

Ministering to Those Who Have Become Entangled with Pornography

The sexual drive in humans is a strong one and, of course, is basic to the continuation of the human race. God has designed us sexual beings and, indeed has designed sex to be a highly pleasurable experience for husbands and wives to enjoy with each other.

In the marriage covenant, God has designed a man and a woman to be joined together as husband and wife in a very special way. That is brought out in Ephesians 5:31 where Paul writes "'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'" Sexual intercourse between a man and his wife creates that one flesh relationship which is so real that scripture teaches if a man loves his wife he loves himself. The Lord said in Matt 19:4-6:-

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female', and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.'"

It is God who does the joining and so the act of sexual intercourse is a physical act having a godly spiritual dimension designed by God from the beginning and creating a very strong spiritual tie (commonly called a "Soul Tie") between husband and wife. There is a sense in which the man and woman give part of themselves to each other in the forging of that one flesh union. It shows that God's hand of favour is upon the marriage union. As God has designed sex, Christians should thoroughly enjoy the experience of it knowing that it is designed by the Heavenly Father they love for their pure pleasure. It is sad when husbands and wives reach the point where the sexual relationship becomes boring or unsatisfying. It was never the way God designed it to be and there's certainly a case for seeking help if the sexual side of a marriage is not bringing the satisfaction it should.

Sadly, the beauty of sex and the strong sex drive in human beings has been exploited by the devil over the centuries and even more so in these days where the internet provides access to endless pornography at the click of a button. Those who have journeyed into the world of pornography find that what might begin as curiosity gradually becomes an addiction which holds its victims prisoner. Unsurprisingly, the demonic realm has taken advantage of this whole area of human behaviour and some Biblical background is set out below.

Biblical Background

In the days of Elijah, a king called Ahab ruled Israel and he had a wife named Jezebel.

Jezebel was the daughter of a king of Sidon to the North of Israel. In her home country it is believed her name meant "Primrose". In Hebrew, though, it meant "Unchaste" or "Rubbish". Jezebel was religious but was dedicated to the worship of the Sidonian gods Baal and Asherah. Baal was the sun-god (the male god of fertility and representing the producing principle in Nature) and Asherah the moon-goddess (the female god of fertility representing the receptive principle in Nature. They were depicted in the form of a totem poles or upright tree trunks presenting a phallic image. Different areas had their own Baals.

Under Ahab and Jezebel:-

- (i) God's priests were being slaughtered and many were in hiding,
- (ii) In their place 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah ate at Jezebel's table and
- (iii) Worship of the gods Baal and Asherah was being made the national religion thereby breaking the first commandment "You will have no other gods before Me".

Altars to Baal were set on high places in order to get an early view of the rising sun and a late view of the setting sun, the sun being considered by Baal's devotees to be the source of all life and the reproductive power of nature. Worship of Baal and Asherah involved witchcraft, male and female prostitution, obscene orgies and other sexual excesses involving crowds of

devotees. The actions of Ahab and Jezebel foisting that on God's people angered God more than all actions of the previous kings of Israel.

In her book "The Healing Presence" Leanne Payne makes the point that where there is worship of the sun and moon, of the created rather than the creator, sexual orgies follow. Human beings worship the creator or their own procreative faculties and demons, principalities and powers of the kind referred to in Ephesians 6 attend such worship. It is interesting that in Romans Rom 1:22-27 Paul writes:

22 Although they (*men who suppressed the truth by their wickedness v 18*) claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is for ever praised. Amen. 26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men.....NIV

The question arises as to who were Baal and Asherah? If they were represented by poles exactly who was being represented? The following scriptures give some guidance.

Num 25:1-3

25:1 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, 2 who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. 3 So Israel joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD's anger burned against them. NIV

Deut 32:15-17

15 Jeshurun (*a poetic name for the people of Israel*) grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the God who made him and rejected the Rock his Saviour. 16 They made him jealous with their foreign gods and angered him with their detestable idols. 17 **They sacrificed to demons**, which are not God — gods they had not known, gods that recently appeared, gods your fathers did not fear.

From that we may conclude that Baal (together with other false gods) is demonic and so has power of a kind which, in the end, is designed to rob, kill and destroy (John 10:10). However, as demonstrated in the account of Elijah on Mount Carmel, that power was insufficient to do what the prophets of Baal requested at that time. God being the greater power demonstrated that he was Lord of lords indeed.

The demonic gods Baal and Asherah – like other demonic powers - have not just faded away. They still operate and drive men and women into deviant sexual behaviour contrary to God's intention that sexual love should be a thing of beauty between a husband and wife which He will bless. The worship of Baal and Asherah is present today via pornography, prostitution and other forms of deviant sexual activity (although the persons involved do not realise that they are paying homage to those evil gods by engaging in such behaviour). Moreover for a married person, entanglement with pornography will reduce, and in some cases nullify altogether, the desire for lovemaking with their marriage partner which is contrary to God's intention for them. It will certainly create a way for evil spirits to rob, kill and destroy a Godly relationship between the couple.

