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FROM THE CANDLESTICK

TO THE THRONE

Book Ten

The Battle of Armageddon

and

Mystery Babylon

By J. Preston Eby

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PO Box 371240
El Paso TX 79937-1240**

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE Book 10
The Battle of Armageddon, Mystery Babylon by J. Preston Eby

This publication has been dedicated to the public domain
Printed in the United States of America

ISBN-13: 978-1721924783
ISBN-10: 1721924787

Scripture Quotations taken from:

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Emphatic Diaglott, Fowler & Wells Co., Publishers, 27 East 21st St. NY

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Young's Literal Translation: Public Domain

Jonathan Mitchell New Testament: Harper Brown Publishing

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Chapter 184

The Battle At Armageddon

"And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Rev. 16:12).

As we approach the cataclysmic events set forth in the remaining verses of chapter sixteen of the Revelation I pray that we all can open wide the eyes of our spiritual understanding, for where we are in the spirit determines how we see the unfolding episodes of this book. A dear brother has spoken of this in a little tract he sent me some time ago and I find his words so beautifully instructive that I am compelled to share them with my readers.

He wrote: "When I was about six years old and started to school, I was told to learn my ABC's. I was told that there were twenty-six of these letters to learn and that I was to learn them in rotation as they were written down. So I finally learned to say them in that order, and I learned to know each letter by itself or I could pick out a particular letter when they were scrambled. Then, one day the teacher gave me a piece of paper which had some writing on it, and asked what it said. I told her that it said ABC's. So she asked me to read what I saw. I began to pronounce each letter in each word; but I had no idea what the letters spelled, nor could I tell her what the letters meant — yet I could tell her what each letter was in each word. I did not know what the words said, or meant. So she informed me that each word meant something else, besides ABC's.

"Well, of course, I wanted to know what she was talking about, so I set my mind to learn what these letters meant besides ABC's. Now, this is a pretty basic parable, but I think it should get my point across. It seems to me that this is the way most people have started out to learn the teachings of Jesus Christ! Most people, when they are taught to read the "letter" of the word, suppose that the "letters" (ABC's) are the complete knowledge of the truth. And the whole church system is still teaching only the letter. Now, as we said, it is right and good to learn the letter or letters, but if that is all we ever learn, we will never discover the riches that we could get out of those letters. If they could only read what the "letters" really say and mean when arranged in the right manner by the Spirit of God, they would mean something else far greater than just the ABC's of the word! Yet in their own Bible it tells them that the letter kills, but the spirit makes alive. Now, how does the letter kill? Not literally, but it kills you spiritually.

"Now it is necessary and good to know the letter or letters, but that is like starting out to follow the word made flesh, but never follow it to the death, burial, and resurrection. You see, there is no spiritual life in the flesh. It only leads to death. The life is in the resurrection! When you see only the outer, the word made flesh, you are seeing the child when he has learned all the twenty-six letters of our alphabet and is taught that those are all the letters we use. There are no more letters to learn, which is right so far, but yet he cannot use those letters. They have something to tell him, but he cannot *read the message*. And that is true of the fleshly or literal understanding of the scriptures! The literal is only the means to assist us in understanding what the teachings of God *really say*. Yet the whole world says and thinks that they understand the literal teachings of the Bible. But there is more!" — end quote.

The river Euphrates is mentioned twice in the book of Revelation — here, and in chapter nine, verse fourteen. The epithet “great” is used in both instances: “the great river Euphrates.” The literal Euphrates river begins in the Armenian Mountains and is about 1780 miles in length, by far the longest and most important river of western Asia. It is famous in Bible history and prophecy. This region was the site of the inception of human sin; here the first lie was told, the first effort of man’s own “religious works” was performed, the first murder committed, the first grave was dug, and the first confederacy for the purpose of war was assembled. It was here the vast system of Babylonian idolatry originated. Israel’s great progenitor, Abram, came from its other side into the land of Canaan. The rivers Nile and Euphrates are prophetically designated as the southern and northern boundaries of the promised land (Gen. 15:18). The region of Euphrates was the scene of the long years in which the children of Israel (both the house of Israel and the house of Judah) dragged out the wearisome days of their Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

The Euphrates river bordered Babylon and was that which had to be crossed either to enter Babylon or to leave Babylon in the direction of Canaan. Sometimes it stood for Babylon itself, sometimes for the land of Canaan, but most often as a border or separation between the two. The prophet Jeremiah revealed how the Euphrates represents Babylon when he said, *“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labor in vain...and they shall be weary. The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah...when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into (captivity in) Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words which are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said unto Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; thou shalt say, O Lord, Thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, and none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her”* (Jer. 51:58-64).

That the river of Egypt, the Nile, and the river of Babylon, the Euphrates, were the divinely determined boundaries of the land of Canaan is stated plainly by the Lord when He gave Abraham the promise, *“Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt (the Nile)unto the great river, the river Euphrates”* (Gen. 15:18). And again in Deuteronomy 1:7 we read that the children of Israel received the command: *“Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto...the great river, the river Euphrates.”* The same we read in Deuteronomy 11:24 and Joshua 1:4. We find that the promise was realized in a literal way in the time of Solomon, for of him we read that he ruled over all the kingdoms from the river (that is, Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines (I Kings 4:21). A number of other passages allude to this river as the boundary of the land of promise, and therefore I find that in its spiritual sense the river Euphrates represents the ideal and real boundary line between the spiritual and heavenly kingdom of God and the carnal and earthly kingdom of religious Babylon. That is the mystery!

As a means of preparation for the battle at Armageddon the beloved John records, *“And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”* It is important to God’s elect in this hour that the Spirit of God would grant a clear understanding of what is here meant by the drying up of the great river Euphrates. The capital city of ancient Babylon was built on either side of the

Euphrates. The river was also the source of water supplying a fortifying mote about the city. Its waters, from ten to thirty feet deep and from 900 to 3500 feet wide, made an obstruction that in ancient times was passable only under the greatest difficulty. Imagine the fearful state of such a great and secure city when the waters of its mighty defense are dried up! So because the Babylonians were the first to build on the banks of the Euphrates, in the book of Revelation the Spirit of God employs this term as a type of "the waters...where the whore (Mystery Babylon) sitteth" (Rev. 17:2,15). The ancient city of Babylon has not existed for long centuries, just as the word of the Lord prophesied, but there is surely that in the earth today which is characterized by the spirit and nature of the Babylon of old which sat upon, and was fortified and defended by, the waters of the great Euphrates. There is especially a repetition today of the conditions essentially characterizing ancient Babylon in its connection with God's people — for Israel was in BONDAGE IN BABYLON. Consequently, their captivity in Babylon, the type, must find its parallel in Babylon of today, the antitype. Certainly great numbers of the Lord's people are today in captivity to the modern *spiritual Babylon!*

What the pouring out of the sixth bowl discloses prophetically is the present (in God's elect) and coming (in all the Lord's people) **destruction of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT!** What the apostle John records in chapter sixteen of the Revelation does not give the complete story of how this great religious Babylon is destroyed. There are further wonderful details revealed to him and recorded in chapters seventeen and eighteen. The plague of the seventh bowl brings the conclusion of the judgments upon religious Babylon, the carnal church systems of man, both within the Lord's people and upon the external systems. Indeed, the events recorded in chapters seventeen and eighteen are the continuation of the plague of the seventh bowl! The fact that all seven plagues have as their great purpose the destruction of Mystery Babylon is plainly stated in the call for God's people to "*come out of her...that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of HER PLAGUES*" (Rev. 18:4). Oh, yes, the *plagues* — all seven of them — are **HERS!** Can you not see the mystery? As John was set to wondering at the particulars of the continuing prophetic vision, so are we today as we see taking place in these eventful times the very things foretold to take place in connection with the pouring out of divine judgment upon that world empire of Babylonish religion. I am assured that in this very hour God's chosen and separated elect is invited by the Spirit of God to come and actually behold these wondrous things, just the same as John was invited to see a preview of them in the spirit and by the spirit.

If we have considered the matter as we ought, we will surely have realized that not only are the plagues sent to destroy Babylon, but they are also for the deliverance, correction, purification, and perfection of God's people held in captivity within the Babylonian system. This holy understanding will give much greater meaning to the fact that it is one of the seven angels which had poured out the seven last plagues of God's passion, who afterward comes to John and shows him what God has made out of His precious people who formerly dwelt in Babylon. "*And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal*" (Rev. 21:9-11).

Thus God's *wrath* or His *passion* does not stand in conflict with His *love*, but it is paired most intimately with it in Godly harmony. His wrath He pours out upon the false teachings and treacherous systems which hold His people in error and bind them in captivity; however, His love He sheds upon His people which collectively He calls His own, His beloved, His bride! Once the

Lord's people are cleansed from their idols and defilement, they will be in a position to shine as His glorious light upon the nations and bring deliverance to a sin-sick and judgment-weary world, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the water covers the sea" (Isa. 11:9). What a detriment the carnal programs of the church systems and the false doctrines of condemnation, judgment, and eternal damnation have been to the cause of Christ!

Only when God's people are cleansed from their carnality and shame can they ever hope to bring deliverance to the world! And that deliverance has to come. It will come through those who have given up their all, those who have lost everything to be joined only to their Lord, and who henceforth live only unto Him. This being accomplished, the pure river of the water of life must flow from the glorious city of God to bring life and healing to the nations. But before God's people can have any part or lot in this great work, they must forsake all and follow the Lamb alone. No one can deliver men from the lies of the antichrist by continuing to embrace and declare those lies himself. This world worships her idols of false religion, materialism, and the flesh. To deliver this world the Lord's people must first get rid of their own golden calves. Jesus must be LORD! And then, "the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And THE IDOLS SHALL BE UTTERLY ABOLISH" (Isa. 2:17-18). That very work is the great purpose of the seven angels with the seven last plagues! Aren't you glad!

Now let us return to our thought about the drying up of the great river Euphrates. Some take it to mean that with the pouring out of this sixth bowl the actual river Euphrates shall be literally dried up, so that nations and armies may pass through it. We must continually keep in mind that we are touching on *spiritual realities*. And the absurdity of the *literal* interpretation of the vision is found in the fact that if the nations wish to gather for a battle, any river on earth would certainly not keep them from doing it, even if it is never dried up! In this day of helicopters, airplanes, rockets, and missiles a river serves absolutely no significance as a barrier against invasion. And therefore, the drying up of the river refers to the removal of all the obstacles and powers that hold God's people in bondage to SPIRITUAL BABYLON! Taken in context that is the subject surrounding the vision under consideration. It signifies that God is now ready to move to break the strength of Babylon's defenses and by a mighty hand and outstretched arm to lead His redeemed people **out of Babylon!** That is the mystery!

Stephen Jones expressed it so well when he wrote, "The sixth bowl prepares the way for the events of the seventh — the battle of Armageddon and the fall of Babylon. In that way, the two are closely linked, and the one becomes the direct cause of the other. While this may not be clear by reading Revelation 16, it is certainly very clear when we see the historical precedent on which this prophecy is based. That precedent is the fall of Babylon during the days of Daniel, when the kings of the east (King Cyrus of Persia and King Darius of Media) diverted the water from the river Euphrates to conquer Babylon. Thus, the drying up of the river Euphrates was the final prophetic act that led to the conquest of ancient Babylon. So also is this being repeated *on a higher level* in Revelation 16! One cannot truly understand the events of the sixth and seventh bowls in Revelation 16 without knowing some of the history of ancient Babylon and how it fell in the days of Daniel."

Let me give you the background. The great kingdom or empire of Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon) was made up of smaller kingdoms that he had conquered. As long as he lived his kingdom was strong; but as soon as he died, it began to fall apart. His son became king in his place, but was soon slain; and one king followed another quickly for some years. The last king was named

Nabonidus. He made his son Belshazzar king with himself, and left Belshazzar to rule in the capital city of Babylon, while he was caring for the more distant parts of the kingdom. At that strategic point a new nation was rising to power. Far to the east were the kingdoms of Media and Persia. These two peoples had become one, and were at war with Babylon, under their great leader Cyrus. While Belshazzar was ruling in the city of Babylon, Cyrus and his Persian soldiers approached the outside of the city, around the tremendous walls, and began trying to take the city. These walls were so great and high and wide that the Persian soldiers could not break through them nor scale their heights.

On that very night King Belshazzar was holding in the palace a great feast in honor of his god. On the tables were the golden cups and vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple of the Lord at the time when he conquered the city of Jerusalem. Around the tables were the king, his many wives, and a thousand of his princes and nobles. They did not know that their city was soon to be taken and that their enemies were at the very gates of the city. While they were all drinking wine together, suddenly a strange thing was seen. On the wall appeared a great hand writing letters and words in a language no one could read. Every eye was drawn to the spot, and all saw the fingers moving on the wall and the letters written. The king was filled with fear. His face turned pale and his knees shook. He called for the wise men of Babylon, who were with him in the palace, to tell what the writing meant. He said, "Whoever can read the words on the wall shall be dressed in a purple robe and shall have a chain of gold around his neck, and he shall rank next to King Belshazzar as the third ruler in the kingdom."

But not one of the wise men could read it. At last the queen of Babylon said to Belshazzar, "O king, may you live forever! There is one man who can read this writing, a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, a man whom Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made master of all the wise men. His name is Daniel. Send for him, and he will tell you what these words are and what they mean." Daniel was now an old man; and since the time when Nebuchadnezzar died, he had been no longer in his high place as ruler and chief adviser of the king. They sent for Daniel, and he came. The king said to him, "Are you that Daniel that was brought many years ago by my father to this city? I have heard of you, that the spirit of the holy gods is upon you and that you possess wisdom and knowledge. If you can read this writing upon the wall and tell me what it means, I will give you a purple robe and a gold chain and a place next to myself as the third ruler in the kingdom."

