Bible. For something that was rare in Scripture to become a common event in contemporary times must raise questions about the authenticity of what we are seeing today.

Instead of God moving, people are being pushed over or manipulated by hypnotic suggestion, after being set up by repetitive mesmerizing music. This is no different from what happens at stage hypnotist shows. (Those who fall down all the time have personality types predisposed to hypnotic induction.)

Today’s experiences are frequently accompanied by hysterics, animal imitations, drunken behaviour and slurred speech.

In John’s experience in Revelation, as in Daniel’s, it was accompanied by a sense of terror at the holiness of the awesome presence of the Lord.

With both John and Daniel (who saw the same prophetic eschatological visions from different aspects), the experience was so frightening that the Lord dispatched an angel to reassure them and tell them not to fear.

Whenever this experience happened in scripture, it was a unique, one time event that took place for a specific reason in a specific situation. There is no biblical record of it happening multiple times.

An overpowering encounter with the Lord brought a sense of terror, so it was not likely to be something people wanted to happen again. Not that the experience with the Divine itself was bad, but it was very frightening to John and Daniel. They required divine intervention to make it bearable.

Today, however, we see people going back again and again to receive “another dose”. Such people are not seeking the Lord, but seeking an experience.

This counterfeits the authentic biblical phenomena with a cheap thrill, reducing a bonafide encounter with the Lord to the level of popular entertainment. The unbiblical practice of getting back in the prayer line for “going down” on the floor is no different to getting in the queue for another ride on a roller coaster (except in their own imagination). The fact that their experience does not match biblical descriptions of being ‘slain in the Spirit’ does not seem to register with them.

Christians who go back for more and more of these experiences are not going back for something real, but for a psychological (and in some cases possibly a demonic) counterfeit. This is only possible due to an ignorance of both post-hypnotic suggestion and an ignorance of the Book of the Lord — as well as the Lord of the Book.

Even though they have had a New Birth experience at some point, they have not been properly disciplined and never taught the Word of God, nor managed to acquire spiritual discernment.

Seeking manifestations of the Holy Spirit instead of seeking the Spirit Himself, and chasing thrills for thrills' sake, while foolishly misinterpreting those as a "blessing", comes dangerously close to "the wicked and adulterous generation seeking a sign" that Jesus warned against and condemned (Luke 11:29).

Ignorance of Scripture

Yet if one questions such unscriptural practices on the basis of Scripture, they are not infrequently told that they are in danger of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. He wrote the Bible, speaking through the Prophets and Apostles. We are plainly commanded to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21) — 'good' meaning 'biblically true'.

A predisposition to such manipulation and suggestion is cultivated by unscriptural worship. (With no theology, there can be no doxology).

The Holy Spirit is only ever worshipped in Scripture in the context of the Trinity of the Godhead. He is never prayed to directly in the Bible. But as John 14 and John 16 tell us, He always points people to Jesus.

The worship of worship

What we see today in the unbiblical lyrics of Vineyard Music, such as "The River Song", does not lift up Jesus but an experience. It is *the worship of worship*, which is not worship at all, but deception. The music has a pre-hypnotic impact, setting people up for "going down".

This is why we see people, who are already Christians, running up for altar calls at such places as Pensacola, in what is then falsely termed "revival".

But when unsaved people see the ludicrous carnality, they think the place is a lunatic asylum. Tragically they are more right than they are wrong. As the experience of "going down" becomes what is sought above the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit Himself becomes denigrated.

Thus we see people referring to going to Pensacola or Toronto to get "IT", instead of going to the Lord for themselves to get "Him". Such extreme Pentecostals and hyper-Charismatics wind up with a pneumatology (a doctrine of the Holy Spirit) which is no different in substance and practice to that of the Jehovah's Witnesses cult, which sees the Holy Spirit not as a person but as an inanimate force. A force however cannot be grieved or blasphemed, only a person can.

Psychological manipulation

Christian Psychiatrists and secular experts on hypnotism, who campaign against its non-clinical use in entertainment, have warned that what we see with people going down today is pure manipulation.

So have some Christian leaders who have come out of it. On a national TV broadcast in Great Britain, **Mark Haville**, a preacher who directs *National Prayer Network* video ministry, showed videos of himself running around putting his hands on people and them dropping like flies, explaining how it is done from the point of view of a preacher who realized from scripture that what he was doing was wrong.

There are many other fundamental differences between the genuine biblical experience of being slain in the Spirit and the majority of what goes on today.

