



Ignore the Visible and focus on the *Invisible!*

How many of you know what the Stealth Bomber is? (*See an image in the header.*) A

Stealth Bomber is an airplane that was secretly commissioned in the early 1980's by the U.S. Department of Defense. The main characteristic of that airplane is that it cannot be detected by any known radar system. Since the airplane is invisible it presents a real threat to every enemy of the United States of America! Do you realize that ***you have stealth weapons*** in your spiritual arsenal?

Careful study shows that David utilized a stealth weapon, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Ps 27:13). Exactly what did he mean by that statement? And where is the stealth weaponry? In essence, David used his heart to peer into the spirit realm first. When he first saw the goodness of the Almighty in his heart then the goodness manifest itself in the natural world! David first believed in something that was invisible and then he saw it. God gives us hope and visions in our heart, "The ***preparations of the heart in man***, and ***the answer of the tongue***, is from the LORD" (Prov 16:1).

Abraham believed in his heart that the promises that God had given to him would come to pass; he saw something that was only visible in the spirit, "Who against hope ***believed in hope***, that he might become the father of many nations; ***according to that which was spoken***, So shall thy seed be" (Rom 4:18). Abraham believed in his heart first and only then did he see a manifestation.

Humanity has learned well from the god of this world who inspired the saying, "Seeing is believing!" You can observe this "seeing is believing" concept through the reaction of Jesus' mockers while he was on the cross, "likewise also the chief priests ***mocking*** said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, ***that we may see and believe***" (Mark 15:31-32)! Here we can actually observe the belief system, "seeing is believing," in action. This belief system was fostered by the devil. However, just like almost everything else we have learned through the Word, the Bible teaches the exact opposite. The Bible teaches that, "***Believing is seeing!***" Notice the words that Jesus used in this precise context, "***Thomas***, because thou hast *seen me*, thou hast believed: ***blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed***" (John 20:29). David was more closely associated with those that "believe" and then "see;" he was one of those of which Jesus spoke who, "***have not seen, and yet have believed***"!

There was a certain nobleman who came to Jesus one day and asked that Jesus heal his son, "Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye ***see signs and wonders***, ye will ***not believe.***" Through



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these words, Jesus was actually instructing the crowd that they must believe even when they did not see evidence in the natural, “Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.

And ***the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him***, and he went his way” (John 4:50). The next day the man met his servant on the road and discovered that the boy was healed the moment that he first believed! This man learned the important spirit lesson of believing first and then seeing.

The devil appeared unto the woman and said, “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then ***your eyes shall be opened***, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Gen 3:5). Obviously, Adam and Eve had perfect vision prior to satan’s ill conceived proposition. Since they already had physical eyesight, what does it mean to have ones eyes open? Adam and Eve bought into satan’s misleading sales pitch, “***your eyes shall be opened***, and ***ye shall be as gods***” (Gen 3:5)! Instead of gaining in the transaction, they were reduced to a lack of spirit realm comprehension! They were fooled into trying to grasp for what they already possessed; God had already said, “Let us make man ***in our image, after our likeness***” (Gen 1:26). --- If you would like to know more about the things that Adam and Eve lost at the fall of man, please get the Bible Study entitled, “*Spiritual Perception.*” You may obtain a copy from the World Wide Web at: <http://www.rivkah.org>.

One of the best examples of what man lost during the fall in the garden is expressed in the story of Elisha and his servant, “And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, ***open his eyes***, that he may see. And ***the LORD opened the eyes of the young man***; and he ***saw***: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha” (2 Kings 6:17). Obviously, the opening of his servant’s eyes produced vision into the spirit realm. That depth of vision was not perceptible to the natural human eyes! We will study another more compelling episode in the life of Elisha a little later.

When Adam was created, he had spirit realm perception; however, he essentially lost his spirit realm eyesight! Since Jesus’ earthly ministry, regenerate humanity can return to the supernatural realm and begin to perceive things in the spirit. The person born of the spirit has the capacity to move into that higher plane of perception. --- If you are not already sure, it is recommended that you learn more about man’s relative relationship with respect to the spirit realm. Please obtain the Rivkah Ministries Bible Study entitled, “*The Angelic Realm.*” You may obtain a copy from the World Wide Web at: <http://www.rivkah.org>.

