“You Have to Cut the Cord to Disconnect from Reiki Energy”

You can’t disconnect from the Reiki energy unless you cut the cord linking you to the source of it.

Would you please elaborate on what you mean?

Sue Bohlin

Hi Sue, I would tell you my story but I know from experience that because of your faith you wouldn’t believe in my words. I’ll go as far to say is that I’m a Christian too and I became attuned to Reiki a decade ago and I never had peace with it and I prayed a lot to be released from it. I think that prayer can release someone from Reiki but if it doesn’t please remember this to help someone disconnect from it, a person is corded to a spiritual being from the back of the neck at the base of the skull. You must either pray and ask this spirit being to release them or imagine yourself cutting the cord that runs out of that area and ask Jesus to seal it shut.

Thank you so much for elaborating! This is not the first time I’ve heard this about the spiritual connection to demons from Reiki and other forms of accessing the energy of the spirit realm.

I would suggest that it doesn’t do any good to ask a demon to release anyone; but in Jesus’ name we can break the connection because His power is the strongest in the universe, and as believers we have the authority over the demonic realm (because He deputized us with His authority before leaving earth: Luke 9:1, 10:19).

Thank you so much for your insight! I am glad you walk in spiritual freedom today.

Sue

Hi Sue, I never said that Reiki was demonic; in fact I don't think they are demons, I think they are spirit beings from a different belief system, but I wouldn't go as far as to say they are demonic. The reason I wanted to be disconnected from the Reiki started because I could always feel the energy running through me and I didn't like it and I didn't want to be corded to a spirit being not of my faith.

I'm curious, _____ . . . Do you believe Jesus is the only way to God? Do you believe Christianity is true?

Hi Sue, yes I do believe that Jesus is Lord and he is my Saviour. As far as people who don't follow the Christian path and what happens to them when they die I'll leave the fate of the hundreds of thousands that died today and die daily all over this world in the hands of God for I believe He is pure love and if I didn't believe that I'd be an atheist. Take care.

Praise God! I am so glad to hear you have put your trust in the Lord Jesus! But if He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me," then His way is the only true and right way, and all other "different belief systems," as you put it, are wrong. (They might and do have nuggets of truth in them, but their basic core beliefs and values and teachings are wrong. They do not lead people to eternal life through Jesus Christ.)

I just wanted to respectfully set the record straight, sister _____, that there are no legitimate spirit beings from different belief systems which are legitimate alternatives to Christianity. The Christian worldview—seeing reality as God has revealed it through the Bible—is the only one that's accurate. So that means that the spirit beings are either angels or demons (some of which deceitfully present themselves as angels, by the way). According to the Bible, there are no

other choices. Which is why, filtering Reiki and other experiences like that through the grid of scripture, we can (and should, I believe) call these spirit beings demons.

I know this is more than you bargained for when you wrote, but Probe Ministries is all about helping people think Biblically, and I wanted to offer this perspective in hopes that, as iron sharpens iron, I can help shape the way you think to help bring it into alignment with the Bible.

The Lord bless you and keep you today!

Sue

"Is Gwen Shamblin's (Weigh Down Workshop) Remnant Fellowship a Cult?"

A young couple that I know have gotten involved in a "church" called Remnant Fellowship that was founded by Gwen Shamblin. Could you tell me if this is a cult and give me more information about it?

I've just had a MOST enlightening trip through some internet web pages to help me answer your question. With some heartbreak I have to agree that Remnant Fellowship is, indeed, a cult. I am a former Weigh Down Workshop person, and it wasn't until after I stopped doing Weigh Down that I was able to figure out what bothered me about Gwen's teachings. Unorthodoxy—and a complete misunderstanding about the nature of God. Especially about the Lord Jesus!

A man who almost joined part of the Remnant Fellowship tells his story here:
http://tinyurl.com/an37n

I couldn't stop reading. Sadly, it was like watching a (theological) train wreck happen.