Phenomena in history

Some will point out that it was a common phenomena in the ministry of John Wesley and George Whitefield during the Great Revivals, and in the ministry of Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney.

That is true. However, while the Lord may have used Charles Finney, we need to be very cautious about making him an authority for any belief or practice.

Mr. Finney, for all of his good intention, effectively denied original sin and bordered on the terrible heresy of Pelagianism. Pelagianism is an ancient error, named after an apostate monk, that says we can make the initial steps towards salvation by our own efforts.

Mr. Finney denied that man was born fallen with original sin and thus needed to be born again, although he did agree we all had sin and needed to repent and be saved.

Our standard to authenticate something must, first and foremost, be the Bible.

In the ministry of Wesley, Whitefield, and Edwards however, while people in large numbers did indeed fall down, it had no resemblance to what we see normally witness today.

In their ministries it was unsaved people falling under the power of a holy and righteous God, in fear and trepidation, and repenting of their sin and being saved. It was not people who already claimed to be regenerate Christians behaving like silly maniacs. It had nothing to do with the kinds of things we generally see in our time.

In the Bible and in church history, when the genuine thing happened to either believers or non-believers, it was nothing like today's popular fiasco.

Moreover, as in the Bible, the "falling down" was a unique, one time experience. It was not repeated at every meeting or continually sought.

The almost addictive craving some people develop for "going down" — as if it were a verification that God's Spirit was really at work — is the kind of compulsive behaviour His Spirit is given to set us free from.

Dangerous and foolish

The real test of God's power in our lives as believers is the power of holy living, not silly stunts.

In a large church in London, a man supposedly "Went Down in The Spirit" and split his head open. When I questioned the leader of the particular denomination about it he said that it happened because the particular area of the floor where he fell was not carpeted!

We have had calls from distraught people in a Pentecostal church in England where a woman has more than once gone down on the floor, supposedly 'slain in spirit', and lost control of her bladder in church. More than that, she insisted that others come and join her on the floor, pontificating that they were 'grieving the Spirit' by refusing to do so.

I can think of few things more warped than to suggest that God's Spirit produces incontinence as a manifestation of His presence. I can only pity this unfortunate woman, but people should not be in a church like that.

In a video of Bishop David Pytches at St. Andrews Chorleywood in the UK, another woman had someone fall on her smashing her eye glasses and bruising her face, yet she was in hysterics displaying the injury for the camera and insisting it was 'of God'.

Benny Hinn settled a multi-million dollar law suite out of court when he laid hands on someone and they supposedly went down under the Holy Ghost, falling on top of an elderly woman, effectively killing her as she soon died from broken hip complications.

These extreme cases are becoming more common. On some videos we have from London's Victory Church (a UK platform of Rick Godwin and Ray Macaulley) which show people falling violently, it is portrayed as hysterically laughable, despite the potential for physical injury. This is destructive to our Christian witness and testimony — particularly as millions watch such outlandish frenzy on national TV.

This is not supernatural, but unnatural. It is for certain that at her funeral the bereaved family of the woman killed by the actions of Benny Hinn, and the poor victims of medical incontinence in geriatric hospitals do not see such things as "blessings".

Such dangerous, traumatic, degrading and even deadly things have no relation to any episode in the Bible where this experience is initiated by God's Spirit.

God's Spirit does not injure, humiliate, or kill people in the name of 'blessing' them, or in the name of bringing Revival to His church. If there is any danger of blaspheming the Holy Spirit it is by those who so dishonour Him by teaching otherwise.

Teaching of Scripture

But let us look even more closely at this experience when it happened in scripture in contrast to what mainly goes on today.

We do not wish to suggest that if someone falls backward the experience is false, purely psychological or demonic, yet whenever it happened in the Bible the people fell *on their faces* before The Lord.

The only time recorded in scripture where people fell backwards, spiritually slain, is when His enemies and false accusers came to arrest Jesus (John 18:6). The other times the people fell forward.

To really grasp the true nature of being "slain in the Spirit" we must look at one key example from the gospels.

In our exegesis let us understand the midrashic and typological dimension of the episode which illustrates the true meaning. As always, we must beware of building any doctrinal conclusions on type, allegory, or midrash. We only use typological illustration and midrash to illuminate and demonstrate doctrine.

Mark 9:17-29

In Mark 9:17-29 we read the narrative account of a young man so demon possessed that the apostles could not cast the evil spirits out of him.

This gospel account reveals important things about the subjects of *demonology* and *exorcism*, and also the subject of *faith* (v. 24). But the text also graphically depicts features which are central to a genuine understanding of 'being slain in the Spirit'.