The spirit led Christian will continually operate at that higher level of spirit realm perception! We can learn more regarding the importance of spirit realm perception by studying the passage concerning the “triumphal entry.” One would expect that Jesus’ “triumphal entry” would have been deeply satisfying to Him; after all, He was finally being recognized as the Messiah. Yet notice Jesus’ actual reaction, “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and ***wept over it***” (Luke 19:41). We may immediately wonder, “Why, especially at this glorious triumphal moment did Jesus weep?” The next verse gives us the incredible answer, “Saying, ***If thou hadst known*** (that is, if they had spirit realm perception), even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now ***they are hid from thine eyes*** (They condemned themselves to suffer a continued absence of spirit realm perception, verse 44 tells us why.). For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon



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another; *because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation*” (Luke 19:42-44). They continued in their spirit realm blindness because they did not recognize their day of

visitation by the Messiah!

So, what exactly is Spirit realm Perception? In simple terms, “spirit realm perception” is to look beyond the natural and see into the spirit realm. As we have learned, humans experience two kinds of perception: (1) spirit realm and (2) natural. Obviously, the highest form of perception is “spirit realm” because it supernaturally imparts understanding. Adam and Eve initially had spirit realm perception until they fell. We know this because when they were created they immediately knew how to walk, talk etc. They gained their understanding through the spirit realm. After we were born we developed by learning to operate in natural things. Our period of development obviously took a great deal longer than it did in Adam; over years, we had to learn how to walk and talk and everything else.

Since spirit realm perception was lost through Adam, when Jesus came to the earth He restored that perception. Here is an example of His operation in spirit perception, “They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night *they caught nothing*. 4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6 And he said unto them, ***Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find*** (*Jesus looked into the spirit realm and supernaturally knew where the fish would be*). They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes” (John 21:3-6). In this Bible Study we will learn how Jesus knew that there would be fish on the right side of the ship!

Another noticeable example of Jesus operating in spirit perception is when He told Peter to get money from the mouth of a fish, “go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and ***when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money***: that take, and give unto them for me and thee” (Matt 17:27). Jesus perceived these things through supernatural vision. How did he do that? Can we really learn? Are there Biblical examples of spirit realm perception?



God revealed to the prophet Samuel a great deal concerning spirit realm perception, “But the LORD said unto Samuel, ***Look not on his countenance***, (*pay no attention to the outward appearance*) or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for ***the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart*** (*Spiritual perception is obtained by looking at the unseen things of the heart.*)” (1 Sam 16:7). Jesus continually walked in God’s form of perception, “The Son can do nothing



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of himself, but what he seeth the Father do” (John 5:19); for this reason, He always saw things through spirit preception!

The Bible does teach that while invisible things are unseen, yet they are perceptible to a human being, “For *the invisible things* of him from the creation of the world are *clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*, even his eternal power and Godhead” (Rom 1:20). Using this passage as a proof text, I can tell you that since the United States of America has stealth weapons available in its arsenal, so do we Christians. The scripture says, “*the invisible things* of him from the creation of the world are *clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made;*” therefore, since I know that there are airplanes which are invisible; I can understand that invisible weapons in the spirit realm are also avialiable!

Indeed, God is invisible! Paul wrote to Timothy, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, *invisible*, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim 1:17). Since God is invisible that means that the natural man cannot see Him, “the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; *whom no man hath seen, nor can see*” (1 Tim 6:15-16). Obviously Paul was writing about Jesus, “Who is the image of *the invisible God*, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, *visible and invisible*, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col 1:15-17). The LORD Jesus is the author of all visible and invisible things!

The natural man cannot see God; however, the man led by the spirit does have the ability to see the invisible! Notice Moses’ experience in this regard, “By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible” (Heb 11:27). This is not only true of Moses; notice that Abraham saw the crucifixion by looking into the spirit realm, “Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD *it shall be seen*” (Gen 22:14). Abraham’s grandson likewise saw invisible things, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men . . . And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Gen 32:28-30)! These are all examples of patriarchs who looked into the spirit realm and perceived things of the spirit.

However, the natural man does not have that capacity to see into the spirit realm, “For since the beginning of the world *men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen*” (Isa 64:4). Jesus said, “Therefore speak I to them in parables: because *they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand*. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and *seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive*” (Matt 13:13-14). Truly God remains invisible to the natural man, “whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him” (1 John 3:6).

People often mistake Pauls words, “*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man*, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Cor 2:9). Some error with this passage because they assume that since “eye has not *seen*, nor ear heard,” that nobody knows what God has prepared. The source of their error is that they fail to continue with the very next verse which says, “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor 2:10). For



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those who have the ears to hear, Paul continues with that whole concept, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, (*human reasoning*) but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:11-16)!

