

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

On December 8, 2014, we received the following comment:

“Unusual spiritual experiences, visions, audible words, sensation of oil being poured over the body, other unusual occurrences? This is what [Jehovah’s Witnesses] believe? Now I do know beyond doubt that you people are mentally deranged and purposely trying to deceive others.”

To the author, thank you for your emails. Before we respond to your comment, we want to say that even though your emails are mostly hateful, the fact that you write us practically every day shows that you are reading everything we post. If you are sincerely seeking truth, we believe in time the things you have read will begin to bear witness with your spirit. We excuse most of your comments based on the fact that you have only been studying with Jehovah’s Witnesses for 3 months and really do not understand the organization you are associating with. But if you would like to have a real interchange, the next time you write, provide an email address and we will be happy to respond privately to your comments since most of what you write is not suitable for publication.

We chose to post this email because we suspect there are other people who may have a similar reaction, but perhaps from a different perspective. Your comment indicates that you don’t believe Jehovah’s Witnesses are having these experiences. Others might think that Jehovah’s Witnesses who have those experiences are mentally challenged. Either way, we want to provide a little more insight into these experiences for both points of view.

As we mentioned in the article **The Witness of the Spirit**, Jehovah’s Witnesses have a unique and significant struggle to accept their awakening to sonship. Many have been taught from infancy the idea that only a very small number of people are sons of God with the heavenly hope and that small number are likely very old. Others have been mesmerized by the constant repetition of that teaching in the Watchtower publications, artwork and in congregational comments and discussions, and by the unspoken, but real, threat of being ‘marked’ or disfellowshipped for simply having a different view. This may be information you are not aware of since you have so little knowledge of the Watchtower organization and its people. But as a result of these **real issues**, the wall separating Jehovah’s Witnesses from their sonship with their heavenly Father is almost insurmountable. Here is where the witness of the spirit among Jehovah’s Witnesses may take on a more unusual and profound nature.

Our celestial family, including the Father, Christ Jesus, and the myriads of other revealed and unrevealed personalities are very aware of the struggle of Jehovah’s Witnesses and the struggles of others whose circumstances interfere with them freely accepting sonship, such as those raised in Judaism, Islam, and other religions who do not yet understand the true nature of Christ Jesus. In order for these individuals to understand the magnitude of the Father’s love and His desire for them to come to Him and be with Him, there often, but not always, needs to be an additional manifestation to give them the courage to take the leap of faith despite their upbringing and training. These additional manifestations are spiritual in nature and therefore not easily explainable.

Accordingly, when such a person tries to explain this additional spiritual manifestation, what comes out may sound strange, odd, even foolish to the average person. Spiritual matters are hard to explain in fleshly terms. The human mind does not have the vocabulary to accurately convey what really occurred. Notice the difficulty the Apostle Paul had in describing his own spiritual experience:

“I have to boast. It is not beneficial, but I will move on to supernatural visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in union with Christ who, 14 years ago—**whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know; God knows**—was caught away to the third heaven. Yes, I know such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body, I do not know; God knows— **who was caught away into paradise and heard words that cannot be spoken and that are not lawful for a man to say**. I will boast about such a man, but I will not boast about myself except of my weaknesses. For even if I want to boast, I will not be unreasonable, for I would say the truth. But I refrain from doing so, in order that no one should give me more credit than what he sees in me or hears from me, just because of receiving such extraordinary revelations.” – *2 Corinthians 12:1-7*

It took him 14 years to openly speak about it and when he did, he hesitated to admit it was his own experience! And recall the difficulties the Apostle John and other prophets had in describing the visions they recorded that became part of the Bible canon. They struggled because there was nothing in their experience consistent with what they saw that they could draw from to explain the visions. So they used the language of the day and drew parallels to things common to their generational experiences. Consequently, many who read these writings find them fanciful and even foolish. Many of their contemporaries likely viewed these prophets as mentally unstable.

The Apostle Paul wrote something on this subject:

“For who among men knows the things of a man except the man’s spirit within him? So, too, no one has come to know the things of God except the spirit of God. Now we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is from God, so that we might know the things that have been kindly given us by God. **These things we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we explain spiritual matters with spiritual words**. But a physical man does not accept the things of the spirit of God, **for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot get to know them, because they are examined spiritually**. However, the spiritual man examines all things, but he himself is not examined by any man. For “who has come to know the mind of Jehovah, so that he may instruct him?” **But we do have the mind of Christ.**” – *1 Corinthians 2:11-16*

Here, Paul says that spiritual matters are explained by spiritual words, words that are difficult for the human mind to express. He says that in order to understand spiritual matters, one would have to view them with the mind of Christ. This is the challenge that our brothers and sisters who have unique spiritual experiences are faced with when they try to explain their experience. Many of those who listen to them do not have the mind of Christ, and so these matters, and unfortunately these brothers and sisters, appear foolish.

For this reason, we have earlier suggested that our brothers and sisters who have these types of experiences recognize that they were given for their own benefit, not to prove their faith to others (See **Question and Response February 25, 2012**), and why we choose not to publish many of these personal experiences on our website. (See **Question and Response March 23, 2012**.) Should you choose to share them, we suggest you share them with those who are capable of putting on 'the mind of Christ' so as not to stumble others from establishing and accepting their own relationship with the Father.

We also want to emphasize that spiritual experiences occur and are real and purposeful, but are never given for mere amusement. Also, they are more common than many people think, so it is wise not to become fanatical about them, thinking that those who receive them are especially chosen by God. We are all chosen. The question is: Who will respond to the choosing? Who will accept the invitation to be adopted as sons of God into the heavens? As Paul wrote:

“For you see his calling of you, brothers, that there are not many wise in a fleshly way, not many powerful, not many of noble birth, but God chose the foolish things of the world to put the wise men to shame; and God chose the weak things of the world to put the strong things to shame; and God chose the insignificant things of the world and the things looked down on, the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, **so that no one might boast in the sight of God.** But it is due to him that you are in union with Christ Jesus, who has become to us wisdom from God, also righteousness and sanctification and release by ransom, so that it may be just as it is written: **“The one who boasts, let him boast in Jehovah.” – 1 Corinthians 1:26-31**

We hope these comments have been helpful, especially to the visitor whose email we are responding to. Never underestimate God's ability and desire to communicate with His children and guide them into all truth. He is as active and concerned today as He ever was, and even more so since the advent of His Son Christ Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit of Truth.

We encourage you to use your study as an opportunity to develop the mind of Christ and not as fuel to attack others, as Jesus counseled (**Matthew 7:1-5**), especially when you have so little knowledge about us and about the organization you have begun associating with. And take a close look at Jesus' words at **Matthew 5:21-22**, as some of your emails have stepped far beyond fair criticism, and are putting your own salvation in jeopardy.

“Elaia Luchnia”