With the single exception of Mary Magdalen, each case of demonic possession recorded in the gospels is accompanied by some form of self destructive, irrational behaviour. This case is no exception. We first see the boy being driven by the unclean spirit into convulsions, with foaming at the mouth.

Some Christians in the medical profession have investigated demonic possession from the view point of medical science. One of the most renowned of these was Dr. Kurt Koch.

Clinically there appears to be at least two general areas of possibility here. We asked Dr. Hilda Podlas, a Messianic Jewish Physician specializing in neurological disorders to attempt a forensic review of the case in Mark 9 from a diagnostic perspective.

We are advised that such phenomena can be symptomatic of serious neurological disorders such as encephalitis, some meningococcal infections, leuco-dystrophy, and certain kinds of epilepsy.

Clearly these illnesses are not always caused by sin or by the direct workings of Satan, but they can be in some cases, and they are here in verse 25, causing the deaf and dumb condition in this young person who Jesus delivered from Satan's clutch.

Whenever Jesus took away a disorder caused by demonic 'oppression' in the

gospels, the Greek term is *therapeuo* meaning 'healed'. When it is caused by open 'possession' however, as it is here in Mark 9, the term is *ekballo* meaning 'cast out'.

Another clinical possibility for the boy imitating an animal might point to the bacterial disease *rabies*. Rabies can result in irrational behaviour in humans as it does in animals. When the mind of a beast was given to Nebechednezzar, the animal imitations were a manifestation of God's judgement. Here it could be a manifestation of demon possession.

Although in its literature the Brownsville Assemblies of God church in Pensacola (like its Toronto counterpart) sanctions animal imitations such as roaring like a lion, nowhere in scripture is animal imitation ever a manifestation of God's Spirit.

Non-metaphorical comparisons of persons to animals, may be a sign of God's judgement, or of demon possession, but never of God's blessing, in spite of what some people are teaching today.

Perhaps however, there was no medical pathology involved, only symptoms. We cannot be sure.

Midrash

The demons then propelled the boy to throw himself into the fire. Viewed midrashically, there is more to this abnormal, self destructive behaviour than the demon trying kill him, although that surface aspect is certainly true and important in its own right, as it reveals how Satan wants people to kill themselves.

In verse 22 the demon threw him into the water and threw him into the fire. In biblical figure, as with Noah's flood and Pharaoh and his army, death by drowning was judgement.

Throwing into the fire however is a picture of hell (Revelation 20:14). This is the true nature of Satan. He wants to see people join him in the judgement and eternal perdition reserved for him.

God — in the person of the Lord Jesus — is in the business of saving people from judgement and hell. This story in Mark is a typological illustration of a new birth experience, a saving act by Jesus resulting in a regeneration, where the old creation that was bound for judgement and hell dies (as this boy falls down like a corpse after encountering the Lord, v. 26).

After meeting Jesus, he becomes (as it were) a different person and is now in his right mind. This is exactly what happened in Mark 5:15 at Gerasene. The Lord gives us the power of a sound mind.

The theological term that applies in this text is known as “corporate solidarity”, where one person represents a larger or collective group of people. Here the young boy represents all of fallen mankind collectively.

This is not to suggest that all unsaved people are demon possessed. This is certainly not true, although all of them reside in Satan’s kingdom and are under the realm of his domain in this fallen world.

But while we cannot say that all persons not yet born again are demon possessed, since the Lord promises His people the power of a sound mind, I cannot help but wonder if all unsaved people are not to some degree, *not* ‘of sound mind’.

How tragic it is then, when supposedly saved Christians behave more irrationally than the lost do, by falling down at meetings all the time, erroneously believing it is God’s Spirit knocking them out.

A new creation

In terms of a corporate solidarity, this young man being plunged by Satan into judgement and hell is saved by Jesus. He falls as if he is dead (verse 26) and becomes like a corpse.

When we are saved we also fall down dead. The old creation is slain. Even though we may not all literally fall under the Spirit of God physically, as happened in figure here in Mark 9 or in the ministry of John Wesley or Jonathan Edwards, the old creation bound for judgement and hell becomes a corpse and we become *new creations*.

Something happened when this young man met Jesus that is so typical of what happens when anyone meets Jesus and becomes a new creation. **Most people thought he had died.**

When I was saved, my family and friends thought the crazy university student stoned on cocaine that they once knew was dead. I became different. And when you first met Jesus and were saved by Him you became different. Your unsaved family and friends thought the old you was dead. And they were, in some way, right.