Isaiah the prophet saw the day when the natural man would be given the Holy Spirit and would then begin to see the light of God, “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” (Isa 9:2). Man’s ways brought on the great darkness, “For, behold, the *darkness shall cover the earth*, and *gross darkness* the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and *his glory shall be seen upon thee*. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to *thy light*, and kings to the brightness of *thy rising*” (Isa 60:2-3). This passage teaches that very glory of God will begin to be perceptible on those of us who have the Holy Spirit of God!

Jesus tried to explain to the people of His time that He operated in the spirit; however since they were blind they could not understand Him. Like Jesus, all of His spirit led disciples are removed from the category of spiritually blinded humanity. Instead He said of them, “All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. 23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: 24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them*” (Luke 10:22-24). You must believe that Christians of this age see more profoundly into the spirit realm than even did the prophets of old!

Even the Father is perceptible to us, “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*” (John 14:7-9). Next Jesus spoke to Thomas regarding our generation, “*because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*” (John 20:29). For this very reason Peter and John said, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). Peter had seen the LORD however, he knew that he was writing to a people that had never physically seen Him, therefore he wrote, “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now *ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice* with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you” (1 Peter 1:8-10).



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What makes the individual born of the spirit different from the natural man? Paul claims that it is our spirit realm vision, “For ***we walk by faith, not by sight***” (2 Cor 5:7).

Walking by faith is walking in spirit realm perception! Walking by sight is the way of the natural man.

Obviously, our human reasoning (*using natural vision*) can get us into a great deal trouble! Jesus was actually disappointed in his disciples because of their human reasoning (*instead of using spirit realm vision*). Jesus warned them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, “And ***they reasoned among themselves***, saying, It is because we have no bread. 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, ***Why reason ye***, because ye have no bread? ***perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?*** 19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?” (Mark 8:16-19). In essence, Jesus’ disciples reacted by looking at the things that were *seen*. They reasoned, “It is because we have no bread?” Their focus on visible things kept them from seeing the invisible! So how can we see the invisible? Are there any Scriptures that teach us how to peer into the spirit realm and see the invisible? YES!

Paul taught, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While ***we look not at the things which are seen***, but at ***the things which are not seen***: for ***the things which are seen are temporal***; but ***the things which are not seen are eternal***” (2 Cor 4:17-18). You might say, “Great, what exactly did Paul mean by those words?” The remainder of this study will primarily focus on the meaning of that very verse!

Paul said rather nonchalantly, “***While we look not at the things which are seen***.” His clear implication is that we need to look at the things that are invisible! Now here is a real paradox for you; how can we ***look at*** things, which are not *seen* (*Essentially, he means the invisible!*)? Was Paul intending his words to be taken literally or figuratively; what on earth did he mean? Essentially, Paul was talking about spiritual perception!

All of God’s laws are *unseen* because they operate by spiritual forces. You do not observe the law of gravity; however, you experience the effects of gravity! You do not observe the law of electricity; however, you experience the effects of electricity! You do not observe the law of magnetism; however, you experience the effects of magnetism! Paul made reference to another one of God’s invisible laws, “. . . but by the ***law of faith***” (Rom 3:27). You do not observe the law of faith; however, you definitely do experience the effects of faith!



In the context of this Bible Study and now that we understand more about the realm of the *unseen*, let’s continue with our study from the book of 2nd Corinthians. It may be helpful for you to turn to that passage and follow along in your Bible, “For our ***light affliction***, which is but for a moment, ***worketh*** for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:17). Paul is describing that we experience in this life a “light affliction.” One of the effects of light affliction can be that it works in us a great weight of glory! However, we must continue with verse 18 “***While we look not at the things which are seen***.” In other words, we must be looking at (*meaning to be focused upon*) the *unseen* realm in order to receive the great weight of glory! It follows that if we focus upon the *seen* (*or natural realm*) we will



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not receive the great weight of glory; even though we may be afflicted! Essentially, the **law of faith** works only while we focus on things which are **not seen!** Using our eye of faith we must look at things which are not *seen!* By the same token, we must realize that Paul did not stop at the idea, “light affliction . . . worketh a far exceeding weight of glory!” Instead, he said that, “light affliction . . . worketh a far exceeding weight of glory; **While we look not at the things which are seen.**” Essentially, the **Law of Faith** works only for those who are continually focusing on the *unseen*. Paul asked, “Do ye look on things **after the outward appearance?**” (2 Cor 10:7). You need to realize that it is actually the looking at the *unseen* or our focus on the supernatural that brings the “weight of glory.” It is not the affliction, as some mistakenly believe which brings the “weight of glory!”