Another excellent article from former Remnant Fellowship members can be found here:
http://www.spiritwatch.org/remnantwatch.htm

A young lady who left the RF after experiencing its abuses has written her testimony here:
http://www.hkpatterson.com/testimony.htm

Christian Research Institute also has an article on Gwen, Weigh Down Workshop, and her theology: Gwen Shamblin: Weighed and Found Wanting. Don & Joy Veinot, the authors of this article, have researched and written four other MCOI Journal articles on Gwen Shamblin at Midwest Christian Outreach. These articles are available on their website to be read online or printed off; the direct link to the most recent article written in 2008 is "The Pied Piper Is Shamblin" at www.midwestoutreach.org/Pdf%20Journals/2008/Spring_Summer_2008.pdf.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

"You Got Christian Science

Wrong”

I have read your thoughts about the religion Christian Science. Although you have researched the religion quite well it seems, to me, that your interpretation is wrong.

Christian Science is a religion based out of love for the lord God. Just like other Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religions.

What does the fine detail of those religions matter if they are based on the teachings of God. What does it matter how they choose to praise God and live the life they think they should. As long as it does not harm any person, and as I speak for my religion, Christian Science, it certainly does not.

I follow the teaching of Jesus Christ. I live my life for God each day. Who are you to judge the religion in which I choose to believe in? Jesus teaches us to follow the Lord and live our life in his Love. Christian Science has taught me to follow the Lord and live my life in his Love. Christian Science is about understanding that God has made you in his image and likeness (as it says in the bible).

I believe that everyone is entitled to an opinon, but I believe your writtings to be criticizing the lives of others, in which only God can judge.

Our analysis of Christian Science isn’t about criticizing the lives of others. It is about criticizing the LIES which are manifested in this particular set of teachings. Christian Science is based on the non-biblical worldview of Gnosticism, not the teachings of God revealed in the Bible. Your experience with it may be different from what you read in our article, but we analyze the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy, not individuals’ experiences.

The “fine detail” of different religions is what determines what is true and what is false. Our eternity depends on what

we believe; if we put our trust in what is false, we will remain alienated from God forever. I respectfully suggest you listen closely to what is said at your church about sin and what to do with the sin problem that separates us from God. If what is taught differs from what God has clearly said in His word—that the only solution to sin is to trust in Jesus' death on the cross which paid for that sin—then it is not true and is giving people hope that is groundless. That is very dangerous.

Thank you for writing. I send this with a prayer that, because you truly seek to know God, He will show you what is true and what isn't. You say you follow the teaching of Jesus. But He didn't say to follow His teachings. He said to follow HIM. He said He was the way, the truth and the life, not the way-shower. The epistles explain that Jesus actually lives inside the Christ-follower who has put his trust in the crucified, risen Lord. Then Jesus Christ lives His life through us, the way light shines through a window. That is very different from any other religion—including Christian Science. I pray your eyes will be opened and you will see what's true. I am so glad you wrote.

Sue Bohlin

Posted 2008

"Do Our Pets Go to Heaven?"

I have a dog that I love very much. She is starting to get old and will only be with me a few more years. Can you tell me if our pets that we love and care about with all our hearts will be with us in heaven?

All we have to go on is what God has revealed to us in His word. According to what the Bible says, there is no indication that our pets will join us in heaven. (However, this does not rule out the possibility; it's just that the Bible is silent on this issue.) Animals are God's creation, but they are not made in His image as human beings are. Animals have bodies and we can say that some are souls (Gen. 1:21 and 24 use the word for "soul" [*nephesh*] to describe the land creatures), but soul in that context means "a breathing creature." Because animals are not made in the image of God, they do not have a spirit where God indwells like humans do. (Neither do angels, by the way.) As far as I can tell from scripture, it is this God-imaging spirit-soul that lives forever.

Revelation 19 does include a vision of the Lord Jesus on a white horse, along with the armies of heaven on white horses, but at this point we can't know if the horses are symbolic or not. And that would be a very tenuous (and unsupportable) connection to conclude that pets go to heaven.

I should tell you that this is not a hill I'm willing to die on. If I'm wrong, that is perfectly okay with me. <smile> Perhaps there is a spiritual parallel to *The Velveteen Rabbit* where pets who are loved by people are made "real" in a forever sense. But if it turns out that pets will be in heaven after all, it will be by God's grace, because their presence can somehow add to God's glory and our worship. There is no loss in heaven, so if they are not, then we will be so joy-soaked and absorbed in the presence of God that we won't notice or be troubled by their absence.