Daniel answered the king. "You may keep your rewards yourself and may give your gifts to whom you please, for I do not want them; but I will read to you the writing. O king, the Most High God gave to Nebuchadnezzar this kingdom and great power and glory. But when Nebuchadnezzar became proud and boasted of his greatness, then the Lord took from him his crown and his throne and let him live among the beasts of the field until he knew that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of men. O Belshazzar, you knew all this, yet you have not been humble in heart. You have risen up against the Lord, you have taken the sacred vessels of His house, and have drunk wine in them in honor of your own gods of wood and stone; but you have not praised the Lord God who has given to you your kingdom and your power. For this reason the Most High God has sent this hand to write these words upon the wall. This is the writing — MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. And this is the meaning: Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided.

"MENE: God has counted the years of your kingdom and has brought it to an end.

"TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances and have been found wanting.

"UPHARSIN: Your kingdom is divided and taken from you, and given to the Medes and Persians."

King Belshazzar could scarcely believe what he heard; but he commanded that the promised reward be given to Daniel. And almost while he was speaking, his end came. For even as Daniel was speaking, King Cyrus had devised a plan to capture the city of Babylon. The walls of the city were too formidable and could not be overcome. But there was a way, another way to gain entrance to the city! The hosts of Cyrus, under cover of darkness, diverted the waters of the mighty Euphrates, turning away the river from its course, leaving a dry river-bed running under the walls of Babylon. In the stillness of the night, almost before the last words of the prophet were spoken, the hosts of Cyrus rushed through the dry river-bed and came upon the palace and there Belshazzar was slain at the table where he had taken the cup of the Lord and had made it the cup of devils!

Throughout the Old Testament the Euphrates river was known as "the great river" (Gen. 15:18; Josh. 1:4). As we have seen, it flowed through historical Babylon and was the life-blood of the city. Even now in modern times rivers are still the life-force to many of the great cities of the world. Spiritually speaking, religious people who serve God out of human zeal, carnal understanding, and soulical power have one river flowing through them, their spiritual head-waters and life-flow — the Euphrates! The Euphrates bespeaks the great head or stream of human reasoning, soulish sentimentality, and traditions and philosophies of men. It has become the channel of the strength and wealth of spiritual Babylon (confusion) in the earth. Just as the rivers of earth have become polluted, so has the mind of man and the religious systems of man. But when we are called out of Babylon, and leave the precincts of the kingdom of Babylon, we are led by the spirit of truth to the river of God's great kingdom — *the pure River of Life!* It is not far to find, for Jesus has told us where it can be found. "He who believes in me, as the scripture said, **from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.**" When that which is flowing out of us is bringing death and bondage to the people around us, we can be certain that it is not the river of life. If you attend a church meeting and you leave without being quickened by divine life, you can be certain that the river of life was not flowing there for you. Both rivers — the Euphrates and the River of Life — flow from out of our own heart and life. The head-waters of Euphrates flow, on the one hand, out of the *soul*, the *mind*, the *emotion*, and the *desires* of men. The head-waters of the River of Life flow, on the other hand, out of the *spirit*, the very *essence of God* dwelling in the deepest depths of the life. Oh, the mystery of it!

The question follows — How will this Euphrates, the religious river, be dried up? The answer is simple enough — a drought! That is what "drying up" means. Water brings life and refreshment. The lack of water brings misery and death. And turning from the pure water of the River of Life to drink from the polluted waters of the Euphrates also leads to weakness, disease, and death. The more submissive we are to the Lord, the more sensitive to the spirit, the more the Euphrates of our own carnal reasoning and religious inclination is diminished within us. The opposite is true as well. When we fail to trust the spirit, when we disobey the way of the spirit as it is revealed to us, the more strength we give to the flesh to exert itself in the service of God and the polluted waters of Euphrates are increased. As God's elect we have been enabled by the power of Christ to actively participate in the "drying up" of the waters of Euphrates within ourselves. But for those who are helpless captives in Babylon, God Himself is moving sovereignly to dry up their waters!

Ah, even as the prophets of God are speaking in our day, just as Daniel spoke to King Belshazzar in the Babylon of old, the river of man is being diverted — the river that is being dried up is the

flow of “ministry” that is coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The “anointing” of Babylon is drying up, their programs and methods are not working anymore, and God is causing a great emptiness within them and is bringing them to the end of themselves. When the river Euphrates that has nourished the Babylon church system dries up, the way will be made for the kings of the east. But this time it’s not just a horde pouring into the land to devastate and conquer it, but now something is coming into the land to purge, purify, renew, and transform it! Oh, yes!

God is even now in the process of “drying up the waters” of the great Euphrates, the river of modern Babylon. God is calling out of Babylon “His people” that have so long been held captive within her walls, within her static creeds, her paganized doctrines, her empty forms, her cold rituals, her lifeless ceremonies, her man-made laws and commandments, her carnal programs, her un-spiritual methods, and her un-scriptural institutions. The Spirit of God shall accomplish such a thorough job of calling His people out “unto Himself,” unto a pure and undefiled walk in the Spirit, under the absolute headship of Jesus Christ, that John is able to write, *“Rejoice over her (Babylon), thou heaven (those seated with Christ in the heavenlies), and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers (spiritual praise and worship), and trumpeters (ministries sounding forth a message from God), shall be heard no more at all IN THEE; and the sound of a millstone (the grinding of meal for bread, the living word) shall be heard no more at all IN THEE; and the light of a candle (even the little light of truth that is in Babylon) shall shine no more at all IN THEE; and the voice of the bridegroom (Christ) and of the bride (God’s purged and purified people) shall be heard no more at all IN THEE: for by thy sorceries (deceptive doctrines and methods) were all nations deceived”* (Rev. 18:20-23). What a word!

As God removes all this from the midst of Babylon, the water of her river is dried up. All of the blessing of God, all of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, all of the spiritual life and even the effectiveness of her programs, liturgies, preaching, and organization is all dried up, and there is naught but death within her. She is thus left defenseless. Upon the prophetic page we may clearly read the doom of Babylon. That her destruction shall be sudden, violent, and complete is thus graphically stated: *“And a mighty angel (messenger, message, move of God) took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all”* (Rev. 18:18,21). And yet that Babylon is also to undergo a gradual consuming process is shown by the prophet Daniel: *“But the judgment (of the saints) shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end”* (Dan. 7:26). Therefore, be it clearly seen that one of the great outcomes of “the battle of the great day of God Almighty” is the total and utter destruction of religious Babylon!

THE KINGS OF THE EAST

“And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, *that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*” (Rev. 16:12).

Among the very instructive and deeply significant illustrations given by the Holy Spirit in the visions of John we have the beautiful presentation of the conquest of Babylon by the “kings of the east.” The historical backdrop is, of course, the conquest of ancient Babylon by the two kings from the east, Cyrus of Persia and Darius of Media. In the book of Revelation we first meet these “kings of the east” at the time of their anointing as kings in chapter seven. “And after these things

I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw **another angel ascending from the east**, having the seal (kingly authority) of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have **sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads**" (Rev. 7:2-3).

John is still wondering what the four angels holding the four winds can mean when he sees the four mighty sentinels all at once turn their eyes to the east. And behold, another messenger comes ascending out of the east as the morning sun comes, announcing God's *new day*. He comes clothed with light as with a garment; the widespread earth shines bright under his glory; and his voice is as the sound of many waters. The ascending messenger holds in his hand the *seal* of the living God! And, addressing himself to the four mighty sentinels, he speaks to them with a voice that they hear above all the commotions that arise from the earth, and the tempests that rage in the sea, saying to them that they are commanded not to hurt the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until "we" have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

There can be no doubt that the seal in the forehead of God's bondslaves is the *mind of Christ*. I have pointed out previously in this series that no man is qualified to *judge the world, rule the world, or restore the world* until he has been sealed in his forehead with the *mind of Christ*. Only the glorious mind of Christ brings the balance between mercy and judgment! It was, then, of this Christ-mind that David prophesied when he said, "Surely His salvation is nigh...**mercy and truth** are met together; **righteousness** and **peace** have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:9-10). Mercy and truth are met together — praise God, what a summit meeting! These words are pregnant with meaning. When one contemplates the impossibility of such a union, it is an overwhelming thought that mercy and truth are met together. Truth is harsh, demanding, unrelenting; mercy is lenient, forgiving, lax. Truth condemns and devours; mercy covers and exonerates. Only when one has intermingled the ministries of priest, king, and judge are these incompatible forces MET TOGETHER!

Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED JUDGE, he shares in that omniscient mind that discerns the true nature of all things, and therefore judges righteously. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED KING, he shares in that dominion, that power that is in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED PRIEST, he shares that unlimited outflow of mercy, compassion, and unconditional love that is derived from the heart of our great High Priest. Only one possessed of this three-fold mind of Christ is qualified to control the four winds of judgment that blow upon the earth, the sea, and the trees! Only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with the mind of Christ will be able to *judge the world in righteousness, rule the world with a rod of iron, and at the same time reconcile all things to God*! All others would, if given a chance, pour out unbridled vengeance, wrath, and damnation upon the rebellious. And in connection with our present meditation upon the "kings of the east" who come to judge Babylon, only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with the mind of Christ can separate between the *system* of Babylon and the *people* held captive within that system, to consume and destroy the *system* while at the same time bringing deliverance, purging, purification, blessing, and glory upon the Lord's *people* within the system! What a marvelous thing!

Now, of this angel it does not say, "...descending from the east," but it says, "...ascending from the east." In the natural, it is the *sun*, the source of light and day, which *ascends* out of the east. Some translations say, "ascending from the sun rising." This is a true translation. Ezekiel beheld the glory of God coming from the east. "Afterwards he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came *from the way of the east*: and His voice was like the voice of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory" (Eze. 43:1-2). Can you not see the mystery? Is this not a similar description to the angel ascending from the east in the Revelation? This is the Lord Himself arising in His elect! The star which heralded His nativity when the firstborn Son of God came into the earth came from the *east!* The wise men came from the *east* to worship the infant Jesus. They were eminent in the science of astrology, which was considered the greatest science of that day. The east, therefore, was looked to for wise men. The Lord Jesus Himself is called, "the bright and morning star." The morning star is seen in the *east*. His glorious appearing is referred to as the "bright shining which shines *from the east* even unto the west." This "angel" ascends from the sun-rising, the quarter from whence proceeds the light of day which gilds the loftiest mountain-tops and penetrates into the darkest recesses of the valleys.

To the Hebrews the term "east" had a much more extensive signification than with us, to whom its only distinction is that it is the point of the sun's rising. But beyond this, it was to the Israelites the cardinal point of the compass to which they naturally looked first. Their temple was built facing the east, its principle entrance being in that direction. The most powerful and enlightened kingdoms of the world lay to the east of Judea, and they included them all under the general term, sons or children of the East (that is, Orientals), and their kings were known as the kings of the East. Travelers from these countries would all enter Judea from the east, as did the wise men who came to see the newborn king of Israel. "The kings of the east," then, employed as a symbol under this sixth bowl, is not intended to signify any persons literally from that quarter of the earth. Forget Japan! Forget China! Such nations have nothing whatever to do with "the revelation of Jesus Christ"! "The east" signifies a spiritual condition and position. It represents the bringing in of spiritual knowledge and understanding, with blessing, dominion, and glory!

The kings of the east are the kings of "the rising of the sun," or the arising of spiritual illumination, power, and glory. Thank God that we live in the time when the defenses of religious Babylon are being broken through and when God is preparing to move in an unprecedented way to reach the hearts of literally millions of redeemed souls held in bondage there! And like the Israelites of old, when Cyrus entered the ancient Babylon through the dry river-bed of the Euphrates, they shall come out with rejoicing and make their way to Zion again! That the spiritual downfall of Babylon will be a very real "plague" to sectarians there can be no doubt, and it is plainly declared to be such by the voice John heard out of heaven declaring, "*Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord who judgeth her*" (Rev. 18:8).

We see then that the sons of God, as the overcoming body of Christ, are arising in splendor and glory over the earth. They speak with the voice as the sound of many waters! God wants His sons to rise, and we are beginning to rise as in and by the Spirit we ascend from one glory to another in Him in this great day! Yet we also know by the Spirit that our ministry to the earth-realm cannot break through *until* we have been perfectly and completely sealed in our foreheads with the mind of Christ! THIS IS TODAY A PROPHETIC WORD IN THE MOUTHS OF GOD'S SONS! THIS IS THE WORD I PROCLAIM UNTO YOU!

Let us then consider that the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates is for one purpose — that “the **way** of the kings of the east might be **prepared.**” Ah, the “way” of the kings, the road, the path, the highway, is being PREPARED. There is a preparation! God is making ready a road, a way, a means for the entrance into the earth of the kings of the east, the kings of the sunrise, the kings bringing the dawning of a new day — the sons of God. These sons are coming spiritually from the east — not out of eastern mysticism or New Age philosophies — but right out of the shining glory of the Lord! But notice what had to happen before they make their appearance — a road must be prepared. The preparation of the road indicates a clearing away of obstacles, rocks, trees, rubbish; the raising up of low places, the cutting down of high places, so that the way is made straight with no obstacles, barriers, hindrances, or impediments of any kind. Can you, dear one, think of any obstructions in your life that would hinder the manifestation of sonship in the fullness of the glory of the Lord? Do you need encouragement, do you need correction, do you need deliverance, do you need greater faith or purity, do you need more perfecting, change, and transformation — the faithful dealing of God in these areas bespeaks the preparation of the “way” of the kings of the east! Let God have His way that you may have part in this glorious manifestation of His sons!