Are you experiencing any problems or bad conditions in the natural realm? If you do then you must forget about the problem that is visible to your eyes, and focus on the realm of the *unseen!* The eye of faith must first see the answer to every problem. You might say, “This is unreasonable; even when I see through the eye of faith that my checkbook shows a good balance; or, I see through the eye of faith that my body is healthy; when I get back to the real world these problems persist! The answer to your situation is that you are looking at a temporary condition, “for the things which are *seen* are **temporal** (*Meaning temporary or subject to change!*)” (2 Cor 4:18). As long as you focus on the temporary you cannot see the eternal; instead our passage teaches, “**we look not at the things which are seen,**” “look not” means you need to keep your focus on the *unseen!* We will either allow our mind to agree with the lying physical world or we will allow our mind to agree with the truthful Word of God! The physical or (*world's system*) fashions those things that we naturally see! Yes they are real; however and more importantly, they are subject to change, “the things which are *seen* are **temporal!**”

The world of the *seen* is fashioned by and exists because of forces in the realm of the *unseen*, “**things which are seen** were not made of **things which do appear**” (Heb 11:1-3)! In other words, the invisible realm forms and fashions what we see in the visible. The temporal (*subject to change*), “things which are *seen*,” are subject to the realm of the *unseen!* The point is that the spirit world upholds the entire natural world! Since the Word of God is truth, “ye received it not as the word of men, **but as it is in truth**, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thess 2:13). That passage further teaches that the Word of God is supposed to be working in those of us that believe! Therefore, since the Word of God is truth and is supposed to be working in us; it follows that we have the power through the Word of God to change the visible world to conform to the world described by God’s word! Read and reread that last sentence until you understand and completely agree with it!

If we agree with the natural world in the fashion that it is presented to us then we will obviously experience the conditions presented by that world! However, whenever we see that the natural world does not agree with the Word of God; at that moment we have the full right and indeed a responsibility to command that there is movement in the *unseen* world until it causes the *seen* world to conform to God’s Word!

From the time that we issue the command until the time that we see the manifestation, we operate in hope, “For we are **saved** (*Greek word “sozo” which means healed, preserved, saved, made whole*) by hope: but **hope that is seen is not hope**: for **what a man seeth, why**



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doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom 8:24-25)! After we start the process of hope then all we need to do is wait

with patience! While we patiently wait we hold on to the hope in our hearts, “Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for**, (Notice that without hope first in the heart, there can be no faith; hope is the origin of faith.) the evidence of **things not seen**. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that **things which are seen** were not made of **things which do appear**” (Heb 11:1-3). The context of “things hoped for” is viewing the *unseen* as opposed to the *seen* world, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of **things not seen** as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to **the saving of his house**” (Heb 11:7). The Bible does not say that Noah hoped for evil humanity to be destroyed; rather, he hoped for his family to be preserved!

God’s word will establish the image that we place in our heart. Proverbs teaches that, “out of it (*our heart*) are the issues of life” (Prov 4:23). You can count on the issues placed in your heart by hope and which are based upon the Word of God! We can count on them because they are truth since God’s Word is truth, “for thy truth: for **thou hast magnified thy word** above all thy name” (Ps 138:2). NEVER! NEVER, allow the circumstances in this world to create the image that you nurture in your heart! Whenever there is a conflict between what your eyes see and what is in the *unseen* world, the *unseen* realm that does not change will create a change in the natural world, which was made subject to change! Larry’s paraphrase of what Paul said in 2nd Cor 4:18 could well be, “the afflictions of life are of no effect as long as you look at the visible circumstances in the natural world. However, those afflictions will produce an eternal weight of glory if you will focus on the invisible world of the spirit!” Your place of pain can become your place of reign! We will see this as we continue.

Notice that it was the *unseen* world that produced the feeding of the 5,000! This *unseen* world is exactly the thing of which Jesus wanted His disciples to get a vision. Notice the episode and His words, “And **they reasoned** (*They operated in the realm of the seen!*) **among themselves**, saying, It is because we have no bread. 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, (*Why are you operating in the realm of the seen?*) because ye have no bread? **perceive ye not yet**, (*Can’t you see the spirit realm?*) **neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?** (*A hardened heart believes circumstances in the seen and cannot believe that the unseen spirit world will make changes in the natural world!*) 18 **Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?** 19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?” (Mark 8:16-19). They took up more than they started out with in the first place; the *unseen* world that caused the *seen* world to change! The *unseen* world changed five loaves and two fishes in the *seen* world so that 5,000 ate, and they still filled up 12 baskets with the leftovers!