Sue Bohlin

“Was Man Created Twice, in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2?”

Why does it seem like man was created twice? Once in Genesis 1:27 and a second time in 2:7.

My own view is this. Genesis 1 is an overview of the entire creation event. Genesis 2 is a more detailed and specific description of God’s creation of mankind. Thus, whereas Genesis 1 mentions the creation of man only briefly, Genesis 2 goes into significantly more detail. The two accounts are not contradictory, but complementary. Genesis 2 simply elaborates on the creation of man in particular.

An excellent website that deals with all sorts of biblical and theological issues is The Biblical Studies Foundation at www.netbible.com/index.htm. I use this site quite often and regularly recommend it to others as well.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“Was Isaiah Written by Two Authors?”

I was told in an Old Testament class that Isaiah was written by two authors. Is this true and if it is does that change the validity of the prophecies in the book?

Also, I have always believed that the gospels were found in different places but were in harmony. Is this true or what were the origins of the gospels?

I am a Christian but have been beating myself up trying to find answers to all of these questions I have.

Thanks for writing Probe Ministries. It is a very common view among moderate to liberal biblical scholars that Isaiah had two authors. Indeed, some even believe that there were three (or more) authors of this book. A disbelief in the validity of predictive prophecy may well be one of the reasons for adopting this view. However, I personally am persuaded that this view is incorrect. One conservative scholar makes the following points:

1. There is predictive prophecy in Isaiah 1-39 (often attributed to the "first" Isaiah who lived prior to the Babylonian Captivity). Thus, one does not escape predictive prophecy simply by asserting that chapters 40-66 were written later in history by another author. For instance, Isaiah 7:16, 8:4 and others are prophecies which were fulfilled shortly after they were given, whereas 9:1-2 is a prophecy about the coming of Messiah (fulfilled hundreds of years after it was given). Such examples could be multiplied.

2. Although there are some differences in the literary style of chapters 1-39 and 40-66, this does not at all mean that the entire book could not have been written by one person. After all, if such standards were applied to the works of Shakespeare or Milton, we would have to deny that they wrote much of what is attributed to them. Clearly, the same author can make use of diverse literary forms.

3. There are also similarities between both sections of Isaiah. For instance, compare 11:6-9 (allegedly by first Isaiah) with 65:25 (allegedly by second Isaiah). Other passages could be mentioned. Such passages argue as

persuasively for a single author as any differences might argue for two authors.

4. Most importantly (in my view) is the New Testament use of Isaiah. First, quotations from chapters 40-66 (allegedly from "second" Isaiah) are simply attributed to Isaiah (see Matthew 3:3 and Acts 8:28-33 for just two examples). Second, in John 12:37-41, there are quotations from Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10, and both are attributed to the same Isaiah who saw the glory of the Lord (John 12:41).

Thus, I think there are good reasons for believing that there was only one author of the book of Isaiah.

Concerning the Gospels, I will certainly admit that there are some difficulties in harmonizing them on all points. However, I do think it's possible to harmonize them in large part. Also, it's important to remember that sometimes problems are resolved with the discovery of new data from archaeology, history and the like. This has happened many times in the past and will likely happen more in the future.

I take the traditional view on the origins of the Gospels. Namely, that Matthew and John were written by the apostles of those names, that Mark was written with eyewitness testimony supplied by the Apostle Peter, and that Luke was written by the physician, who thoroughly researched the subject before writing (see Luke 1:1-4). All of the Gospels were written in the first century, probably between the dates of the mid-50's to early 60's for Mark and the 90's for John.

Hope this information helps put your mind at ease a bit.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“What About the Witch of Endor Calling Up Samuel’s Spirit?”

I just read the Animism article. It states that Christianity specifically teaches against the existence of ghosts (spirits of dead people) in the world, and that dead people cannot communicate with the living and vice versa. What about the passage in I Samuel 28 with Saul and the witch of Endor? She calls up Samuel’s spirit to communicate with Saul.