Yet — before this work of the preparation of the road, there is something else that has to happen, something has to “dry up.” The river Euphrates is the stream, the flow, the current, the “anointing” of Babylon! This stream has given life to the Babylonian system in each and every facet of its expression. The Euphrates is the life-flow of that which keeps God’s people in bondage! Don’t tell me there is no life-flow, no *spirit* of Babylon, for there truly is. But the river is polluted, contaminated, and corrupted. It bespeaks an impure word, truth mixed with error, life mingled with death, anointing and gifts corrupted by flesh. Oh, yes! Jesus is preached in Babylon, people are saved in Babylon, many are even baptized in the Spirit in Babylon, there are blessings and miracles and answers to prayer in Babylon, but the anointing of the Spirit and the message of the Word of God are so contaminated with error, fleshly means and methods, man’s control and manipulation, that it is unsafe to drink the waters of this river. Because of these polluted waters spiritual babies are born into the kingdom of God with horrible birth defects, grotesquely deformed, misshapen, gnarled, crippled, lame, bowlegged, and hunchback. The way they view their Father’s heart, the way they perceive their Father’s plan and purpose for humanity, the future they suppose their Father has planned for them and for the rest of mankind is so grossly distorted that it is obvious that they are either brainwashed by religion or suffering from a spiritual mental illness. Growth in the life of Christ is stunted, the saints are spiritually illiterate, spiritually sick, and many die from the waters of Babylon.

THE SONS OF GOD CAN NEVER BE MANIFESTED IN BABYLON! Something must happen so that the way of the kings of the east can be prepared. The Lord must arise “from the east” upon His called and chosen elect, and the great river Euphrates, the current that runs through Babylon, must be completely dried up, for the “way” of the kings can only begin to be prepared *after* the Euphrates has become a sand box! There is the divine order!

Not only that — the drying up of the Euphrates signals the end of Mystery Babylon the Great. In ancient Babylon in the days of Daniel, it was right while the king of Babylon was desecrating the holy vessels of God — that very night the Medes and the Persians came in and conquered Babylon. How they did it is the wonder of the ages and contains within it the seed-bed of the truth the Holy Spirit would now reveal within our hearts. As we mentioned earlier, the armies of the Medes and Persians diverted the flow of the river Euphrates and **dried it up!** They then walked right into the city on the dry river-bed and burst into the palace where the king and the whole

government of Babylon were feasting; they seized King Belshazzar and killed him in the midst of his feast and overthrew the entire government and kingdom of Babylon ***in one hour***.

As with ancient Babylon, the type, so with the antitypical Babylon of the Revelation. Hear the word of the Lord! “*And the kings of the earth (leaders of the carnal church systems of man), who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come...for in one hour so great riches is come to nought...and they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city...for in one hour she is made desolate*” (Rev. 18:9-10,17,19). What a picture!

When the hour comes for the final overthrow of that great city, the mystical Babylon, whether it be the Babylonian stronghold within each of us, or the external systems of man, the mystical waters, or what spiritual life and anointing there is within her which has stayed the hand of God up until this time from judging her, are dried up, to make way for the kings, “those who are of the rising of a sun” (Literal Greek). Truly, these kings of the rising sun are those of whom the prophet spoke, “*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. 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. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the nations, and that their kings may be brought*” (Isa. 60:1-3, 11-12). And speaking of this great victory over Babylon that comes at the symbolic “battle at Armageddon,” John wrote, “*And these shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful*” (Rev. 17:14).

Cyrus, the commander of the Persians, eventually became the king of the ancient kingdom of Babylon. It was through him that the king of Babylon ceased to exist, God’s people Israel were restored to their land, Jerusalem was raised up to glory, and the temple of Yahweh was rebuilt and the priesthood restored. Concerning this great Cyrus, hear the word of the Lord! And as you read these remarkable words think of Israel as *all* the people of God; think of Jerusalem as the bride of Christ; think of ancient Babylon as Mystery Babylon the Great; and think of Cyrus and the armies with him as “the kings of the east” — the manifest sons of God! For truly that is the **spiritual meaning**. “*Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel. Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth for myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, that maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, that maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of His servant, and performeth the counsel of His messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I*

will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel” (Isa. 44:23-28; 45:1-3).

The great soul-gripping truth is just this. Cyrus was ordained of God as the type of Christ our Elder Brother, our Forerunner, the Captain of our salvation, the Head of the Christ-body, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the glorious One riding the white horse followed by the armies that are in heaven! Just as Cyrus and his armies diverted the waters of the great river Euphrates causing it to dry up, so shall Christ and His armies, the manifest sons of God, by their word and authority cut off the flow of the river of the mystical Babylon in order to lay siege upon it and destroy it by the power of the Spirit. God is setting the stage in this new kingdom day for the appearance of the kings of the east, He is removing the refuge of lies, and preparing the way for a ministry from the arising of the sun of righteousness with healing in His rays. If by the grace of God this true and holy vision can burst upon your spiritual consciousness and settle and penetrate deeply into your spiritual mind, you will then be able to clearly understand the precise meaning of each of these significant words penned by John on that long-ago Patmos, “*And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*”

Let me tell you something. THIS RIVER EUPHRATES IS ABOUT TO DRY UP! Even now there is less and less reality or effectiveness in any of the church systems of man! Who can deny it? And when the waters do dry up the kings of the east are coming! Jesus is *the King* of the east and the sons of God are *the kings* of the east! Jesus is the dayspring or the dawn from on High, the bright and the morning star. He is the sun of righteousness arising with healing in His rays. He is the light of the world, the resurrection and the life. He is the daystar that arises in our hearts — Christ in us the hope of glory. And because of Him, and because of us, the river of Confusion is going to dry up! Babylon is confusion. The river of Babylon is the flow, the current, the force and power of all religious confusion!

Truer words have never been written than those penned by the late George Hawtin when he wrote, “The church system of our day is in a sorry state, and it with the world is rushing headlong for judgment. *Strong delusion* has settled down upon the people making them willing to believe a lie and grasp almost anything that will attract a crowd, bring a measure of excitement, or add to prestige or prominence. In all the vast church system today there is but a handful of people whose hearts are *crying out for the will of God*. There is but a *tiny remnant* who long to be filled with *the wisdom of God* and who make the *mind of Christ* their daily, hourly quest. *Few there are who sigh and cry because of the abominations and injustices everywhere* and who wait with longing spirits for the judgment of the Lord. But there is a tiny remnant, according to the election of grace, who can say, ‘At night upon my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth.’ There are still a few who cry, ‘Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for Thy love is better than wine.’ There is still a handful who pray, ‘Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where *Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flocks to rest at noon*: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of Thy companions?’ (S. of S. 1:2,7,8).

“Not only has the *spirit of delusion* settled upon the world, but the *spirit of confusion* is rampant everywhere, manifesting itself in every aspect and walk of life. Confusion reigns daily in the governments of the world. Confusion stalks like an evil specter among the nations, disrupting all their international agreements. Confusion and disorder reign in millions of homes where all authority has gone from the parents and all respect has vanished from the children. Art and music

always reflect the temperament and disposition of the people of the day. Certainly music has returned to the jungle and art to the weird grotesqueness of the kindergarten. Juvenile delinquency has attained such proportions that the Attorney-General of the United States has declared that if it cannot be beaten in ten years *it will be unbeatable*. Confusion reigns among the races and colors of people, among the majorities and minorities. It reigns between labor and management and between nations that have and nations that have not. And by no means least is the confusion that reigns in the church system, which is spiritual Babylon. Babylon *is confusion*" — end quote.

The Lordship of Christ who *is the truth* must march through our land, drying up the entire river of Babylon's confusion! Oh, yes! All must first become reality ***within us*** before it can be expressed and ministered ***through us***. The spirit of the Babylonish church system has tarnished and dimmed our vision so that many of us still do not see the whole truth. How proud we have become of our deep revelation and our high calling and our vast understanding in spiritual things when in reality we know *nothing yet as we ought to know!* Oh, yes, we are going to destroy Babylon in one divine hour, but first every last vestige of Babylon ***must be destroyed in us***. Before we ask God to do something through us and outside of us, let us beseech Him to make the necessary changes ***within us*** so that ***we can do it right!*** The sons of God will get it right and keep it right — they are the final, only, ultimate hope for the reconciliation, redemption, deliverance, and transformation of all creation!

Let us return for a moment to the thought that to the Hebrews the primary direction in spiritual things was the east. It is an enlightening study just to look up the word east in the concordance and follow through all the passages in the Bible that speak of the east. No doubt we could spend the next five years just writing about that! What happens when you face east? Eventually you will behold the rising of the sun, the dawn of the morning, the glory of the new day! That is the supreme idea that the east represents. I am reminded of the young man in ancient days who wondered where the sun went after it set. One night he sat up all night pondering this, trying to figure out where the sun was — and finally it *dawned on him*. And that, my beloved, is the revelation and the truth of the east!

At times we experience the setting of the sun in our experience. At one time the Lord arose in our lives and revealed a glory of Himself and blessed and anointed us, but when it had accomplished its purpose and He was through with the revelation and activity of that "day" the sun set. Every day has a morning and an evening, a beginning and an end. Every revival and move of God in the history of God's dealings has been like that. And every time God gets ready to bring in a new age and put a new revelation and order into place the sun sets on the old. What was once illumination, blessing, and glory becomes darkness, bondage, and death! That is how the walls of Babylon are built — when men settle down around a revelation or an experience after GOD HAS MOVED ON! But if we are watchful, in due time His sun arises on the new! Paul said it this way, "*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 3:13-14). Those who continually "follow on to know the Lord" are KINGS OF THE EAST!

Chapter 185

The Battle At Armageddon (continued)

"And I saw *three unclean spirits like frogs* come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:13-14).

From the greatness of the crisis and the solemnity of the warning, these emissaries must be creatures of awesome power. Yet they seem unaccountably crude, uncouth, and unseemly. They surprise us. "Frogs!" we exclaim, "heralds of battle? Ambassadors to kings? Impossible! Absurd! Ridiculous!" The crisis is the greatest in the annals of war. It is referred to in scripture, as well as in our text, as "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." It is portrayed as a World War, a Universal Conflict. And yet — to assemble the militant nations — three slimy batrachian monsters! What are these "questionable shapes," these disgusting amphibia, from the swamps and mud of dried-up Euphrates? John describes them as "unclean spirits," they are "demons," or dead men. What we see in the vision is three ghostly emissaries, one out of the mouth of each of the confederates, the dragon, the wild beast, and the false prophet — gigantic shadowy frogs, croaking night prowlers, cold-blooded reptiles dwelling in marshes, quagmires, and stagnant waters, with their spotted skin, their sprawling limbs, their agile leap, their dismal croakings filling the night with noise. They are as politicians, these masqueraders, at home in the slimy pool, in the gooey mud, in the air or on solid ground; noisome, repulsive, abhorrent. Of what are these cheap orators, these uncanny imposters the emblem?

First, I would draw your attention to the fact that they are called "unclean spirits." They are unclean just because they are designated as frogs, and under the Old Testament law of Moses, as defined in the dietary laws, frogs were unclean animals and therefore not to be eaten by the people of Israel. Our second clue is that they are described as coming out of the mouth. Now how can a frog be in the mouth? The metaphor signifies an unclean **spirit** or an unclean **word** that is coming out of a **false teaching**. This is the spirit of all false teachings that originate from the mouth of the dragon (the devil and Satan), from the mouth of the beast (the world system), and from the mouth of the false prophet (the carnal church system of man). These are the teachings that people partake of, eat or assimilate into their lives, thus swallowing the spirit of that teaching, becoming defiled by it. And all of these teachings gather our minds and hearts in resistance and rebellion against the truth of God as it is in Jesus! Then when God shows up in our path and begins to deal with us by His Spirit **the battle is ready to begin!**

"SPIRIT AND WORD" — that is the issue in this battle at Armageddon. "Three *unclean spirits* coming out of the *mouth*." There is a time when God does more than just forgive our sins and pour down blessings upon us. The hour comes when He contends with the very spirit or spirits that motivate us and we find ourselves drawn into conflict — into the greatest conflict of our lives! The battle is not just "*against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Eph. 6:12). We are to be CLEANSED "*from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*" (II Cor. 7:1). Thus, when God sets His hand to purify and perfect us it is no local skirmish, but erupts into a full-fledged WORLD WAR involving every vestige of the flesh and every

stronghold of spirit as God in us goes about His work of “*the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*” (II Cor. 10:4-5). In John’s vision three unclean spirits emerge, touching upon the defilement and slavery of man in all areas of body, soul, and spirit. It reaches into all the expressions of society — religious, political, and economical. The frogs may croak all night but their influence will end with the Light of God’s New Day, when “***the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.***”

An “unclean” spirit is the opposite of the “clean” or “holy” Spirit. The “clean” or Holy Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, life, and righteousness. Unclean spirits produce the opposite: lies and deceits, evil, and death. The characteristics of the Holy Spirit are found in the “fruit of the spirit” which is: “*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*” (Gal. 5:22-23). These are the nine virtues which constitute the ***nature*** of the Holy Spirit which is the nature of God. The scriptures show that our bodies are the “body of Christ” and the “temple of God.” When we walk in the spirit we are walking in the nature of God. Paul says, “*This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:16). The lusts of the flesh produce uncleanness. Acts 1:8 says, “*But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me.*” What kind of POWER does the Holy Spirit give us? Certainly not muscle power! No, you get muscle power by eating certain proteins and exercising regularly. Would it be atomic power? There is a lot of power in atomic power — enough already stockpiled by the nations to blow twenty planets like ours to smithereens! If God is willing to give us power, it must be power AFTER HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS. What is God like? First of all, we know that God is a Spirit, and when God gives us power, He would naturally give us ***spirit power***. He gives us power after His likeness! This means that He gives us ***love power, joy power, peace power, longsuffering power, patience power, goodness power, temperance power, meekness power, and faith power***. This is indeed — ***SPIRIT POWER!***

If ever there was a need for this kind of power in the world, it is now! This old sin-weary world needs peace power, love power, and joy power. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all the rulers in all the nations had the ***peace power*** of GOD! You will understand a great mystery when you understand that love is spirit, joy is spirit, peace is spirit, patience is spirit, temperance is spirit, goodness is spirit, longsuffering is spirit, meekness is spirit, and faith is spirit. All of these virtues are ***spiritual attributes***, and they are all in the Holy Spirit and in us as the very essence of our beings as children of GOD! This is the nature God has raised up in us as He has poured out His Holy Spirit upon us, quickening *our spirit by His Spirit*. “***He that is joined to the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT.***” As we allow these virtues to grow and increase and abound within us we are walking in the power, strength, and blessing of the kingdom of God right here upon this earth. We are the ***sons of God!*** As we allow the spirit of Christ to rule in us, reign in us, and work through us, there is a manifestation of God’s kingdom through us to the world.