The unsaved cannot understand what happens when we are born again. Our old selves become dead at the feet of Jesus and He raises us up as new creations that Satan can no longer control and throw into judgement and the fire of hell.

Understood midrashically, the literal experience of being ‘slain in the spirit’ in Mark 9 reflects the deeper experience of death and resurrection we all have when we meet the Lord Jesus. He saves all from the judgement and the fire who repent and truly receive Him.

Spectators have the same need

Just like the spectators in Mark 9 however, the unsaved who knew us before we met Jesus share a common attribute. They knew that the demon possessed young lad was in serious trouble and in desperate need of help.

What they did not realize however, was that in God’s economy they were in the same desperate state. **They are bound for the same judgement and destruction at the hands of Satan.**

The unsaved who see the change that meeting Jesus causes in our lives, do not realize that they too have just as desperate a need for Him to bring Himself and His salvation into *their* lives as well, although the need may not be as outwardly obvious. They also are bound for judgement and hell without the true salvation only found in Him.

God can do the same today

The physical falling that happened with the young man in Mark 9 happened in the crusades of the Great Awakenings, when people fell under the conviction of sin and were saved. There is no biblical reason why the real thing cannot still happen today, if and when God so chooses.

But precious little of today’s falling down (or being blown down by Benny Hinn) is the sovereign power of God.

Once the boy got up again, he was a completely different person. His falling down ‘slain in the spirit’, when he encountered the Lord, was a once-only life transforming experience.

Even when it happened to Daniel — a believer under the Torah, and John — a saved believer, it was the same.

In each biblical case the people were totally different after they got up than from when they went down.

The test is not what happens when somebody goes down, but how radically transformed their lives as believers in Jesus are, once and for all, after they get back up.

In genuine cases, the people were never the same again. Today, we see very little of this. What we mainly have now is people going back for more and more because the first time they went down it was not transforming enough — so they want another dose of the same experience.

If anything demonstrates the hollow and counterfeit nature of most of what we see today in “falling in the spirit”, it is this.

The real thing we see in Scripture has nothing to do with Toronto, Pensacola, Sunderland, or what has become of most of the Full Gospel Businessman’s Fellowship.

How radically different are most of the people we see falling down today after they get up again? Usually they are no different in the longer term. That is why they go back for what amounts to little more than “another fix”.

But it would be very wrong to say, as some do, that there is no biblical authority for the experience of being ‘slain in the spirit’. There is a clear scriptural basis for this experience and, as with the Gifts of the Spirit, **Satan only counterfeits things worth counterfeiting.**

It would also be a mistake to state that this experience is something that only happened in biblical times and that a sovereign, all-powerful God cannot or will not cause this experience to happen again if He so chooses.

Nowhere does Scripture teach that He will not do it when and if it suits His purposes. He did it in the ministry of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield (Reformed Calvinists) and John and Charles Wesley (Arminians), and He can do it today.

In accordance with Scripture

But if He does elect to do it today, it will be in accordance with Scripture as it was in the ministry of Wesley, Whitefield, and Edwards — and not like Benny Hinn, Colin Dye, Steve Hill, or Rodney Howard-Brown. These are two distinct and mutually exclusive things.

The former group was of God, and the latter group most certainly is not.

While it would be quite wrong to say that most of what is alleged to be being 'slain in the Spirit' in contemporary trends has anything at all to do with the genuine biblical article, it is also quite wrong to say that there is no genuine biblical article to begin with.

We must not confuse the biblical with the popular, neither conversely, should we reject the scriptural and authentic because of the unscriptural and counterfeit.

The clear and overwhelming majority of what goes on today clearly is not God at all. At best, most of it is a fleshly manifestation where the psychological and carnal are substituted for the biblical and spiritual.

In some cases it may even be overtly demonic. The increase of body heaviness, despite no actual increase in mass or weight, testified to by Pensacola Pastor John Kilpatrick when he went down — while a very common feature in demon possession, occult practices, and in Eastern and New Age Religion — certainly has no biblical warrant.

Because the Fruit of the Spirit is *self control* (Galatians 5:23), no valid supernatural experience, no matter how ecstatic, can justify people passed out in a day dream or screaming like maniacs on the floor. This is not what happened to John, or Daniel.

Less still does a real supernatural experience of the Lord see someone crashing down on the ground, vibrating like a victim of severe epilepsy, and resembling more the demoniac in Mark 9 before Jesus saved him, than the soul he became after he met the Lord.