The incidence in 1 Samuel 28 is one of two exceptions to the “no crossing over” boundaries in scripture, both highly supernatural miracles. The witch of Endor had no power to truly conjure up the spirits of dead people; that’s why she screamed in terror when Samuel actually appeared. It was God at work, not the witch or even the departed prophet responding to the summons. Samuel gave the word of the Lord to Saul, and his prophecy was fulfilled shortly thereafter.

The other miracle was when Moses and Elijah appeared along with a transfigured Christ to Peter, James and John (Matt. 17). The disciples did not summon the spirits of these dead saints; they were sent by the Father (probably to encourage the Lord Jesus).

The fact that there are two biblical exceptions, both of which required divine intervention to send departed spirits into this world, does not affect the truth that there is a “great gulf fixed” between the living and the dead (Luke 16:26).

That’s the point of miracles: they are God-powered exceptions.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Is There a Specific Reference to Heaven or Hell in the OT?”

Is there any specific reference to Heaven or Hell in the Old Testament or did this notion emerge solely as a result of the Persians’ Zoroastrian influence on the Jews?

The OT contains numerous references to heaven. Many of these refer to the physical heavens (Gen. 1:1, Psalm 19:1, etc.). Nevertheless, there do also seem to be a number of references to heaven as the dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:30, Psalm 11:4, etc.).

As for the term “hell,” it depends on which English translation you consult. The KJV, for instance, translates the Hebrew term “Sheol” as “hell.” The NASB, on the other hand, simply renders this term “Sheol.” The NIV translates this term in a variety of ways: the grave, death, the depths, etc., depending on the context. Strictly speaking, sheol (the Hebrew term) does not refer to hell in my judgment. It might refer to Hades (i.e., a temporary place of punishment for the unrighteous dead between death and resurrection) in some contexts. But hell, as I understand it, is properly understood as the second death, the Lake of Fire, the place of eternal

punishment. And this is not true of either Sheol or Hades (see Revelation 20:13-15). Thus, the Hebrew term Sheol can, in certain contexts, be used in a manner similar to the NT term Hades (e.g. Job 26:6; etc.), but I personally don't think it refers to hell (strictly speaking).

I do not think it's necessary to suppose that Zoroastrianism was solely responsible for the NT doctrines of heaven and hell. In the first place, the OT does refer to heaven as the dwelling place of God, distinct from the physical universe. For another, the OT concept of Sheol is often used to refer to the place of the dead (i.e., the place of the dead between death and resurrection). This actually parallels the NT doctrines of Abraham's Bosom or Paradise and Hades (see Luke 16:19-31). In the OT, Sheol was apparently a place for both the righteous and unrighteous dead. It may have been a place of rest for the righteous and a place of torment for the unrighteous. However, in the course of progressive revelation, we have been given a clearer vision of the afterlife (including the eternal state) in the NT. Thus, I think this can be easily explained in terms of progressive revelation, rather than as borrowing from Zoroastrianism.

In case you're interested, I have written a previous reply about Zoroastrianism. Although this reply is attempting to answer some questions other than what you've asked about, it may nonetheless be of benefit to you.

I hope this helps.

Sincerely in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“Trusting God a Joke Since Wicked Prosper, Godly Suffer”

I write to you feeling perturbed about God. At times I really wonder the question of His existence.

I would appreciate if you could enlighten me in the area of trusting in God. I find it hard to trust Him nowadays. I trust in Him to provide financially, but instead I receive more financial problems. I see sinners who are ruthless and despicable earning tons of money, curse Him with the very breath He gave them. What a joke! His children suffered in hunger and He dared to claim that He will not allowed the righteous to suffer hunger. Sometimes when I see how He blessed those rogues, I told myself where is His logic? Of course He hopes that by showing mercy, these crooks will repent, then how about His children who are suffering hunger? You mean God enjoys people cursing Him so that He could bless them? Then I think His children will begin to curse and swear at Him.

I poured my hope on Him in several areas of my life. He said that whoever called upon the name of the Lord shall not be put to shame. I trusted Him time and time again in some areas of my life such as my career, my family problems etc. But none of them came true for me. Instead my feeling right now that He is a cheat and I feel more ashamed trusting Him. What a joke!

I thought to myself, if He cannot even keep up His promise as Jehovah Jireh, our providence, that can meet our needs on earth, how can we trust Him for our salvation?