The so-called “gifts of the Spirit” are really manifestations of the ***ability*** of Christ within us, while the “fruit of the Spirit” is the manifestation of the ***nature*** of Christ within us. Every living thing possesses these two aspects of being: ***ability*** and ***nature***. Ability is what you can DO. Nature is what you ARE. With Christ in us, both His nature and His ability are to be fully developed in, and expressed through, our lives. All that Christ can DO He must do through us! All that Christ IS He must BE IN AND THROUGH US! As these two aspects of God’s Being are brought to complete fruition within, we become capable of truly reigning with and as Christ. Through the development

of these we are enabled to be **overcomers**. Jesus says, “*And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*” (Rev. 2:26-27). The nature and power of God raised up in His sons shall be ministered to the nations that they finally might be ruled by the greatest and most irresistible power of all — divine SPIRIT POWER! Love power...peace power...joy power...faith power!

Now let us return to the three “unclean spirits” like frogs which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. These come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These three “unclean” spirits are the opposite of the “clean” or Holy Spirit. They are therefore the ministers of lies, unrighteousness, and death. These three spirits spew forth all the unclean doctrines, propaganda, ideologies, delusions, deceptions, hatred, war, perversion, uncleanness, immorality, unbelief, and every other corruption that is characteristic of this evil day. These are the attitudes and conduct that are leading the nations of the world on the downward spiral to destruction. And just as righteousness is **spirit**, peace is **spirit**, love is **spirit**, joy is **spirit** — so rebellion is **spirit**, wickedness is **spirit**, hatred is **spirit**, fear is **spirit** — THE SPIRITS OF DEVILS GOING FORTH IN OPPOSITION TO THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST! And this “going forth” ultimately leads them to confrontation with truth and righteousness — at the “*battle of the great day of God Almighty!*”

The truth is, my beloved, you can be filled with the Holy Spirit or you can be filled with the spirit of the devil. You can be filled with God’s Spirit or you can be filled with the spirit of the world. You can be filled with the Spirit of Christ or you can be filled with religious spirits. You can be filled with the spirits of demons, devils, and evil spirits. I don’t care how you conjure them up. Matters not to me whether you think they are entities walking about in the invisible spirit world about you or whether they are something that comes out of a state of mind — these powers are real and Jesus cast them out of people. I don’t pretend to understand all about evil spirits — I don’t even understand all about the Holy Spirit and how He works! And I am much more interested in the Holy Spirit than I am in a devil or a demon or an evil spirit. I’m not a devil preacher. I am not devil conscious in my own life. But it is a fact that there is an unclean and evil anointing just as there is an anointing of the Holy Spirit! And every man who follows on to know the Lord will eventually come face to face with every one of those unclean “anointings” or “devils” when he comes to his Armageddon; for Armageddon is the *final battle* where Babylon, with all its carnality, worldliness, fleshliness, deception, and deviltry falls to rise no more. Therefore this battle must of necessity deal thoroughly and eternally with every one of the “spirits of devils”! Armageddon is where all the devilish spirits, all the worldly spirits, and all the religious spirits make their last stand against the Lord of hosts! And, like General Custer, they go down into ignominious and everlasting defeat! IT IS THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!

With this very thought in mind George Hawtin wrote: “The next great thing of note was the discovery that *right in the synagogue* there was a man possessed with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, ‘*Let us alone*; what have we to do with Thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth. Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God’ (Mk. 1:24). Now I wonder who that man was who was possessed with an unclean spirit? I dare not be certain, but I will tell you who he *may* have been and who he probably was. He was probably the *leader* of the synagogue. Are you horrified at my suggestion? Well, you need not be, for I have on my desk at this moment a large picture of a preacher with a reverse collar and all the regalia of a minister, marching with a crowd of homosexuals, all replete with signs and banners, agitating for public acceptance and recognition. Do you know what Moses said of homosexuals? He said they should be cut off from among the people (Lev. 18:22-29). That is the Old Testament type, and

under the New Covenant the apostle Paul warns that no homosexual shall inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10). Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord! Yet in our day these abominable demon-possessed people are being ordained as ministers of the gospel! If Jesus walked into their congregation today, He would have no choice but to cast the devil out of them, for all such are possessed of an ***unclean spirit***.

“There are other devils in the church system besides this one. There are false prophets, covetous, boasters, men who do not believe in the resurrection, the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, or regeneration. The Roman system from start to finish is a ‘do it yourself’ religion. I do not hesitate to say that all who are rubbing shoulders with it and glorying in ecumenism and the charisma of the whole evil business are coming under the control of Satan and the power of devils working miracles (Rev. 16:13-14). Have you never read this scripture, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every *foul spirit*, and a cage of every *unclean* and hateful bird’ (Rev. 18:2)” — end quote.

The three unclean spirits like frogs are called “*the spirits of devils*.” The Greek word for “devils” is *daimon* — a better translation would be *demons*. We dare not go beyond what God reveals. The scriptures are plain that there are entities called unclean spirits, devils, demons, etc. But the Bible nowhere clearly and explicitly informs us as to where the origin of these was. Until the Lord makes it plain it really isn’t important who are what they are. Some things are certain: Evil spirits of various dispositions exist, they pertain to a negative realm, they are agents of the satanic kingdom, they actively seek to inhabit the souls and bodies of human beings, and Jesus has given us authority and power to cast them out. There is absolutely NO scriptural evidence or even a clear inference that they are ***fallen angels!*** That is another false teaching of Babylon. Some feel that they are unique, individualized manifestations of the serpent nature in man. Others believe they are disembodied souls or spirits of ungodly men who have died — spirits confined to a low spiritual dimension in earth’s atmosphere. I will confess that I lean toward this interpretation and it would certainly explain why they seek to possess, express, and manifest through *human* bodies and use *human* speech.

There is a further clue indicating this. There was a day when Jesus crossed the sea of Galilee in a boat and came to the country of the Gadarenes. When Jesus stepped out on land, there met Him a certain man out of the town who was possessed by demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he lived not in a house, but among the tombs of the cemetery. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and fetters, but often he would break the bonds and be driven by the demons into the wilderness. And when he saw Jesus he raised a terrible cry from the depths of his throat and fell down before Him in terror and shouted loudly, “What have You to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you do not torment me.” Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he answered, “*Legion*,” for many demons had entered him. And they begged Jesus not to command them to depart into the deep. A great herd of swine was there feeding on the hillside; and the demons begged Him to give them leave to enter these. And He allowed them to do so. Then the demons came out of the man and entered into the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep cliff into the lake and were drowned (Lk. 8:26-39).

I would draw your reverent attention to a few pertinent points. I have met brethren who are of the opinion that these demons were not actual persons or personalities but “negative thoughts” or “false beliefs.” But these devils, *not the man*, besought Jesus. They asked a favor of Him. They used *human* speech. They entreated Him not to command them to go into the “deep.” The word “deep” does not signify the lake. The Greek word is *abussos* meaning “abyss,” a word elsewhere

applied to Hades, the unseen realm of disembodied *human* spirits. The devils besought Him that He would not send them to the disembodied state, but permit them to embody themselves in the swine. He permitted them to go. The devils went *out* of the man and went *into* the swine. Now some tell us that these were “negative thoughts” or “false beliefs.” What shall we say to these things? Shall we say that a legion of six thousand false beliefs went out of this man and entered into the swine? Is that a practical thought — that six thousand false beliefs can go out of one man and enter into two thousand hogs? Is it so, that six thousand false beliefs so worried and worked upon these hogs that they committed suicide in the waters of the lake? Was the suicide of the swine a protest against false beliefs? To ask the questions is to answer them! These demons bear all the marks of *human personalities*.

Having said that, however, we must not forget for one moment that in the book of Revelation we are dealing with *symbols* and *signs*. We cannot let down our guard and yield to the easy temptation to *literalize* the visions John beheld in spirit. Three “unclean spirits” which are “spirits of devils” come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. We already know that the dragon is not a *literal* dragon, the beast is not a *literal* beast, and the false prophet is not one solitary *literal* man who is himself *the* false prophet. Each of these stands for something else! They are each a metaphor and a parable! Since the dragon is not a literal dragon, is the dragon’s “mouth” a literal mouth? And if the mouth is not a literal mouth, are the “spirits of devils” issuing out of that mouth *literally* a great host of demons spreading out over the earth? Not by any means!

Now these unclean spirits go forth into the world to all peoples. They go to the “kings” of the earth and of the whole world to gather them together unto the battle of the great day of God. On the personal level this takes place right within ourselves, whereas on the corporate level it also is fulfilled externally in the church systems of man. Individually, the unclean spirits muster all their forces to try to deceive, delude, and defeat the work of God in His elect. This is the battle of Armageddon **WITHIN**. Corporately, however, these demons go primarily to those having some authority or influence over others — the **Leaders!** This includes ministers who are leaders of large groups of the Lord’s people as well as secular leaders. All these groups, or classes, these spirits subtly influence in various ways in their thinking and believing so as to stir them up to oppose and withstand the final work of God in these days of the manifestation of the sons of God. This is a battle for **men’s minds**, for the **control** and **domination** of God’s people, and these spirits gather when the river of Babylon is dried up, when her defenses are weakened, to croak loudly in an effort to oppose the kings coming from the rising of the sun, to prevent their entrance into religious Babylon to seize and destroy it and to set God’s people free!

The key here is the word *mouth*. How meaningful this is! The book of Revelation gives us two views of everything. One is the view from heaven, the other is the view from earth. When you’re on earth and you see the Lord’s people, how do you see them? You see them as seven churches with all their spirituality and their carnality. You see them as a woman in the wilderness, as a harlot riding a beast, as that great city, Babylon. Oh, yes, those are all views of God’s people! “Come out of her, *my people!*” But when you see them in the heavens of the Spirit, what do you see? You see a woman clothed with the sun, as a manchild ascending the throne, as 144,000 standing upon the heavenly mount Zion, as the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. Everything is viewed from these two vantage points — heaven and earth.

We must always know whether we are seeing from the heavenly perspective or the earthly perspective, because from these two vistas we see two different things. This is interesting because from the earth the devil is beheld as a *dragon* along with two mammoth bestial systems he uses and has always used throughout the history of the church age. The first bestial system (out of the sea) is the world governmental, economic, educational, judicial, military, and cultural system — the world order. The second bestial system (out of the earth) is the false religious system of man. And the dragon is the spirit of the devil that inspires, motivates, and controls them all. But when John beholds these from the **throne zone**, he sees them as nothing but three ugly, slimy, ***croaking frogs!*** In the spirit they appear as three unclean, demonic spirits manipulating human governments and religious systems of man — and, of course, individually these same propensities lie within each one of us! From the viewpoint of heaven we see them as frogs, but from the viewpoint of earth they appear as a great fire-belching dragon and two fearful beasts that reign in the lives of men and dominate the whole world. Ah, yes, we would fear what we see in the earthlies, but the fear loses all its power when we see the truth as it appears from the heavenlies! We perceive the dragon, the beast out of the sea, and the beast out of the earth as mighty, dreadful, intimidating, terrifying powers. Yet God sees them as pesky, annoying, obnoxious, croaking frogs to be squashed by one stomp of His almighty foot! In the earth realm we hear the voice of the beast that speaks as a dragon, but in the heaven realm we only hear the croaking of a frog! Oh, the wonder of it!

In scripture frogs speak of evil spirits. These spirits aren't frogs, of course, but they are *like* frogs. If I understand the properties and effects of water, I can understand water as a figure for the Holy Spirit who comes to us refreshing, cleansing, empowering, and giving life. If I understand something about the properties and characteristics of a tree, I can then understand something about what the scripture means when it says that we are "the planting of the Lord," and "trees of righteousness." I grasp the idea of the strength, stability, and fruitfulness of one rooted and grounded in Christ. In like manner, if I understand the characteristics of the frog, then I can understand how these unclean spirits operate. It's not just important to know that they are unclean spirits like frogs, but it's important to discern how they operate. What do we normally associate with coming out of someone's mouth? WORDS! Words which express thoughts and ideas, or intent of action. So out of the mouths of these three "ungodly" forces poured forth torrents of ***words!*** Unclean, evil, deceptive, deluding, degrading, false, lying concepts and teachings. Babylonish doctrines! The way they operate is through WORD POWER! We understand this great truth by the fact that this three-fold unclean spirit comes out of the ***mouth*** of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet! You see, my beloved, whatever is hidden in our nature will eventually spill over into our ***speech!***

The words of Jesus are just as true today as when He spoke them to the Pharisees twenty centuries ago: "*O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*" (Mat. 12:34-37).

