

Deceiving Spirits



Protection from Deception (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

Revelation 4:6–8 depicts four living creatures that surround the throne of God. They are there as representatives of what we might call the animal kingdom: a lion, a calf, and an eagle. But none of them make noises that express their animal nature. All of them alike proclaim the holiness of God in pure and beautiful speech. It is important to understand that there is an order in God's creation. Man was created in the image and likeness of God to exercise authority over the animal kingdom. You can see that in Genesis 1:26. Man is, in fact, the highest order of the creation described in the opening chapters of Genesis. This has a bearing on the way the Holy Spirit blesses us. He uplifts those whom He blesses. He will at times cause an animal to act in some ways like a human being, but He will never degrade a human being by causing him to act like an animal.

I have a certain amount of experience in this area because I've encountered animal spirits many times in Africa. I recall one particular deliverance service that I held in Zambia with about seven thousand Africans present. When I had finished the teaching and began to command the evil spirits to manifest themselves and come out of the people, there were all sorts of animal spirits that were let loose. By animal spirits I mean evil demonic spirits that enter human beings and cause them to behave like animals.

The first thing that happened was that a man with a lion spirit tried to charge me, but someone tripped him up and he did not reach me. You need to know that the reason these Africans in this part of Africa have so many animal spirits, is because many of them are hunters of animals. They have this superstition that in order to hunt an animal successfully you have to get the spirit of the animal in you. So a man tends to have the spirit of the animal which he seeks to hunt. For instance the man who is hunting a lion will get a lion spirit. There are many others.

We dealt with spirits of wild boars that caused people to burrow in the earth with their noses like a wild boar rooting for something. Then there were many snake spirits. These were mainly in women, and when they were manifested the women were flat on their bellies, slithering around like snakes. All these I actually witnessed myself. There was one other spirit that I did not witness, but I heard about from the missionary couple who organized the meeting. Later I met the lady concerned. She was a very sweet Christian lady, a

school teacher, but her husband was an elephant hunter. When she came to the missionary couple for deliverance, they commanded the elephant spirit to come out. Immediately she dropped on her hands and knees, crawled out through an open door, put her forehead up against a small tree, and began to try to push it down. Wasn't that remarkable? Perhaps some well meaning Western Christian might have said, "Our sister is pushing a tree down for Jesus." But that was not the explanation. The elephant spirit in her was causing her to do what elephants regularly do which is push down trees with their foreheads. As soon as she was delivered from that spirit she no longer had any urge to push down trees with her forehead.

In the West we sometimes tend to speak about the people in Africa as unsophisticated and to consider ourselves more sophisticated. However, I think in this realm of animal spirits, it is we in the West who are unsophisticated and the Africans who are sophisticated. They've lived for generations with such spirits, but until the gospel came with the power of the name of Jesus and the word of God, they had no way to deal with them. Thank God that many of them now know how to deal with them.

Another example of which various reports have been given, is people behaving like dogs. I am a dog lover, but I think dogs should be kept in their rightful place. I do not believe that the Holy Spirit ever causes anybody to bark or to run around like a dog or to do the other things that dogs do. Where such manifestations of animal spirits have occurred, there are certain steps that we need to take. We cannot tolerate or encourage such manifestations, nor can we merely sweep all this under the carpet and go on as if nothing had happened. In Matthew 12:33 Jesus instructs us,

> "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."

Wherever there is bad fruit, it comes from a bad tree. It is not enough to get rid of the bad fruit, we must also cut down the bad tree that produced it. If we fail to do this, the bad tree will go on producing more bad fruit. Undoubtedly the tree that produces animal behavior of this kind is some form of occult of pagan practice.

For instance there are frequent manifestations of animal behavior in some parts of Africa and India. To cut down the tree requires that the leaders responsible identify the problem, confess it as sin, and repent of it. No where in the Bible is there any ground to suppose that God will forgive sins that we are not willing to confess. Somebody has said, "The confession must be as wide as the transgression." If leaders have tolerated these things in the presence of their people, then in the presence of their people they need to confess it as a sin and cancel it. Otherwise, if the bad tree is not cut down it will go on producing bad fruit.