We initiate changes in the *unseen* world by the promises found in God’s word and by our confession of His Word in our individual circumstances! In essence we shape the *unseen* by calling, “those things which be not as though they were” (Rom 4:17). This is only activated when you have renewed your mind to the point that it is so conditioned by the Word of God that anything that does not agree with God’s word is rejected by your spirit! You get to the point that you realize that God has already established His word on the matters of salvation, healing and prosperity; therefore, the natural world must get in line with His word. The



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agents of the *unseen* world are, “his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, **hearkening unto the voice of his word**” (Ps 103:20).

You need to realize that you cannot believe in things any further than your base of knowledge! For this reason, it is very important that you find out what the Word of God says! Once you know what God’s Word says on any matter, you must get that word in your mouth! Notice that this is exactly what God required of Joshua, “This book of the law (*God’s Word*) **shall not depart out of thy mouth**; (*You are to continue to confess God’s word!*) but **thou shalt meditate**; (*You need to continue to mutter God’s word to yourself!*) therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: **for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success**” (Josh 1:8). Do you want to prosper and have good success in your Christian walk? The instruction given to Joshua will also work for us today! One thing further that we must realize; who was the individual responsible for making Joshua’s way prosperous? It was Joshua! If he had not kept the words of the book of the law in his mouth and muttered it to himself day and night then he would not have been prosperous and successful. Now, lets realize how Joshua operated; he shaped the *unseen* world by the images of God’s Word in His heart through the spoken words that came out of his mouth! Even Job understood the power of declaring God’s word, “I will shew thee, hear me; and **that which I have seen** (*in his spirit or heart*) **I will declare**” (Job 15:17).

Clearly, the Bible teaches that we are to speak God’s Word. Further, it also teaches that speaking the wrong words that agree with the natural situation, and which disagree with God’s Word is destructive. Perhaps the story that best demonstrates this concept is the story of the Shunamite woman and her son who died a premature death. We will start by reviewing the whole story and then we will go back and closely observe the exact words that the woman chose to use.

There was a woman from Shunem which was a small village on the road between Mount Carmel and the city of Jezreel; Elisha often used that specific road since he spent a great deal of time in that area. In the Shunem village there was a God-fearing couple barren of any children. They must have normally displayed an open heart toward strangers. In the course of time they came to know Elisha; and, the woman regularly invited Elisha to eat in their home. In time she even asked her husband to build an upper room on top of their house so that the man of God could use it whenever he came through their village.

One day Elisha felt especially gracious concerning this couple. He was moved by the Spirit of God and naturally wanted to know if he could somehow do a kindness to this woman. She replied, “I dwell among mine own people” (2 Kings 4:13). In essence she told Elisha, “all of my needs are met. I have need of nothing.”

Elisha was unwilling to let this issue rest and he asked his servant, “What then is to be done for her?” (2 Kings 4:14). The servant gave Elisha a discerning answer that it was not any material blessing that the woman could want; instead, she and her husband are without any children. They both realized that her barrenness was a reproach to her.

Soon thereafter, Elisha told the woman, “About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son” (2 Kings 4:16). Incredulously the woman said, “Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid” (2 Kings 4:16). In other words, “Don’t



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play with my emotions on such a sensitive subject!” A son was obviously the thing that this woman had desired all of her life. To get her hopes up only to be denied would be more than she could bear. Nonetheless, the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, exactly as Elisha had told her!

The woman’s son grew to become a delight for his parents. One sunny morning the young boy went out into the fields while his father was gathering in the harvest. The heat somehow adversely affected the child with some kind of a heat stroke that gave the boy a severe headache. The father was concerned and instructed his servant to carry the boy home to his mother. The child lay in her lap until noon when he died. She took the dead boy in her arms up the stairs into the room that they had built for Elisha. She laid the little corpse on the bed of the man of God; she shut the door and left.

The woman ran and told her husband that she needed a donkey and a servant to drive her to find the man of God on Mount Carmel which was about fifteen or twenty miles away. Her husband asked why she was going since it was not a New Moon or a Sabbath. The woman in essence replied, “It shall be well. (*shalom*)” (2 Kings 4:23). At the minimum her reply was certainly an inaccurate answer to her husband’s question.