The nature of the dragon, the nature of the beast, and the nature of the false prophet are three dimensions of the nature of the natural Adamic life within each of us. These three natures or minds speak out of the mouth of the flesh man. These are powers within us that must experience the dealing of God! We all know how it is that when difficulty, adversity, tragedy, pressure, trial, or

trouble comes into our life, what is hidden in our nature becomes manifest in our words. Fear, dismay, anxiety, doubt, unbelief, anger, bitterness, frustration, resentment, exasperation, disappointment, disillusionment, depression, displeasure, wrath, deceit, and a world of other attitudes, dispositions, opinions, feelings, emotions, and attributes of our inner state of being express themselves through the words of our mouth. Are we so blind that we cannot see that trials and testings are *gifts from God* sent to us? They are sent to reveal US TO US! That's really all they are sent to do! They are not sent to show us that we failed to *do something*, or that we *need to do something*; they are not sent to expose us to others, to embarrass or discredit us. Oh, no! They are sent to reveal to us areas of our lives where there is still a lack and where the Spirit of God is raising up His mighty hand of dealing within us!

When all is well and there are no pressures pressing in upon us, these dimensions of the natural life remain hidden deep within us. But when trouble comes, out of our mouth proceeds the **evidence** of those things that still lie buried in the heart of man, in the nature of the dragon, the nature of the beast, and the nature of the false prophet. These are devilish spirits (attitudes, words) that must be slain by the sword of the Lord! These are devilish spirits, working wonders, and they are sent forth to the kings (those strong things which rule) of the earth (soulical religious realm) and of the whole world (the all-inclusive nature of man) to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty! What does it mean to you, my brother, my sister, to have the words of your mouth reveal and call forth the strong things in your life that rule where the spirit of life and righteousness and the mind of Christ ought to be enthroned? What does it mean to you when you face the *last battle*, the *final conflict*, where ALL that remains unconquered and unchanged within you is exposed and led forth to the battlefield where Christ will conquer once and for all? Ah, *that* is truly the battle of the great day of God Almighty! *That* is truly Armageddon! It is indeed the **battle of battles!** And it certainly has a thousand times more to do with "*the revelation of Jesus Christ*" than some bloody war between carnal nations over on the plains of Megiddo! This is the final battlefield for the Christ of God where Christ becomes the Victor within. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it!

Our text tells us that the unclean spirits proceed from the **mouths** of the infernal trinity — the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The *dragon*, you recognize, is the devil, that ancient serpent, who slithers about in the dust of man's flesh nature and carnal mind, and who is, after all, the real power over all the kingdoms of the flesh, within and without. Corporately, the *beast* is the monster out of the sea of humanity with its ten horns and seven heads — the whole bestial world system of man — human governments and institutions of all kinds. It is the dragon in man who gives the beast out of the sea his seat and great authority! And the *false prophet* is the same as the second beast in chapter thirteen of the Revelation, who comes up out of the earth of our soulical powers, who has two horns as a lamb, but speaks like the dragon — the innate soulical religious nature of man expressed through the carnal church systems of man. And we may also remember that the relation between these three is such that the beast, or the whole world system, is the representative of the dragon upon earth, exists for him and works for him; and that the false prophet, the false church, in turn labors and deceives the nations on behalf of the beast and his image. Now, these three unclean spirits signify a **three-fold word**, (*the thoughts of men's hearts, political and educational propaganda of all kinds, and religious teaching and preaching*) for they come out of the **mouth** of the dragon, and out of the **mouth** of the beast, and out of the **mouth** of the false prophet!

Now, let us look a little further. In the nineteenth chapter of the book of Revelation we find this same beast is referred to. And there we read, "*And the beast was taken, and with him the false*

prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he had deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire that burneth with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20). And in Revelation 20:10 we find mention of him once more: "*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are.*" There is no difficulty in identifying these two, the beast and the false prophet. The beast is obviously the first beast, the one out of the sea; and the false prophet is none other than the second beast, the one out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, and a voice speaking as a dragon, who deceives them that dwell in the earth-realm. Therefore we understand that the second beast is also called — ***the false prophet!***

What is a prophet? We must banish from our minds the popular conception that a prophet is chiefly a person who foretells the future. True, a prophet also foretells the future; but the prophetic ministry is broader than that. A prophet is, according to scripture, one who speaks for someone else. Aaron is called the "prophet" of Moses when they two go together before Pharaoh, and Aaron delivers the message to Pharaoh on behalf of Moses the stutterer. And that is why all the prophets of God have prefaced their prophecies with the phrase, "Thus saith the Lord!" They are men who speak *for God*, delivering His message to His people, appealing to the minds and hearts of men on behalf of God and His purposes. They teach and speak and reveal the will of God and draw men to embrace that which is the mind of the Lord.

So this second beast is also a prophet! He speaks for someone else. His purpose is to influence the minds of men, to persuade them, to rally them to the cause on behalf of which he speaks. But he is a *false prophet!* That does not mean that everything he says is a lie — not all that the serpent told mother Eve in the garden was a lie — but it was truth laced with just enough error to deceive. That is the purpose of the words of a false prophet — deception! And if we consider this in relation to the beast now under consideration, we shall find that this is in reality his character. In the first place, his very appearance is deceiving. He looks like a lamb; and one would receive the impression, therefore, that every word he speaks is the word of the Lamb of God! But he speaks like the dragon, that is, the message he bears is not in the final analysis the *gospel*, the *good news* of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, but is liberally laced with *bad news* of threats, intimidation, fear, condemnation, coercion, judgment, hell, and eternal damnation.

What beast is this? Ah, this refers to the false church, one that outwardly looks like the church of Christ, but he speaks as a dragon. Today in the church systems of man the dragon's voice can be heard out of the mouths of multitudes of pastors, evangelists, and church leaders of all kinds! They sing songs of worship, they speak of Jesus and the gospel, they have "church" written on their signs and their buildings, they perform religious ceremonies, they do good works — it looks just like the Lamb! Yet as one listens there is discernible another sound, it is "another voice," the dragon's voice, and it leads millions into man-made rules and regulations, false ideas about God, paganized holidays and doctrines, distorted understanding of God's will, His ways, and His word, and into fear, condemnation, and horrible religious bondage and slavery.

On another level we can say that the dragon indicates the *carnal mind*, the beast bespeaks *worldliness*, and the false prophet signifies *false doctrine*. That which comes out of their mouths is their *word*. And how full the world is today of these CROAKING VOICES! What mighty words these are! What powerful traditions, laws, customs, ideas, philosophies, societal pressures, value systems, and demands they represent! It is fitting that the activities of these three unclean spirits is compared to frogs, working under cover and in the darkness and stagnant places of man's carnal life. The croaking voices sound forth loudly day and night from the halls of government,

from the class rooms of schools and universities, from all branches of the media, from books and movies, from commerce and business, and from the pulpits of the churches and all religious systems. And that **word** brings great conflict in the lives of all who try to harmonize worldly, fleshly principles and standards with the nature, spirit, and ways of the Lord! These three unclean spirits work miracles, that is, they do mighty, convincing works, and the one that comes out of the mouth of the false prophet even speaks in tongues, prophesies, heals the sick, and tries to prove their authority, dominion, and power and that they are the successors of Christ and the apostles, and are the repository of the orthodox truth of God; but for the kings of the east, the perfected sons of God, they have to battle these things out in their spiritual experience, when they see and understand what these unclean spirits represent, and why they are their enemies, their opponents in this great battle at Armageddon, and yield themselves up to Christ for His victory to be fully consummated within them. Hallelujah!

Before there can be any battle there must be a confrontation of two forces. And to bring this confrontation into a state of action, there must be a provocation. The provocation that brings about that battle of the great day of God Almighty is the **word** of the three unclean spirits like frogs! It is *they* that go forth to gather all the kings, or mighty ruling powers within, unto the battle of God. It is when the word of man and the word of God meet by the enlightenment of the spirit of the Lord within us that the battle is set. When God dries up the river of Babylon in our life, it is then that every religious spirit that would challenge the mind of Christ and the Lordship of Jesus within us rises up to do battle. Did you ever sit in the dark in a quiet rowboat in the middle of a lilypad-covered lake? Suddenly there is a noise close by from a frog on one side. Then one croaks from far away on the other side. From here, there, over here, over there the noises come! In just that way the religious spirits croak away in our minds and emotions, shouting their propaganda, calling out their objections to the way of the spirit, raising up their carnal demands out of the soulical nature within, stirring up flesh and spirit to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Everywhere, within and without, there is the croaking of the frogs in which one imitates the other. They try to exceed each other in offensive boasting and blasphemous talk. According to their own estimation they accomplish great things before the eyes of the blinded people, they perform signs and wonders, everyone is amazed; yea, they blaspheme sublimely. On and on they croak out their false, contemptible word. They creep and croak and defile, and fill the eyes of mankind and even our own hearts with their noisy demonstrations. It is when we discern the frog-like nature of these unclean spirits that we are brought to the front lines of the battle. It is these three spirits that the kings of the east must battle within their minds and hearts, in the place called Armageddon.

It was not until after the river Euphrates was dried up, that John saw the three unclean spirits like frogs. Before the river was dried up, John did not see the unclean spirits, for they were hidden in the mud and swamps of the river. But when the Lord begins to divert the river of man He also brings forth a revelation of just what that river really is and what spirit it is of! The river Euphrates pictures that religious flow which does not produce the way of life and truth from the Lord Jesus Christ, but produces the way that *seems* right unto man. The river bespeaks the merchandizing spirit of religious Babylon which nourishes the spirit of confusion. But when God pours out His bowl upon the river it dries up the flow that is there! God has already dried up that river in the lives of many who now read these lines, and soon He shall dry it up in the lives of millions more of His precious people! As soon as the river is dried up there is seen and heard the three unclean spirits as they make their appearance. This is very interesting! Frogs feed on flies, which signify the spirit of Beelzebub. They feed on the flood that comes out of the mouth of the dragon, which

is also the great river Euphrates, and they are the spirits of devils which go forth unto the kings of carnality and flesh within us. Here the battle is set!

This is the battle of that great **day** of God Almighty. It **is** GOD'S DAY! The adversary has reached his last ditch. It is now a free fight between truth and error, between religion and reality, between flesh and spirit, and between life and death. It is now time for ALL of God's people to be liberated from the bondage of the great city of spiritual Babylon. The adversary has nothing with which to make war upon Jesus and His many brethren, the sons of God, and against all the Lord's redeemed ones — nothing, that is, except *falsehood* — the very same weapon he used when he began his opposition to God in that long ago Eden! In the garden he came speaking through the mouth of a reptile in the form of a bewitching serpent. But now, at his final stand, in desperation he comes with the same falsehood in the form of vile, croaking frogs, slimy reptiles, called "spirits of devils." It is indeed the battle of the "*great day of God Almighty*" when unfettered truth meets naked falsehood in the final combat. Truth certainly will prevail! As truth and reality have prevailed within us, God's called and chosen elect, in our personal Armageddon, so will truth and reality prevail in all the Lord's people and Babylon shall fall to rise no more! It is indeed wonderful!

Chapter 186

The Battle At Armageddon (continued)

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:13-14).

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are *the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*" (Rev. 5:6).

You will understand a great mystery when you see that in the book of Revelation we are shown two sets of *spirits* which are sent forth into the same areas and seek to control the same territory — the "seven spirits of God" and the "three spirits of devils"! Right here lies the **cause** of the great battle within! The seven spirits of God signify the *fullness of the spirit of the Lord* raised up within God's people. This seven-fold spirit is raised up to subdue, reconcile, and redeem the whole man — spirit, soul, and body. Thus we read that the seven spirits are "sent forth into *all the earth*" — truly into all the earth that **we are**, as well as into all the **earth-realm** where the Lord's people dwell!

But now there is **another spirit** — three unclean spirits like frogs — and this three-fold spirit is likewise sent forth "*unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world.*" This three-fold **unclean** spirit seeks to dominate and control the same territory of our lives where the seven-fold **holy** spirit has come to live and reign. The message is clear — WAR is about to break out in the "earth" of God! These spirits "go forth unto the kings (inner dominions) of the earth (carnal Christians) and of the whole world (of our beings), TO GATHER THEM TO THE BATTLE OF THAT GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!" Can you not see the mystery? The seven-fold spirit (of the perfection of God) comes into active conflict with the three-fold spirit (complete power of the flesh, the world, and the devil) of man's carnal, natural life. This three-fold spirit may also be characterized as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, for these spirits go forth unto the "whole world," and the apostle John informs us that "ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD **IS** the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life!"

There are three things: (1) The lust of the flesh (2) The lust of the eyes (3) The pride of life.

That's *all there is* in the WHOLE WORLD!

Those three are what "THE WORLD" consists of!

Therefore, the "kings" of the "whole world" signify the ruling principles and powers of fleshly desire that influence, dominate, and control the natural and soulical religious life of man! We need to note that Armageddon is a battle among kings. The spirits of devils go forth unto "**the kings**" of the earth-realm and of the whole world — and that is the end of those kings!

Can we not see by this that the battle is between the *flesh* and the *spirit*, for Paul tells us plainly that "The flesh *wareth* against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the

one to the other..." (Gal. 5:17). Right there, my friend, you have your battleground — ARMAGEDDON!