A genuine falling under God's Spirit that reflects a true redemptive work of God, or revolutionizes the life of a believer in such a way as the church is blessed and encouraged, as with John in Revelation chapter one, is another matter entirely.

It is rather rare in Scripture, fairly rare in church history, and seemingly even more rare today. Perhaps, if the real experience were not being counterfeited and produced in the flesh so widely, we would see the Lord doing more of the real thing. I do not know. God is sovereign and that is up to Him.

Being discerning and judging biblically, however, is something He said is up to us.

We live in a church environment today where people are falling down left, right, and centre. There is a true version and a false version.

What predominates in contemporary circles, is plainly the false. This falling can and has caused physical injury, humiliation, and even death.

The saturation of our churches with this current brand of manipulation and deception is good for little, except undermining the credibility of the church.

I want to be open to anything of God that He desires for me. If it is of God it will be Bible based.

The only thing that God is interested in — and therefore the only thing that we should be interested in — is **not what happens when people go down, but what happens when people get back up.**

Moriel News and Items for Prayer

Israel Update

In light of the global outcry by Israel's Christian supporters against the proposed anti-evangelism legislation triggered by the actions of Morris Cerullo with the participation of Ari Sorko Ram have begun to have a political impact in Israel.

Benjamin Netanyahu has issued a statement saying that he and his government oppose the bill (although a number of cabinet ministers voted for its first reading). It is crucial that the prayers and letters to Israeli Embassies around the world continue, but we do have some hopeful signs.

MORIEL and Jacob Prasch wish to express our gratitude to all of our friends and subscribers who have prayed against this law and written letters. We must however keep up our efforts on behalf of the believers in Israel.

Ed Raberts drops dead

Ed Raberts, leader of the Toronto Experience in South Africa suddenly fell down dead leading a march in South Africa in July. While we detested his evil doctrine, we do not rejoice at his sudden death.

Pensacola Pastor forced to admit he is a False Prophet

Brownsville Assemblies of God Ministers caught lying

In early April, Brownsville AOG Pastor John Kilpatrick (the John Arnott of Pensacola) delivered a robust prophetic prediction that, within three months, God was going to bring down Hank Hannegraaff.

John Kilpatrick prefaced his remarks by stating, "The Lord gave me a word last night that I am going to share with you". He then stated, "I am going to prophesy to you as a man of God".

As the three month deadline began to draw to a close, with Hank holding John Kilpatrick accountable on the basis of Scripture that, if it failed to happen and he prophesied falsely, God commands he be rejected as a False Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:20-22), Kilpatrick's situation became desperate. He broke down, being forced to admit that he indeed is a man who arrogantly blasted off his own mouth with empty anathemas, falsely prophesying in the Name of the Lord, deceiving thousands.

Although we no longer stone false prophets as was done under the Law, the sin is no less serious and God condemns those continuing to pay attention to men like Kilpatrick as being in rebellion against the Lord (Jeremiah 5:30-31).

This was only one aspect of what is coming to light. In the original prophecy Kilpatrick claimed he had "no chip on his shoulder, or axe to grind". In his retraction he admitted that "he felt indignation and anger". Lying and contradiction seem the two most conspicuous features of Kilpatrick's *modus operandi*.

Investigations made into the claims of the Pensacola leaders, Steve Hill and John Kilpatrick, by such figures as Pentecostal Pastor, Joseph Chambers, and Baptist Minister, Dick Fisher (co-author of *The Strange World of Benny Hinn*), reveal the bogus nature of the claims that a revival is going on.

According to the Joseph Chamber's videos, the Pensacola Chief of Police and Sheriff's Department both categorically reject the statements that the police are bringing arrested juvenile delinquents to the church to get saved as utterly false; such a practice would be illegal.

False claims

Moreover, the official crime statistics provided demonstrate that crime in the Pensacola area increased by 2.9% annually since the alleged revival begun.

Claims by the Pensacola leadership about 'decreasing crime' have also been investigated by Rev. Dick Fisher (co-author of *The Strange World of Benny Hinn*) and reports them as wrong.

Similar claims of the number of campus fellowships in the school system blossoming from 3 to over 30 are also unknown to the Superintendent of Schools and Education department according to the Joseph Chambers investigation.

False testimony

On one video where a young teenage girl is vibrating like someone with very advanced Parkinson's disease, Kilpatrick seeks to authenticate what resembles an uncontrolled traumatic fit as being 'of God', validating the girl's spirituality by saying he has known her all of her life, and that she comes from a good family, with a mother who is a teacher and a father who is a physician.