As Elisha looked out on the mountain road, he could see the familiar form of the Shunammite woman and a servant. He knew that something was obviously wrong because the woman’s presence on Mount Carmel was unusual. Therefore, Elisha sent his servant to meet her and ask “Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well. (*shalom*)” (2 Kings 4:26).

Nevertheless, the moment she saw Elisha, she fell at his feet and took hold of him. Elisha’s servant thought that her behavior was at the least an inappropriate way to treat the prophet so he stepped in to remove her from Elisha’s feet. But Elisha cried out, “Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me” (2 Kings 4:27). The woman cried out to Elisha, “Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?” (2 Kings 4:28). She remembered what she had earlier told the prophet when he had prophesied to her that she would have a son. Remember her inner thoughts, “Don’t play with my emotions on such a sensitive subject!”

Elisha immediately realized what had happened to the child and he said, “to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. 30 And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her” (2 Kings 4:29-30). Ultimately, Elisha raised the child back to life.

However, as we return back to the point of the story; did you notice that throughout this entire event that the woman never once told anybody that her son had died! Let’s notice specifically every one of her statements after the death of her son:

- To her husband she replied, “It shall be well. (*shalom*)” (2 Kings 4:23)
- To Gehazi she said, “It is well. (*shalom*)” (2 Kings 4:26)
- Even to Elisha she said, “Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?” (2 Kings 4:28).



Ignore the Visible and focus on the *Invisible!*

From this story it is clear that just like the Shunamite woman we cannot let our mouth speak the circumstances that our natural eyes see; instead, we must speak what is in our heart!

This is exactly how the Shunamite woman reacted; and she received her son back to life!

Jesus is another example of speaking only what was in His heart. Lets begin as the Lord received word about Lazarus, “his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, **he whom thou lovest is sick.** 4 When Jesus heard that, he said, **This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby**” (John 11:3-4). Jesus said what was in His heart concerning this matter and not what He knew would actually take place! After hearing about Lazarus’ illness, Jesus decided to stay there for two more days; then, He told them that they were going back to Judea. It was at this juncture that He brought up a seemingly unrelated matter, “Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him” (John 11:9-10). Jesus was not talking about natural vision in the *seen* world! He always looked into the *unseen* world; therefore he was speaking what was in his heart! Notice the interaction, “after that he saith unto them, **Our friend Lazarus sleepeth** (*Lazarus was literally dead*); but I go, that **I may awake him out of sleep** (*Resurrect Lazarus*)” (John 11:11). Jesus was speaking and thereby fashioning the problem in the *unseen* (*spirit realm*). Remember that Jesus told his disciples two days earlier, “**This sickness is not unto death**,” if you were to take His earlier words literally it would make Him a liar! The fact is Lazarus died; because his disciples were confused, “Then said Jesus unto them **plainly, Lazarus is dead.**” If the disciples had trusted in Jesus’ earlier word, “**This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified**” they would have realized that Lazarus would have to be resurrected back to physical life! Once again, they missed the whole point behind Jesus’ words! The whole point for us is that just like Jesus, we must focus our words on the end result of what we need! Lazarus was dead but Jesus ignored the obvious facts! Jesus looked beyond the bad news, He looked beyond an emotional response; He totally ignored all outward appearances and spoke the end result of what He desired in his heart, “I go, that **I may awake him out of sleep!**” The image in the heart of Jesus was to awaken Lazarus from sleep!

We must use Jesus as our example! He looked beyond the *seen* and into the spirit realm realm. He realized that the *seen* things are temporal and therefore *subject to change*! How did Jesus know that the fish would be on the right side of the ship? He first saw the fish in His heart and then He spoke and the *unseen* world caused the *seen* world to manifest what He had spoken! How did the LORD know that Peter would find a fish with a coin in its mouth? He first saw in His heart that there would be a coin in the fish’s mouth and then He spoke what was in his heart. The *unseen* world caused the *seen* world to manifest the thing that He had spoken!

Our stealthy weapon is seeing through the spirit realm that hope which is in our hearts. When we see with our heart’s eye that thing that we hope for, we are actually looking into the spirit realm! Jesus had the hope in His heart that He would rise from the dead. He spoke his hope and it happened, “Therefore **did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad;** moreover also **my flesh shall rest in hope:** 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:26-27).

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