So, you say — I would never be deceived by the doctrines of the three frogs going forth to gather the kings of the earth. Don't be too sure! If you still have kings in YOUR earth, or flesh life, kings of pride, jealousy, resentment, criticism, condemnation, judging, presumptuousness, desire for recognition, authority or control, carnal reasonings, vain imaginations, doubts, false doctrines, fears, anger, frustration, lusts, worldliness, or any one of a hundred more, somewhere deep within you are hearing the croaking of the three ugly frogs and there is that within you which leads to turmoil and conflict. So many people are caught up in viewing Armageddon as an external battle between nations that they completely overlook the possibility of these kings actually existing in their very own flesh life.

There have been within all of us many usurping kings, possessed of the bestial spirit of this world, who are very subtle, very powerful warriors, and very acute disputants. Each of us is like a huge, elaborate palace just full of these kings! Beloved! Examine yourself — do you not find this to be true? What mighty, powerful, persuasive, unwearied rulerships and dominions exercise their authorities within the courts of our bodies and souls, what strange, strong, and subtle reasonings are there? Insomuch that the old Adamic man carries all before him, and these lusts, these desires, these emotions, these imaginations, these habits, these religious inclinations, these selfish and self-serving tendencies, these ruling kings of flesh bear away the day of it, and tread down all that stands in their way; by their false logic, their cunning sophistry, and their powerful affection they ride rough-shod over the voice of the spirit, over the word of God, over the ways of righteousness, and right over the revealed will of the Lord. And this you know is, and has been of old, and shall be, my beloved, until Jesus Christ be revealed, until He be pleased, with His almighty power to arise within the soul and command obedience, and that He will now manifest Himself, and comes forth with regal, conquering power, else our lusts and thoughts and emotions make such a noise, such a blustering, such a clamoring in the soul until Christ cannot be heard. But when the *King of kings* commands all the kings to gather on the field of battle He marches forth to command them all, to put them all to silence, answering, convicting, and banishing every fleshly lust and every soulical sentiment, with every vestige of self-will, and then great Babylon falls, the captivity of the spirit is ended, and then His kingdom comes in great power and glory, and He reigns in soul and body, becoming the King of the life! Great is the mystery!

With keen spiritual insight Ray Prinzing wrote: "How we desire that He REIGN IN US until every fragment of that which would rise up against the truth is subdued, until every desire in us is wholly purified, until every root that would defile us has been burned out — yes, until He shall have thoroughly dealt with all of our '*internal enemies*.' It is not the man on the street, the raging nations around us, but our own INTERNAL REALM that needs to be fully subdued. The *kings within us* that war against His will. Yes, until we are brought to that place where we can say with Jesus our Lord, '*the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me*' (Jn. 14:30). Praise God! Then He shall be able to look upon us, and declare — not just from a prophetic point of view, but from our experiential position in Him, '*He hath not beheld iniquity in this vessel.*'

"We read that, '*There was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker*' (II Sam. 3:1). David prefigures in type the spiritual man of the new creation within; while all the kings, and the house of Saul, stand in type for the carnal realm of the flesh. '*The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do*

the things ye would' (Gal. 5:17). There has been a **long war within us**, but, praise God, the Christ life waxes stronger and stronger, to overcome the carnal nature and bring it to an end.

"Another example of a **long war** — '*Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them...*

(Josh. 11:18-20). Significant that as Joshua, and the warriors of Israel, came up to a city, instead of that city seeking a peaceful surrender, THE LORD WOULD HARDEN THEIR HEARTS, they would insist on doing battle, and would be destroyed. I have experienced betimes that God will **harden** 'a king' within us, our own self-will crystallizes into a firm rebellion, that He might draw out that which is within us, until He has purged us, and IS LORD OF ALL WITHIN. All of this serves as a parable for our spiritual walk with God. It's amazing the 'nations' and the 'kings' that have been resident in us, which He now draws out into the battle, to conquer. For, WE BECOME OVERCOMERS IN CHRIST TO THE DEGREE THAT WE ARE OVERCOME BY CHRIST. Thank God, '*In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*' (Dan. 2:44).

"There are those who search the newspapers to see how the kings of earth are lining up, and how 'they think' prophecy is being fulfilled. But there is an **internal working** that transcends all of that, and it is this **war within us**. The kings of self, the passions and lusts of the flesh, the rudiments of the old Adamic nature — all of these must be **dealt with by His cross**. Paul wrote of this internal warfare, '*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*' (Rom. 7:24-25). And HE, THE SON, '*must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet*' (I Cor. 15:25). Yes, there will be a universal fulfillment of this! The outreaches thereof stagger the imagination. But there is also an individual inworking, as He now wages **this long war** in us, riding within, '*conquering and to conquer*' (Rev. 6:2). Praise God, the victory is HIS, reigning supreme until He is Lord of all within us!" — end quote.

Concerning these hidden, internal kings the Lord says in type and shadow: "*Moreover the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed. Thou shalt not be frightened of them: for the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible. And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee...the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. And He shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them*" (Deut. 7:20-24).

Have you ever been attacked by a hornet? If a fly buzzes around we may get annoyed but we usually just swat at it to chase it away. But it only takes one hornet to get us stirred up and running! Well, in the spiritual meaning of the word, the Lord says He will send the hornet among us until all the kings that are left in our lives, and have hidden themselves from us, run right out into the open and are destroyed. It is my conviction that these hornets portray the same great truth and serve the same divine purpose as the "three unclean spirits like frogs" which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty! Oh, yes, these hornets, these spirits, will stir these kings out of their hiding places! These stirrings will cause fiery trials in the lives of the Lord's people, and great commotions of battle. Every child of God will be touched in depths within their beings which before were unknown to them. They will feel that they are being torn asunder and the pain and anguish will be

great. It is difficult to imagine how much pain there will be when the hornets begin to stir the kings out of their hiding places! "War is hell!" it has been said.

Why is such a drastic dealing necessary? Because God is dealing with man's self-life, man's fleshly nature and ways, man's Babylonian religiosity, and man's utter deception and delusion. He is striking at the root of our desires, our opinions, our pride, and our self-confidence and self-will. Have your "kings" been stirred by hornets lately? If you have received the call to sonship to God, then whatever is hidden within your being is going to be stirred in this great and terrible day of the Lord! God will expose the kings that rule in your land so that you can see them. When the hornet stings they will rush out into the open, into plain manifestation! The battle, my beloved, is for the identifying of these kings so that you can see them, recognize them for what they are, and destroy them from your life. At this battle of the great day of God Almighty the Lord has ordered the slaying and destruction of all that would rise up against the truth and against the righteousness of HIS KINGDOM WITHIN!

More than a hundred years ago Harry Emerson Fosdick penned these perceptive and inspired words: "*Prayer is a battlefield*. When a man, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, calls God into alliance, he does so because he has a fight on his hands. He may have set his heart in dominant desire on godliness, but that desire meets enemies that must be beaten. 'No man ever became a saint in his sleep.' From without, the influences of the world assail his best ambitions; from within, the perverse inclinations of his own heart make war on his right resolutions. A fight is on in every aspiring life. Sometimes like the captain of a ship in mid-sea with a tempest raging and his own crew in rebellion, a man must at once steady his course amid outward temptations, and hold a pointed pistol at the head of his own mutinous desires. No one in earnest about godliness has ever succeeded in describing the achievement of godliness except in terms of a *fight!* 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,' says Paul. 'I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage.'

"In this spiritual battle, as in every other, *the decisive part of the engagement is not public and ostentatious; it is in secret*. Long before the armies clash in the open field, there has been a conflict in the general's office, where pro met con, and the determinations were reached that controlled each movement of the outward war. Even in law, 'Cases are won in chambers.' So, in the achievement of divine nature and spiritual character there is a hidden battlefield on which the decisive conflicts of the kingdom of God are waged. Behind the Master's public ministry, through which He moved with such amazing steadfastness, not to be deflected by bribes, nor halted by fear of man or devil, nor discouraged by weariness, lay the battles in the wilderness where He fought out in fasting and prayer the controlling principles of His life. Behind His patience in Pilate's Court, and His fidelity on Calvary, lay the battle in Gethsemane, where the whole problem was fought through and the issue settled before the face of God. All public consequences go back to secret conflicts. Napoleon sat for hours in silent thought before he ordered the Russian Campaign. Washington, praying at Valley Forge, was settling questions on which the independence of his country hung. We are deceived by the garish stage-settings of big scenes in history. The really great scenes are rarely evident. *The decisive battles of the world are hidden, and all the outward conflicts are but the echo and reverberation of that more real and inward war.*

"George Adam Smith suggested that no one had so frankly revealed the use of prayer as a *battlefield for the conquest of the soul* as 'Chinese' Gordon. A search of his letters to his sister reveals the truth of this. 'I can say for my part,' writes Gordon, 'that backbiting and envy were my

delight, and even now often lead me astray, but by dint of perseverance in prayer, God has given me the mastery to a great degree. I did not wish to give it up, so I *besought Him* to put that wish within me; He did so, and then I had the promise of His fulfillment.' Even more vividly does Gordon put his use of prayer when he speaks of Agag — his figure for his own selfish ambitions and pride: 'My constant prayer is against Agag, who, of course, is here, and as insinuating as ever — I had a terrible struggle this morning with Agag — I had a terrible half-hour this morning, hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord.'

"Who can fail to see what Gordon meant? Some impurity was in him and he hauled it before the face of God and slew it there; some selfish ambition, counter to the will of God, he dragged up into the light and hewed in pieces before the Lord. Day by day he returned to cast down unholy passions and selfish aims and to confirm every true ambition of the spirit in the sight of God. The very fountains of his life, the springs from which all action comes, were cleansed. He obtained the victory!" — end quote.

ARMAGEDDON!

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. *Behold, I come as a thief.* Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together *into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon*" (Rev. 16:14-16).

God's people are still prone to think with *carnal minds*. When they read in the prophecies of the Bible about the gathering of kings unto battle, and the fighting of great wars, immediately their attention is focused on *world events* rather than on the *things of God*. This fallacy-ridden practice has given rise to what has been rightly termed "newspaper eschatology" — studying current events in the arena of "this present evil world" rather than searching the mind of the Spirit for the wisdom and understanding God gives of the *true thing* He is doing in the earth by His Spirit! The *work of God* is not currently outside of us, not out there in the world of darkness with all of its plans and efforts and shamefully fleshly activities and wicked schemes. The work of God is *within His people!* "For it is God which *worketh in you* both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). Sons of God do not derive their theology from the newspapers nor the television news casts. What you read and hear there is *not* what God is doing! Nor is it what God is *talking about!* That is not where God's work is seen! Nor is that what God is concerned with! The Holy Spirit of God has not come within us to show us what the world system is up to — He has come to "take the *things of Christ* and *show them unto us!*"

When the Holy Spirit gives us revelation it is not to bless us with juicy tidbits of information about the intentions, activities and movements of the government or military machine of the United States, Russia, Iraq, Iran, Israel, the European Union, Al Queda, the Taliban, or any other of the nations of earth or national and world leaders! Let us seek to *abandon all such side issues* and seek diligently to concentrate on Christ and spiritual things! Those who will possess the mind of Christ will find *in Him* the source and substance of all reality and the culmination of all purpose. We hear a great deal today about many wonderful things. As we draw nearer to the manifestation of the sons of God, and the full light of God's new day sends its illuminating rays upon our waiting souls, there will be an ever-increasing flood of light and revelation. This we must certainly expect and accept, for every new day brings new things, and new dispensations are sent to flood the world with greater light and greater experience in God. But the "new things" are *God's things* —

not the world's things! The "things that must shortly come to pass" are *spiritual things, divine things, heavenly things, supernatural things* — not the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil! "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things of God*" (I Cor. 2:9-10). The spirit within us is not searching out the intentions and movements of Russia, China, Israel, or Europe — oh, no! His revelation to John the beloved — and to you and me, my friend — concerns the DEEP THINGS OF GOD! Isn't it wonderful! The book of Revelation is a message from heaven about something that is taking place which cannot be seen except *in the spirit*, and *by revelation*. It is an *apocalypse*. It's not what men call an apocalypse, as though somehow the destruction of the world would make it a better place. As though millions of people running in fear for their lives from giant scorpions and swarming locusts out of the abyss, crouching in fear from one-hundred pound hailstones falling out of the sky, drinking the blood of dead men from their faucets, being burned to a crisp by the heat of the sun, one-third of the human race being blown into eternity by atomic warfare — as though all this and many more unspeakable horrors are somehow an appropriate climax to this great story of the Bible. Such crude, perverted ideas are so very sad! They are so disgustingly sadistic! It is remarkable, to say the least, that *literal* events such as these, should be represented by supposedly spiritual men as THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! Such distorted "logic" reminds me of the little story I heard some years ago which went like this — One bright day in the middle of the night two dead soldiers got up to fight. Back to back they faced each other, drew their swords and shot one another. If you don't believe this story is true, ask the blind man — he saw it too!

Get beyond the outer, natural, carnal understanding, my beloved brethren, and look into the spirit, into the heart of our heavenly Father, and see that the revelation of Jesus Christ is not something you can see with the natural eye or touch with physical hands, for it must be revealed *in you*. Paul understood this when he wrote, "...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son *in me*" (Gal. 1:15-16). If you can understand that premise, that when John saw these scenes he was *in the spirit*, you will perceive the mystery of the Revelation, for John beheld all these things from a *spiritual perspective*.