In fact the girl's parents had been separated for 15 years and she grew up in a broken home.

This is precisely the kind of lying that took place to justify the excesses of Toronto, with Guy Chevreau claiming that hysterics took place in the Great Revivals with Daniel Roland, George Whitefield, and John Wesley.

What Chevreau left out is that Wesley and Whitefield stopped the hysterics as a demonic disruption.

Same as Toronto

The same kind of proven lying which characterized Toronto has become an even more blatant hallmark of Pensacola.

The worship leader and evangelist of Pensacola both had been to Holy Trinity Brompton in London during Toronto and John Kilpatrick's wife had twice been to Toronto, commending it.

Some have tried to disassociate Pensacola from Toronto, but the videos prove that the Pensacola practice of getting down and imitating animals is the same, the lack of self control (the opposite of the *Fruit of the Spirit* in Galatians 5:29) is the same, the drunken behaviour is the same.

While the Bible commands us to be sober in the last days - 2 Timothy 3:5 - John Kilpatrick states on video that his drunken state caused him to need to get dressed at 4:30 to arrive at a 7:30 Service).

While the deranged and unnatural manifestations are virtually identical between Toronto and Pensacola, the lack of sound biblical basis and the shameless lying to promote the deception are the same.

For all the talk about repentance, unsaved people seeing the mad antics do not fall and repent, they simply mock us and our beliefs.

Make disciples

Jacob Prasch was saved through a Christian Cult called 'The Children of God'. There are those who had "Born Again" experiences in the Roman Church, but realized they had to leave, as Jacob Prasch left the Children of God.

In any group or movement that presents a gospel message, some people will in fact be saved. The question of course is "what are they being saved into"?

Jesus said to make disciples, not converts, and much less lunatics.

While it is clear most of the people running forward in Pensacola are either people already claiming to be Christians or claiming to be backsliders, even those who are genuinely responding to the gospel cannot, in view of the excesses and wrong doctrines, remain in a place like Pensacola, any more than they can remain in such cults as the Roman Catholic Church, the Children of God, or the Jesus Army.

Even if some people are saved in Pensacola, just as a number were saved through the Charismatic renewal in the Roman Church, it is surely not God's will for them to be in deception.

Unsubstantiated claims

Yet the claims of astronomical numbers saved appear deceitfully exaggerated. The adult population of Pensacola is around 218,000. If 100,000 have been saved in a revival in Pensacola, we must expect that over half the adult population was born again in the last two years.

However documentary video cameras on the streets and the testimony of the pastors of other evangelical churches in Pensacola reveal no such thing has happened.

Just as no revival came to Toronto but only misguided Christians from other places chasing an experience, the same seems no less true in Pensacola.

Whether Pensacola began right, we do not know. But it is not right now. What we really have is not huge throngs being saved, but undiscerning and biblically ignorant Christians responding to altar calls and chasing a fad.

As Jesus said: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign" (Luke 11:29). The videos reveal little else but another con like Toronto.

See the Joe Chambers videos for yourself. Lose no sleep over Pensacola, the carnal excess encouraged by the leaders videos show nothing more than another deception, gift wrapped in a pack of lies and hype the same as Toronto.

Debate with Michael Brown

Jacob Prasch accepted the July 31st date to debate Messianic Toronto proponent Michael Brown.

Once Jacob had already purchased the air tickets, and arranged to be in New York for the 31st, Mr. Brown said he could not make the date and wanted it changed to a Sunday night, when few pastors or Christians could attend due to church commitment.

Brown attributed this to a "communications failure".

Hank Hannegraaff demolished Michael Brown in a debate on Christian Radio. Jacob Prasch has proposed an alternative November date in California, but at the time of publication, Mr. Brown was also running away from this proposal.

One fad stemming from Boston on the videos, features a woman claiming that God appears to her wearing a tie with a wolf embroidered on it, telling her and other women to "howl at the moon in church for Jesus," and men being walked around the church on all fours while barking wearing dog leashes, dog leads, and dog chains as the women howl at the moon. What do the unsaved think of us when they see such sick perversion that some call a revival?

David Wilkerson

In a fax to Jacob Prasch, Michael Brown claims that David Wilkerson endorses Pensacola, seeing the opposition to it as "proof" it is a real move of God.

Joseph Chambers reports that David Wilkerson, after watching the videos, contacted Rev. Chambers making it clear the videos show the difference between classical Pentecostalism and Pensacola, which David Wilkerson certainly does not endorse. David Wilkerson ordered a number of copies of the video to distribute himself.