My pastor emphasized a lot on His grace and prosperity. I believe wholeheartedly but now I feel very cheated by such messages. I felt worse than Job, he suffered but at least God restored him eventually. I felt like a fool believing in a

book that was claimed to be written by Him.

Jesus came to give us life so that we can have life more abundantly. Now instead of having life more abundantly, I guess it should be read as a bums life. A life that is cheap and useless comparable to the fate of a bum.

I winced when I read that your pastor emphasizes prosperity. If it's the same kind of prosperity theology that some preach here in the U.S. that God wants to lavish good stuff on His kids, including health and lots of money and whatever our hearts desire then no wonder you are disillusioned with Him. We believe this is a false gospel and it leads believers to stumble because it teaches a lie about God.

God is concerned about His glory, and about us having a close, intimate relationship with Him (the second produces the first). Making us or keeping us comfortable usually doesn't result in God getting the glory or in a close, dependent relationship with Him, because it's so easy to cherish the gifts instead of the giver.

So, because of false teaching, it is quite possible that you had unrealistic expectations of a God who is not the same God of the scriptures a God who is holy, just, righteous, sovereign, and not at all committed to jumping through our hoops. And then you blame God for not being faithful or good, correct?

But because God IS good and because He loves us so much, He only acts in our best interests. If our prayers are for things that are not in our best interest, He will not grant our requests (or our demands). Which is why I think Philippians 4:6-7 is so incredibly important: God wants us to let our requests be made known to Him *with thanksgiving.* However He chooses to answer, when we give thanks, we are relinquishing our illusion of control and expressing our belief that He is sovereign and He knows what He's doing.

I learned this important (and now precious to me) lesson the hard way when He kept saying "no" to the huge prayer of my heart for physical healing. I invite you to read my story, How to Handle the Things You Hate But Can't Change.

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin

[Editor's Note: The inquirer shares the frustrations of the psalmists in seeing the rich and ruthless get off apparently scot-free, seemingly unnoticed by a God who promises justice and blessings. This quandary is nothing new, but it is significant that a sovereign God would allow it into the Scriptures it would make God look bad if there were no bigger, truer picture as explained briefly above. See for reference: Psalm 73: 2-12.

Regarding the inquirer's reference to Psalm 37: 25-2 about the righteous never being forsaken or their children begging for bread, *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. and others, explains, "David must surely have seen good people in great difficulties! But this misses the psalmist's point. He did not question that the righteous may be temporarily forsaken, needy and poor. Rather, he observed that nowhere can it be shown that the righteous have experienced continued desertion and destitution…. The point is this: in the long haul, God does not forsake his own whether they have little or much; their children will be blessed! (pages 267-268)." *Hard Sayings of the Bible* also addresses the issues of why the godly so frequently suffer and the ungodly seem so prosperous related to Psalm 73. For another Probe perspective on how Psalm 73 helps us deal with the problem of evil, please see Dr. Ray Bohlin's article "Where Was God on September 11?"]

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“Spanish Language Immersion Programs in Public Schools?”

Should we be concerned about Spanish language immersion programs in public schools? Our system just started one, offering Spanish-only kindergarten and first grade classes. Am I just an alarmist or is this just another ploy to undermine our sovereignty?

Thank you for your e-mail. I have noticed that some states (like North Carolina) are implementing a Spanish language immersion program like Los Puentes. On its face, it is probably a good idea since children learn language so much easier when they are younger. So I don’t think there is anything to be concerned about English-speaking students learning Spanish at a young age.

That being said, there are concerns people have raised about bilingual education that does not put Spanish speaking kids into the mainstream. Recently I had a guest on my radio program who was responsible for some of this (in particular he was the reason all ballots are in both English and Spanish).

Also, the Rand Corporation released a study that documented the costs for language assistance instruction programs. They found that the total per pupil costs was estimated to be in the range of $460 to $1,600 in 2007 dollars. The total cost was $3.9 billion.

Bilingual education has been expensive, and it doesn’t seem to help Spanish-speaking students. It tends to isolate them rather than integrate them.

Thanks for writing.

Kerby Anderson

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