There are words and phrases, signs and symbols in the Revelation that have held and still hold a place in Christian thought out of all proportion to their importance to the overall vision John saw on Patmos. For some reason they stand out like snow-capped peaks in a mountain range. Barrels of midnight oil have been burned by zealous students trying to unravel the riddle of "666," "Antichrist," "Armageddon," or the "Millennium." Not because of the over-riding importance of these things in the visions of the Revelation, but because of their prominence in Christian thought and current literature they merit special attention as we pass through the mysteries of this book. The fact is, the term "Antichrist" is altogether foreign to the book of Revelation — it never appears anywhere, not even once! And yet we constantly hear from preachers things about a supposed "Antichrist" in the book of Revelation! And "Armageddon" appears only one time in the whole book, here in our present text. The term "Armageddon" awakens in many minds a kind of superstitious dread of some awful crisis, they hardly know what, but a dreadful day that will make all other crises in history pale into insignificance.

This line of thought is expressed so vividly in a letter I received from a dear sister some years ago. She wrote: "I read the article you sent me. I must say that I am dumbfounded, amazed, speechless, blown-away or any other word that you can find that describes my utter shock. I've never heard anything like it before in my life! I must say that I am a product of conventional

Christianity. All of my conceptions of end-time events leave me absolutely frozen with fear. I saw David Wilkerson's movie of his end-time revelation when I was 10. I have been living with this kind of death threat hanging over my head all these years. I become absolutely terrified when contemplating the end. I envision an Orwellian Big Brother world laced with famine, disease, crime, untold suffering, and people being martyred for their Christian faith. My heart almost fails me for fear! But this is what I have been taught. I only hope it is not true. If your article is any indication then I believe that you probably have an entirely different outlook on things. I have often questioned God and asked Him why did He choose for me to live in this time when there is absolutely no hope. All is bleakness. I have often asked would it not have been better for me to have been a serf governed by a feudal overlord, been an Irish peasant during 1845 and 46 when the potatoes rotted in the field. Would I not have been better off to have died in the Great Plague of London in 1665, been in Pompeii when Vesuvius blew. Any of these fates seem preferable to me than living through the end-time. I have wrung my hands in anguish asking God why. But maybe there is hope. Your article seems to imply that there is. Maybe everything I have heard is just man's carnal mind attempting to interpret the spiritual mind. I hope that is so! But if these things are to come to pass as I have imagined them then I have asked the Lord to be merciful and let me and my family die before they take place" — end quote.

Today, more than ever before, shelves of all our Christian bookstores are loaded with new books on eschatology, the second coming of the Lord, the rapture of the church, the coming antichrist, the great tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, and the millennial kingdom. The names of the authors of all these works differ as do their theories on end-time events. I am neither a news analyst, nor a prognosticator of world events. Recently I turned on the television and began to watch what appeared to be a regular news broadcast. The announcer was armed with statistics about the balance of power in the Middle East, with very refined information about armies, missiles, and nuclear weapons. I listened to him with some interest, thinking I was listening to some kind of news analyst, until after about ten minutes he said, "All of this agrees with prophecy," and he commenced to try to tie all of these pieces of news into the prophecies of the Bible. Well, I don't see that it was a Bible lesson at all — it was *newspaper exegesis!*

I have no time to waste anymore even listening to such things. My time would be better spent watching "I Love Lucy" — at least I would derive some humor and relaxation from it! I listened and read after such for many years. I discovered their projections and predictions never come to pass. Their game-plan changes with the years as technology advances and the world power-blocks shift with the sands of history. It is all speculation, based on a false premise, with faulty information, erroneous conclusions, and outright lies. Such are ministers of *delusion*, deceiving God's people. God has given them a working of delusion to believe the lie. They know not the purpose of God nor the outcome. They are taught by the serpent, that man-instructing snake of Eden who traduces or translates the scriptures for them, but gives them only dusty revelations and carnal interpretations, for that is all the carnal mind can receive. And the greater mark of their error is that there is NO LIFE IN THEM — as the letter quoted above reveals, there is only fear and bondage.

Now let us return to our subject of the battle at Armageddon. The book of Revelation is the fighting book of the New Testament. In its brief twenty-two chapters the words "to war" and "to make war" are used fifteen times! The words are found in all the rest of the New Testament but fourteen times. It reveals a great significance when we see that two hundred and thirty-eight New Testament chapters use the words fourteen times, while twenty-two chapters of the Revelation employ them fifteen times. This certainly indicates a purpose deeper than the mere incidents of

literary expression. None of these words appear in the four Gospels or in the Epistles of John. And yet the author of the Epistles of John also wrote the book of Revelation! This certainly identifies the theme of the Revelation as one of *warfare!* And once we know that “though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of *our warfare* are *not carnal*, but *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to *the obedience of Christ*,” — once we understand the *nature* of this warfare as *spiritual warfare* all the carnal, traditional interpretations of the book of Revelation are turned upside-down!

Other basic words in the vocabulary of conflict also appear in it. The two New Testament (Greek) words for “sword” appear in the Revelation. Luke is the only other writer to employ both of them. Omitting duplications, the words for “sword” appear twenty times in all the rest of the New Testament and eleven times in the Revelation. Two words for “chariot” are used in the New Testament and both appear in the Revelation. “Chief Captains,” who are military leaders, are mentioned twice in the Revelation. The fighting Parthians tied up the tails of their war horses in compact, pointed fashion until they looked like serpents. In one of John’s visions he sees in type just such a picture — two hundred million war horses with tails like serpents charge across the stage of this drama. The shape of the locusts was said to be “like horses prepared for war.” The sound of their wings was like the sound of many horses and chariots rushing to war. But the greatest warrior of all in the book of Revelation is none other than God’s Christ! Surely no one thinks that HE makes war with tanks and guns and missiles and bombs! *“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful”* (Rev. 17:14). *“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war”* (Rev. 19:11).

What one word most frequently describes a massive conflict ending in catastrophe? **ARMAGEDDON!** Students of theology have for generations been gripped in their imagination by the word “Armageddon.” Many these days talk about that great “Battle of Armageddon” which is mentioned only **one time** in the whole Bible! They suppose this to be the final “World War,” using the customary instruments of warfare, which will some day pit God and all His heavenly forces against Satan and all his evil hosts in a particular spot in the land of Israel. Most of us have been taught to view it as the war to end all wars. Some even view it as the end of the world!

But is Armageddon really a superpower confrontation? Is it a war between the United States and Russia, or between Russia, Europe, and Israel? Or some other such scenario? Statesmen, scientists, and generals have long warned of a “nuclear Armageddon” that could annihilate mankind from the face of the earth. Many believed that World War I — and later World War II — would end with Armageddon. Some today believe that Armageddon will be the last battle between the democratic nations and the communist block. But did you know that *nowhere* in the Bible — from Genesis to Revelation — is there any mention of a “battle **of** Armageddon”? After all, it’s only mentioned **one time** in the entire Bible! *“And he gathered them together into a place called... Armageddon.”* We see here that Armageddon is described as a **place**, not an **event**. It is the place of **gathering** in preparation for battle. But that is not the **name** of the battle! It is not the battle “**of**” Armageddon, but **“the battle OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!”** Oh, yes! It is GOD’S BATTLE — THE BATTLE OF GOD’S GREAT DAY! And that is how we can know that this is a **SPIRITUAL BATTLE!**

To be consistent, if one takes the reference to Armageddon literally, then he ought also to take the reference to the three slick, slimy frogs literally. Both references appear in the same passage! Yet no one ever suggests that there will be three creatures resembling frogs literally going about over the earth, landing at airports, conferring with the heads of state of many nations, seeking allies and recruits for this battle. In order to follow the path of consistency as witnessed again and again throughout the book of Revelation, we must look upon this reference to Armageddon as symbolic imagery, as with the reference to frogs. These are not descriptions of national and world events, but of the outworkings of the mighty spiritual purposes of God!

The word Armageddon, as pointed out, appears but once in scripture. People often pick out other scripture passages and claim that they refer to this “battle of Armageddon,” but that is unwarranted and without any evidence or foundation whatever. Armageddon means merely “the mount of Megiddo” — that is, the fortified hill of Megiddo. In olden times many a battle was fought near the ancient city of Megiddo. When the people of Israel heard that an enemy was approaching from the east, they tried to reach Megiddo first. Whoever held the city held command of the mountain pass of Megiddo and had a better opportunity to win the battle. The University of Chicago many years ago excavated the mound of Megiddo. There is evidence that the city antedated the time of Abraham. The word *me ged* from which part of the word Megiddo is derived means, among other things, “a fruitful place” or “pleasant things” and the city of Armageddon (the fortified Megiddo) was in this way associated with the fruits of victory. Another aspect of its meaning is “rendezvous” from a root indicating a “pressing in” or “assembling.” It was the place of the assembling of armies, and thus the Spirit says of Armageddon, “*And he gathered them (the kings of the earth and of the whole world) together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*”

Thus, in Armageddon we see both the positive and negative aspects. It is a gathering together unto slaughter on the one hand, and victory and glory on the other hand. It is death and life. It is defeat and triumph. It is the DAY OF THE LORD! It is the GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY! Not the day of the beast, not the day of the Antichrist, not the day of Satan, not the day of the flesh, not the day of world, or of sin, darkness, and death. But beloved, this is the long-awaited day when the LORD arises upon His people and HIS GLORY IS SEEN. It is the day when the dragon in the sea is slain, when the false prophet is cast into the lake of fire, when the great city Babylon falls to rise no more, when deception, struggle, sorrow, sighing, sin, darkness, and death all pass away and Christ becomes all-in-all! Oh, yes!

Jesus has already passed His Armageddon! He passed it when in the garden, in agony of soul, sweating great drops of blood, He said, “Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done” (Lk. 22:42). He passed through His darkest hour of battle and arose on the other side **victorious** over death, hell, and the grave! “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death **He might destroy him** that had the power of death, that is, **the devil**” (Heb. 2:14). “And having **spoiled principalities and powers**, He made a show of them openly, **triumphing over them** in it” (Col. 2:15). “That ye may know...the mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, **far above all principality and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named...and hath PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET**” (Eph. 1:18-21).

Christ met all the forces of sin and evil on His own personal battlefield of Armageddon. And Christ is VICTOR! He REIGNS — NOW! He has already overcome EVERY ENEMY! He has

conquered them. They are all already under His feet. They have no more power over Him! He is above them all. Jesus doesn't get sick, because He overcame all sickness. He can't die anymore, for He arose victor over death. He can't sin, for He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Satan has no power over Him for Jesus has already had His "bout" with Satan and now holds the ***Universal Championship*** over him! He overcame the world. He overcame the flesh. He overcame the devils. He met the kings of the earth and of the whole world and conquered them all. He spoiled principalities and powers and mighty dominions. Oh, yes, my friend, THAT IS ARMAGEDDON! Jesus doesn't have any more battles to fight, any more enemies to subjugate, for the last enemy that anyone, anywhere, ever has to destroy is ***death*** and He has already conquered His LAST ENEMY! An Armageddon for Jesus? There won't be any, for His is already past. He has entered His kingdom, possessed His possessions, and now reigns over all in the higher than all heavens. Hallelujah to the Lamb!

The Armageddon in chapter sixteen of the Revelation is not for Jesus. It is for all those whom Jesus invites to come and experientially ***share His victory***. It is for us and it is for all of God's precious people. It is first of all for that "firstfruit company" of overcomers who are first to follow the Lamb *all the way* and stand with Him upon the holy hill of Zion, redeemed from the earth, from earthiness, from the soulical and religious, with no guile or deceitful doctrines in their mouths, the glorious mind of the Father impressed upon their foreheads, singing that song that only those can learn who stand with Christ under the open heavens. These are the *firstfruits* unto God and the Lamb. These are the *first*, after Jesus, to experientially appropriate the fullness of HIS DIVINE LIFE, NATURE, AND VICTORY! There must be a people that accomplishes this. The book of Revelation reveals the outworking of it. This victory shall eventually be ministered to *all* the Lord's people and finally to all the peoples of the earth. But it involves a ***battle***. All the way. There is never any victory without a battle! And in our text it is particularly the Lord's people who have long been held in the bondage of religious Babylon — unto whom the battle comes!

The magnitude of the victory is determined by the magnitude of the battle. The greatest battle shall give way to the greatest victory. Be not alarmed, child of God, if the battles are becoming fiercer, hotter, for ***this is the day of the Lord!*** The battle of the great day of God is upon us! Armageddon is here! And this great day of the Lord is described first of all as "*a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness*" (Joel 2:2). Ah, yes, Gethsemane! Travail. Sweat. Blood. Tears. Prayers. Sorrow. Struggle. Death. But, thank God, the prophet continues, "*as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like...and the Lord shall utter His voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can abide it?*"

Armageddon is the most exciting battle in all the word of God! There must come a time when the truth is revealed to us that Armageddon is not a battle fought in the so-called Holy Land in the Middle East. Well, it's a lot closer than that! Rather it is a battle fought within that Holy Land ***which we are***. God's people have been so duped with religious junk food that they have missed the whole point. It's when this stronghold of our earth-life gets attacked by all the power of God to conquer God's people and make them what He has redeemed them to be! What a gathering it is when we are gathered to our Armageddon! Hear now what the scripture says about this gathering. "*And He gathered them into...*" not a place, as we have it in the King James Bible, but "*into the place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*" There is the definite article in the Greek which designates it as ***the place*** of Armageddon. Furthermore, the word place is the Greek word *topos* from which we get our English word topography. The Holy Spirit anointed John

to write it exactly that way because in the natural there is no such topographical place called "Armageddon." So what is the Lord saying here? He's speaking a spiritual language to cause us to understand that those unclean spirits like frogs that God's people have listened to through unclean doctrine have lifted up a mountain, which is a man-made kingdom and God is making war against every man-made mountain and stronghold and He's going to abase it and destroy it in what He spiritually calls Armageddon, the mount of Megiddo. For that is the place where God in the Old Testament judged the enemies of Israel when they walked in obedience to Him, and He in turn judged Israel there for their transgression and idolatry. So God today is raising up an army of sons of God to administer the word and dealings of God, making war against the stronghold of the mountain or kingdom of the flesh. It doesn't exist geographically. But there is a huge mountain of Babylon that God is erasing! Great is the mystery!