Moriel contacted David Wilkerson's office at *Time Square Church* in Manhattan, and we were assured that David Wilkerson has not endorsed Pensacola, nor named and endorsed any other Revival. Something is clearly not kosher in Pensacola.

False Prophecies

More than once Michael Brown has been left with egg on his face. As with John Kilpatrick, Michael Brown's propensity for making false prophetic predictions in the Name of the Lord is well established and recorded on audio tape.

False predictions in the Name of the Lord were not only an aspect of why the Community Church in Long Island was forced to excommunicate him, but were also the cause of Mr Brown's problems with the Messianic Movement in North America.

Michael Brown is a proven false prophet by the definition of God's Word (Deut 18) and those paying him any heed to him are in direct rebellion against the Lord and in open rejection of the plain teaching of His Word.

The performance by Michael Brown on the official Brownsville video *The Intercessors*, where people in a drunken state were carried around the church, unable to walk, was an utterly idiotic spectacle.

Perhaps the most ludicrous feather in Michael Brown's cap was the fiasco we have on tape in Jerusalem several years ago, when he predicted a Pentecost style 'holy fire' outpouring for a specific night in the presence of Israeli Messianic leaders, including such leading scholars as Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum, who witnessed the false predictions.

Michael Brown went so far as to interpret the national disaster of forest fires destroying 20% of Israel's reforested land, as emblematic of the outpouring.

Mr Brown literally had people up the entire night waiting for the great event. True to form — nothing happened!

Benny Hinn's Necromancy & Legal Dilemma

Benny Hinn has been communing with the dead. Again. He claims to have had an encounter with the ghost of Kathryn Kuhlman.

A form of Necromancy is suggested to be a valid Christian practice by Earl Paulk. Praying to the spirits of the dead is a basic tenet of Roman Catholicism. But the Bible condemns such practices as demonic.

Meanwhile, a \$25 million law suit is pending against Hinn following the dismissal of police officers he hired as private agents for hefty sums of money, who violently assaulted Christians opposed to Hinn's money preaching and false doctrine.

The Assemblies of God Executive in Italy banned Hinn, while the Assemblies of God in Australia (whose Executive has been busy suing other Christians in secular court who challenge their antics and doctrines in rejection of 1 Corinthians 6), brought Hinn in as their featured Conference speaker.

Bible Codes?

The Moriel office and some of our branches have been deluged by letters, e-mail, faxes, and phone calls asking our opinion of Michael Drosnin's book *The Bible Codes*.

The recognition of numerical coding patterns in the Bible is not new. Ivan Panin, a Christian mathematician from Russia, began working out recurrent patterns of the alpha-numeric values of the numbers 6 and 7 from the Greek and Hebrew texts decades ago.

In the early 1980s, some independent researchers at the Technion in Haifa, Israel, began doing computer assisted number pattern recognition.

Probability determining software programmes were also once experimented with to analyse the probabilities of Wellhausen's theory of Pentateuchal sources (which determined there is a less than fifty to one chance that Genesis had more than one source author).

What is new is the more sophisticated calibre of the computer assisted research

of Genesis by Dr. Eliahu Rips and Dr. Doron Witztum, two Israeli mathematicians who did the actual initial code recognition (the initial research was not done by Michael Drosnin of the USA).

Both of these code breakers reject Drosnin's claims of being able to predict future events from biblical coding, as do a number of rabbinic scholars, and Dr. Harold Gans, one of the worlds foremost experts in mathematical cryptology, and former consultant to The Pentagon and U.S. National Security Agency.

We are forced to agree. Clearly there is a remarkable numerical coding to the bible and this has a valid and potentially valuable application in evangelical apologetics. With this we firmly agree. But the predictive hypothesis of Michael Drosnin has no value other than in the considerable royalties he has without doubt raked in from it.

Neither Jesus, the Hebrew Prophets, or the Apostles ever handled or suggested that others approach biblical prophecy in this way.

We must separate that which is biblical and what is not. Certainly symbolic numbers such as 3, 4, 6,7, 8, 12, 30, 50, 300, etc., and their multiples, have a meaning in biblical typology. This has always been known.

The scriptures also use the ancient Hebrew numerical word play of Gematria which we see evidence of in Matthew's Nativity Narrative.

In Formula Citations (Old Testament prophecies being fulfilled in the life experience of Jesus) and in Biblical Genealogies, numerical values and patterns re-enforce a textual meaning. But nowhere is Gematria used as a basis of doctrine or prophecy.