In closing I want to give a little parable of my own construction which is about my relationship with my wife. In this parable my wife represents the Holy Spirit, and I represent God. Now, please understand, this is a very simple little parable and I'm fully aware that the Holy Spirit is not the wife of God, but with these cautions let me relate the parable.

A friend comes to me and says, "I saw you and your wife together on the platform the other evening and she looked so beautiful, so fresh, so full of the Holy Spirit." So I say, "Thank you. That's really how she is."

Then a little later the same man comes to me and says, "Do you know yesterday I saw your wife in a bar with a man drinking." And I say, "That was not my wife. My wife is a pure and godly woman. She does not go to bars and she does not drink with strangers. My wife was right here with me all day yesterday. Don't speak that way about my wife."

But a little later he comes to me and says, "Do you know I saw your wife yesterday sunbathing topless on the beach." Then I get really angry. I say to him, "My wife was nowhere near the beach yesterday and she would never expose herself like that. If you want to remain my friend, you've got to come to the place where you don't identify that loose, immoral woman as my wife, because that's an insult to her and to me. If you want to remain my friend, you've got to change the way you speak about my wife."

The application, of course, is this. If you want to remain a friend of God, you cannot afford to identify the Holy Spirit as something that is loose, or immoral, or ugly, or unholy, because that angers God intensely.

Now we come to one final Scripture which is Matthew 12:31–32. Jesus says,

> "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit [the Holy Spirit] will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

That is a very solemn and frightening warning. We are warned by Jesus to be very, very careful how we speak about the Holy Spirit, how we represent the Holy Spirit. Jesus uses the word “blasphemy” and I decided to look it up in my big Greek lexicon. The primary meaning of to blaspheme is given in the lexicon as this, to speak lightly or amiss of sacred things. So when you speak lightly or amiss concerning the Holy Spirit or misrepresent the character of the Holy Spirit by definition, you are close to blaspheming. If you have ever done that, or are prone to do it, or been associated with those who do it, I want to offer you some sincere advice. You need to repent. You need to settle that matter once and for all with God, and never again be guilty of misrepresenting God’s Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit is holy and He is God.

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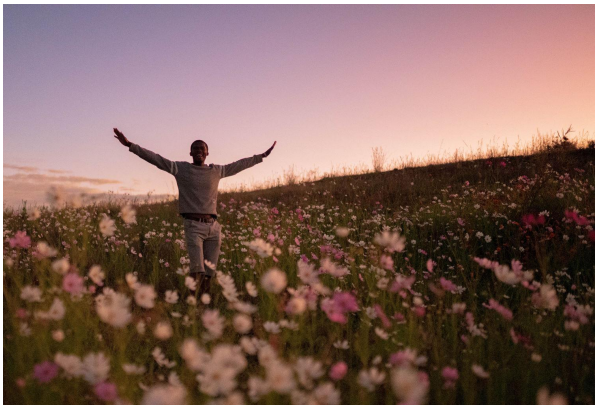
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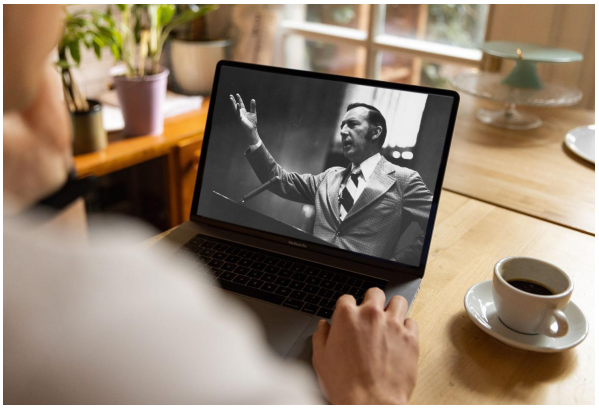
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