Going back to Jezebel, who was a worshipper of Baal, we find some interesting characteristics. Jezebel was a controlling individual who had eunuchs around her (men who were "neutralised" and robbed of their masculinity). A controlling jezebel spirit is still present today. Often it will make the person who has the spirit controlling and manipulative too. A jezebel spirit may be at work, say, in a wife who cruelly dominates her husband to the point

where he feels devoid of masculinity in the marriage. However there is another side to the jezebel spirit. For example, a person who feels dominated by a lust for pornography may have picked up, amongst other demons, a jezebel spirit which has a powerful controlling influence and drives the flesh to crave for such things to the point of addiction. Having prayed with Christians who have become entangled with such a lifestyle, they have shared how they are affected by feelings of misery, guilt, anger, self-loathing, shame, condemnation and so on. That, in turn, has substantially neutralised them leaving them unable to walk in victory. Taking full advantage of the situation, the spirit robs the person of power to witness in the way he or she really wants to, strives to convince the person that he or she is unworthy, particularly of God's love, and fuels a fear in the person of such behaviour becoming known to others - especially other Christians - thereby rendering the person powerless and ineffective. In other words, the controlling spirit effectively produces Christian eunuchs. Aspects of the jezebel spirit are explored by Steve Sampson in his book "I was Always on My Mind".

In the end, Jezebel was killed by being "thrown down" to the ground from a window by two or three eunuchs. She was then trampled upon. See 2 Kings 9:32-33. In the same way, a jezebel spirit should be thrown down ruthlessly by the Christian who has been repeatedly controlled and neutralised by it. The spirit can then be ejected. When ministering in such a case, we have actually asked the person receiving ministry to stamp on the floor to represent physically what is happening spiritually.

However, that's not all. Lusting after pornography is tantamount to the person concerned paying homage to Baal and Asherah who, as already mentioned, continue to the present day to lure men and women into deviant sexual behaviour. A Christian must not pay such homage and we encourage a person receiving ministry who has become entangled in pornography or deviant sexual behaviour to repent of that and to renounce Baal and Asherah.

Alfred Edersheim in his Bible History points out that Baal was the real deity of Asia, worshipped under different forms (hence the plural: *Baalim*). One of those forms was Molech who was Baal under another aspect - that of destruction. Children were sacrificed by fire to Molech. (2 Kings 23:10). Leanne Payne in her book referred to above writes how, in these days, the legal status of abortion has effectively provided the god Molech with the homage for which it craves as aborted infants are fed to its fire. Ministry to those who have had an abortion is dealt with in a separate article.

A Ministry Pattern

When ministering in this area it is particularly important for ministry team members not to be judgmental towards the person seeking ministry and the need for confidentiality cannot be stressed enough. This area in particular is one which brings with it much guilt and shame and the person who has come to see you may well have agonized about coming because of that. He or she may have tried and tried to shake themselves free from the addiction without success. Moreover, it can affect any Christian from those in senior pastoral roles to church members who, on the face of it, would be the last persons you might think would be entangled with pornography. So, be loving, understanding, tender and kind.

Make it clear that whatever the person tells you will be kept confidential unless the team considers it necessary to make disclosure to the leadership, for example where it involves confession of a criminal act.

Thereafter, if the person begins to tell the team about a criminal sexual act you must break in to what the person is beginning to share and make it clear that in view of the nature of the act, the leadership of the church must be informed. Appropriate action can then be taken by the leadership. .

Here are some ministry steps to be taken but please note that these are a guide only and reliance on the Holy Spirit to instruct during the ministry session is essential. Also, be aware that it may not be possible to complete the ministry in a single session.

1 Let the person talk freely about their reason for wanting ministry and try to find out what caused the person to become involved with pornography in the first place. It may be a number of things such as being sexually abused when younger, being introduced to pornography by an adult, accidentally coming across pornographic material and so on.

2 When the facts are known, you can begin to move into a ministry time where the person should forgive anyone who was instrumental in the person moving into pornography. If the person can recall the first time they voluntarily viewed pornographic material then he or she should repent of that and also repent of the gradual sliding into the world of pornography and their eventual entanglement with it. The person should repent of fantasizing over pornographic imagery. Any specific sexually deviant acts should be repented of individually.

3 Where focus on pornography (if the person is married) has reduced or nullified altogether the desire for lovemaking with their marriage partner they must repent of that.

4 The gods Baal and Asherah and paying homage to them by viewing pornography should be renounced.

5 Where demon spirits are discerned such as lust, jezebel, shame, guilt and so on the person is to renounce them and repent of allowing the spirits a foothold in his or her life. Those spirits should then be driven out in the Name of Jesus.

6 There may be other issues such demonic strongholds which have locked the person into what he or she has seen as a life pattern so dominated with pornography that they can see no way of escape. They may see ministry as a last ditch but have little faith in it in their circumstances. All that could be the work of a main controlling demon which needs to be discerned and cast out. Again, reliance on the Holy Spirit is essential. There will also be soul ties to be cut if the person has been involved in sex outside marriage, for example with prostitutes.

7 The person should receive the Lord's forgiveness and those ministering should assure the person of that forgiveness. Also the person should forgive himself/herself of becoming entangled with pornography.

8 Encourage the person to thank God for pure and true sexuality and encourage him or her to walk free of sexuality contrary to God's design. The person must destroy pornographic material which he or she owns and has lusted after. Also, encourage him or her to receive mentoring from the church leadership as he or she moves away from the former lifestyle dominated by the addiction.

Remember that the person who has received ministry has opened up to you an aspect of his or her life which is extremely sensitive and the impact on them could be devastating should it ever become generally known outside the ministry team. Therefore we stress again the need for maintaining confidentiality when ministering and particularly so in this area.

These ministry notes should be regarded as a guide only to ways of approaching ministry. Qualified medical, psychiatric or legal advice may need to be sought in certain situations and nothing in the notes must be taken as a substitute for such advice. Moreover, the way in which the notes are used is beyond the control of the writer and Mannawords. All those using the notes and those receiving ministry do so of their own volition and on the basis that all such ministry is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and neither the writer nor Mannawords can offer guarantees with respect to any particular person receiving healing in any particular area of life. All those using the notes and those receiving ministry do so on the condition that they waive all rights to claim liability.