Another valid numerical codification of scripture is biblical acrostics and acrostic poetry. For example, in Psalm 119 simple biblical acrostics occur where the first letter of the first word of the first passage is the Hebrew letter *Aleph*. And the first letter of the first word of the second passage is *Beth*, etc. The disciples of Rabbi Akiva were able to memorize astronomical portions of Torah using acrostics.

We must recognize these aspects of biblical numerics which have validity. Some though, again take it further than scripture does, arriving at wild conclusions.

The allegedly secret meanings of words or phrases in Jewish mysticism are derived from understanding their numerical values. In Zohar, Kabbalistic interpretations of numbers are not uncommon, but this derives from the occult practice of numerology, which is pagan and hellenistic in origin, even though versions of it found their way into Judaism.

Such things of course are utter nonsense. In the year of the Hebrew calendar's equivalent of 1984, I was living in Israel on a kibbutz. Because the alpha-numeric make-up of that year spelled the word *tashmod*, meaning "destruction", the Hassidic Jews were getting ready to evacuate! As one might expect, nothing happened.

With the help of a computer, one might be able to 'discover' another coherent text keeping to a fixed system of numerical pattern as scripture does. (If this is so, the proposition goes back to Panin).

However, one could take almost any original Hebrew text (though not necessarily a text translated into Hebrew) and devise an alpha-numeric pattern that will reveal what are supposedly cryptic messages or predictions. In Hebrew this would be relatively simple because, unlike Greek and Latin, Hebrew has no vowels, only consonants. So it is easy to make words.

In dealing with prophecy and deeper significance in a biblical text, God's Word does not use alpha-numerics in the way Mr. Drosnin suggests.

Where did Jesus or the Apostles ever place an emphasis on such things? The Bible uses the literary genre of apocalyptic, typology and midrash to relate deeper meanings in a biblical text, but never as a basis of doctrine or specific prophecy.

This may involve some gematria or symbolic numbering, and we do not deny there is a Bible code, but this bears no relation to the predictive hypothesis in Mr. Drosnin's book.

Moreover, Mr. Drosnin is not a regenerate believer. He needs to get saved. The implication that, by knowing the specifics of end times events from Bible codes, we can rescue ourselves or alter the ultimate eschatological prophetic purposes of God is silly. God warns His people through His Word by His Spirit; by what it says, not by numerical codes. Only the Lord can save His people.

For those interested in reading the press clippings and finding access to the mathematical patterns underlying Bible coding, please consult one of the various internet sites addressing this subject.

Although Moriel has received a ton of material on this book, including the technical data, our staff and volunteers are too weighed down to spend time posting out copies all over the place.

Every month it is some other silly hoax. Last issue we were swamped with letters about a book by a crackpot in Florida who said the Bible shows Jesus would be back May 14, 1997. The issue before that it was another one claiming to have found Pharaoh's Chariots and the Ark of The Covenant. We are afraid to speculate what the next hoax may be. One thing seems to be for sure — whatever it is, it is likely to earn some huckster a lot of money and cause us a lot of unnecessary work.

Derek Prince's Endorsement of Pensacola

Moriel regards most of Derek Prince's Bible teaching as very good, and some excellent. However, Pensacola is not the first error he has made in his judgement.

Derek Prince, by his own admission, was wrong about the Heavy Shepherding Movement. He has also gone into unscriptural teachings on the subjects of curses and hyper-deliverance, and has come uncomfortably close to compromising on the Ecumenical issue of Roman Catholicism (the problem not being Catholics, but the False Gospel of Rome).

With all due respect to him, he has been seriously wrong before, and his sanctioning something does not confirm it as biblical or as being of the Lord.

Derek Prince has many true gifts. The record shows however, that discernment is not among them.

We can however endorse Derek Prince's booklet *Protection From Deception*. Sadly, we are informed that some of his branches have been pressured into discontinuing the booklet by the loonies.

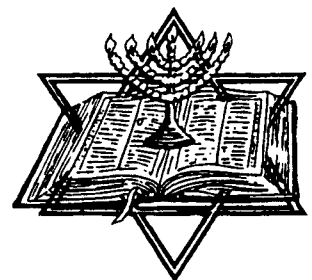
The *Moriel News and Prayer Letter* is published in Australia by:

Moriel Ministries Australia
P.O. Box 112
Trafalgar Vic 3824
Tel: (03) 5633 2300
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