In closing, let us remember and be instructed by the following facts. The Bible nowhere identifies a specific place bearing the name Armageddon. The name does not appear in any ancient geographical or historical writing. The Armageddon of the Revelation has no location on the geographical map of the world. The place of Armageddon is nowhere, and it is everywhere. Furthermore, the term "Battle of Armageddon" is not used in reference to the *place*; rather, it is called the "battle of the great day of God Almighty." So much more than simply a geographical location is meant! Symbolically, as a PLACE of assemblage, Armageddon represents an array of *circumstances*, a state of *affairs*; it typifies a *condition* that exists within the life of every child of God, which also will be extant throughout the whole church world as God moves to bring the destruction of Babylon. That battlefield is in all the people of God in the world, and it is also deep in the soul of each man. Some of us today may be in the midst of our Armageddon. The field of battle has been in progress throughout the ages, but in the purpose of God and by the power of God it moves toward a final climax and culmination. John in vision sees the consummation of the conflict and calls it Armageddon.

We find that the kings of the earth are gathered together at this Armageddon, but the battle is not said to be fought in the Middle East with horses, tanks, soldiers, swords, guns, airplanes, missiles, or bombs. The battle is against the authority, way, and will of God, and it is the BATTLE OF GOD'S GREAT DAY! God doesn't fight His battles with carnal weapons, God only fights with the sword of the spirit which is the (living) word of God! And the weapons of our warfare are not carnal either, but are "MIGHTY THROUGH GOD!" For indeed, "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Eph. 6:12). Let us read this from the Amplified Bible: "*For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood — contending only with physical opponents — but against the despotisms, against the powers, against the master spirits who are the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly sphere.*" The Phillips translation says, "*For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual.*" In the light of the history of man for the past 6,000 years, with its endless struggle and conflict against evil and wickedness, "The Great Day of God Almighty" signifies the climax of that struggle in men's lives, in which the powers of sin, the satanic realm, and death are completely and permanently broken. The thing that makes that day "great" is not the battle! The battle simply ushers in the "great day." When God finishes and consummates all His redemptive and restorative work in His people, raising up in the earth the ***man in the image and likeness of God — WHAT A GREAT DAY THAT IS!***

Armageddon is a spiritual battle, an on-going campaign between the forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the forces of Christ and His kingdom rule within. It's a battle between the old

man and the new man, between the idols of the soul and the living reality of Christ in the spirit. The chief battleground is the mind. This is the battle in which the light of the Spirit meets the darkness of the carnal mind. This is a battle against the kings of carnality and flesh, a battle waged by the pure, holy nature of the Lamb. This is the battle of the great day of God Almighty! And only God's "almightiness" can win this battle! There is a tremendous struggle within our consciousness, within our experience, within our state of being. Armageddon is both an individual and corporate process. It affects the world within us as well as the outer world we walk in. This is the battle of the power of the kingdom of God in the manifest sons of God against the entrenched kings of the earth, the rulers of the darkness of this present world, including the religious leaders. The glory of Christ risen as the noonday sun upon the body of Christ is the atomic weapon that destroys the adversaries!

Many who study this glorious Revelation are more interested in finding possible references to modern implements of war — tanks, airplanes, missiles, lasers, and nuclear weapons — than in discovering the deep inworkings and mighty dealings of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who are becoming God's Christ. According to John's own witness, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of *this prophecy*!" To ignore Jesus in favor of a war in Israel or atomic blasts is a perversion of the spirit of Truth. It is a *prophecy to the church* — God's called out elect! As a prophecy, it is to the Lord's *spiritual people*, the *body of Christ*, the *ransomed of the Lord*! There is not a chance that the apostle John, standing in the blinding glory of Christ's majestic presence, would have thought it important to prophesy about Cobra helicopters, space shuttles, computers, laser tattoos, or a war on the plains of Megiddo. Nor would he have been interested in foretelling to the saints of that day about the future of the United States of America, Russia, China, the Moslem nations, or the European Community. Not that such things are not important on some level, but the sons of God are concerned with God's SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT in relation to the nations, not the carnal warfare of man's invention! The Revelation is concerned with matters of far greater importance and consequences than satisfying our curiosity about the future of communism, the western nations, Islam, terrorism, or the Illuminati. **It was written to show us what the Father has done and shall do to save and transform His people, to glorify Himself through His sons, and to deliver and restore all creation unto Himself!**

You will not read the fulfillment of its prophecies on the pages of *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, or *USA Today*, but you will see them manifest in the lives of men and women! The word of the Lord in its spiritual meaning does not describe for us the carnal warfare between nations. For what have wars between nations to do with the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God does not come by the sword nor as a result of it, so of what importance in the outworking of God's kingdom on earth are the conflicts between nations and empires? They have no meaning whatsoever! The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*, but are *mighty through God*! The battles beheld in spirit by the eagle-eyed seer of Patmos signify spiritual combats, combats between light and darkness, between spirit and flesh, between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the precious mind of Christ and the vile carnal mind, between life and death. A man must experience this combat within himself to become a spiritual conqueror and gain the crown of life! A war in the Middle East has absolutely *nothing* to do with this! Our Lord, in the days of His flesh, carried on such spiritual warfare in an infinitely greater way than others, overcoming the compounded powers of the world, the flesh, the devil — and finally *death itself*! What a warfare! What a victory! How the mighty battles of the Roman Empire pale in contrast with this! The first and second World Wars accomplished essentially nothing for humanity compared with what Jesus won! He has opened up the way to victory and triumph over every enemy of sin, sorrow, limitation, and death for all who are willing to follow Him into the power of the kingdom of God!

Our Lord is a **spiritual conqueror!** And the book of Revelation is addressed to “**him that overcometh!**” That is a military term! “Him that overcometh” does so at ARMAGEDDON! That should settle in every heart what kind of warfare the book presents!

Brother Paul Mueller hit the nail squarely on the head when he wrote: “The truth is, the Adamic nature is responsible for all the wars from the beginning of time. What the world needs is not another literal war, but a spiritual war that will end all wars! God knows this better than we do! His omniscient wisdom is far superior to the ideas and opinions of the religious theologians. He has set forth a plan by which the present warfare, which we are now engaged in, shall destroy the man of sin and bind Satan for the age. This is indeed a war that shall end all wars and violence in the world for the duration of the kingdom of God on earth!”

Every nation has had war and destruction. The terrorist attacks on our nation and on other nations in recent decades have been indeed horrible, yet not even to be compared to the horrors visited upon Europe and Japan in the Second World War. Great empires have risen and fallen throughout history, and none of them heralded the end of time. Plagues, pestilence, earthquakes, storms, and disasters of many kinds have killed millions of people in hundreds of nations and devastated whole civilizations, but none of them brought the end of the world. All of those things have been happening out there in the external world since the beginning of time, but let me tell you, none of them have anything whatever to do with the coming of the kingdom of God! Only the nature of the Father formed in His elect, only the full measure of the stature of Christ formed in God’s New Creation Man, only the power of God upon His people, only the glory of God in His manifested sons, will bring the battle into the world that will overthrow sin, strife, error, sickness, sorrow, and death within mankind, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption and signaling the hour of transition into the greater glory of the kingdom of God upon the nations of earth! Ah, ARMAGEDDON!

Chapter 187

The Battle At Armageddon (continued)

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs...for they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev. 16:13-15).

The battle of the great day of God Almighty, like everything else in the Revelation, is a **spiritual battle** just because it is **God's battle!** God does not fight His battles with carnal weapons of tanks and guns and missiles and bombs, but with the *sword of the Spirit*, which is the *living word of God!* The setting of this battle is concerned with the destruction of Babylon the Great and the judgment which is sent upon it. Hear it! "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and **great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath (passion)**" (Rev. 16:19). As we move from this passage on into chapters seventeen and eighteen *everything* is about the judgment and destruction of Babylon! The dealing of God upon Babylon is a mighty *spiritual operation* of God — not a literal warfare. But the carnal-minded theologians and the ignorant secular world have seized upon the word "Armageddon" and have used it as a cryptic synonym by which to describe the final world conflict. Some of the erroneous usages of the word "Armageddon" include such definitions as: "Site of the great end-of-the-world battlefield of the Apocalypse"; "Atomic Armageddon"; "Will the next war be Armageddon?"; "Armageddon occurred in the holocaust of the Second World War". There is no scriptural or spiritual basis for any of this when one reverently considers the context as a whole.

The battle at Armageddon occurs first of all *within* the Lord's people, but also *through* His people. And as God assembles the "kings" to this battle He says, "*Behold, I come as a thief.*" The church and the world are both going to be greatly surprised when they learn that the so-called "battle of Armageddon," the "battle of the great day of GOD ALMIGHTY," unleashed in all its fury, is first and foremost the greatest display of *divine power and glory*, revealed through God's people, that this world has ever witnessed! It has been said that heaven would be hell to the sinner. And that is exactly right. The unveiling of the might and power and glory of God in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation is going to produce on the one hand great consternation, distress, shrieking, gloom, and destruction to all the hardened hearts and organized systems which are opposed to God, and on the other hand life and victory and deliverance when the judgments have accomplished their work and every knee bows before His majesty.

As we have pointed out again and again the battle at Armageddon is the battle of THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY. The prophet Joel prophesied of this great "day of the Lord," saying, "*Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon (ruling powers) shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion (the mount of sonship), and order His voice from Jerusalem (His holy city); and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope (shelter) of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain (kingdom): then shall Jerusalem (the*

Lord's people) be holy...and it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains (strong kingdoms) shall drop down new wine (joy and revelation), and the hills (lesser kingdoms) shall flow with milk (of the word), and all the rivers of Judah (those who are a praise) shall flow with (living) waters, and a fountain (of life) shall flow forth from the house of the Lord" (Joel 3:14-18).

What can be more clear than this: the great day of the Lord brings the shaking of heaven and earth, that is, judgments from the Lord — while at the same time, in that **same day**, in God is shelter and refuge and new wine and milk, and refreshing waters from the house of the Lord! Little wonder that the day of the Lord is called both a "great" and a "terrible" day! A battle unto victory is always both great *and* terrible! Armageddon brings the triumph of God's kingdom within His people. It brings the glory of the saints. "Then shall Jerusalem be *holy*." "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God *dwelling in Zion*." It brings to an end the rule of religious Babylon over the Lord's people, the destruction of every system and device of man, life and liberty to the captives. The veil of spiritual blindness that hangs like a pall over God's people shall be removed and at last they shall see things as they really are and behold the glory of the Lord. Wine and milk and living waters shall flow as life-giving streams to every saint of God everywhere. What a day! A day of darkness and gloominess on one hand, but to those who wait upon the Lord it is "the morning spread upon the mountains."

As God assembles to this battle He says, "*Behold, I come as a thief*" (Rev. 16:15). This battle comes "as a thief" upon those who are attacked by the Lord! By this we are to understand that the sleeping church recognizes neither the war of Armageddon nor the day it ushers in. What divine sense that makes! For the masses of God's people are still looking for a war in the Middle East instead of God fighting the battle in their hearts! How often we look in the wrong place to find our enemies. Our true enemies are WITHIN. These are the enemies that prevent God's people from possessing their full inheritance in their promised land — CHRIST. Kings in the Middle East have nothing to do with that! The Lord's people are blind and asleep in relation to the true battle of God's great Day. A thief comes while people sleep, unheralded, unsuspected, and unrecognized. He blows no trumpet; he wants no fanfare. He works in secret and by stealth. Then when the morn comes, they learn of their loss, but too late. The thief has come and gone, and with him their treasures. Thus the Spirit conveys to us the great truth that when God sets His hand to deliver His people out of Babylon **He slips up on them and they aren't aware that He has conquered their hearts and delivered them of all their "earthly" and "religious" treasures until the work has been accomplished!** What a marvelous strategy!

There is a coming of the Lord as a thief. It happens at the battle of Armageddon! Nearly all Bible teachers have missed this fact. This is not a coming or appearing of the Lord that is before the public. It is not an unveiling before the multitudes. You will see no report of it on CNN. A thief does not go down to the public square with a sound system and say, "I'd like to make an announcement. At three o'clock in the morning I'm going to visit the *wealthiest lady* in this town and I'm going to steal everything I can get my hands on." He doesn't do that! He comes at the darkest part of the night. He comes with softest tread, without noise, without light, without warning. He comes as silently and stealthily as possible, unobserved by the sleepers. He comes to rob. He comes to take away everything that he can. He is after gold and pearls and jewels of great price. Men are unaware of the event until he has come and gone and the items of value to the owner have disappeared with Him. The Lord Jesus says that at the gathering of the forces to Armageddon HE WILL COME AS A THIEF!

The “rich lady” to be robbed is Babylon! As our friend Connie Asbill once wrote, “Like Israel who was *rich* in covenants and promises, this woman (Babylon) is rich with the word that has been brought to her, not only by the scriptures, but by those men who have been raised up out of the midst of her to speak truth under the anointings of God. In Revelation 17:4 she is seen ‘arrayed in purple and scarlet color, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand...’ Babylon is, indeed, a RICH WOMAN. That she is rich by the hand of God, and is not merely pretending to be rich, is seen in Hosea 2:8 where the Lord Himself affirms that He is the source of her wealth. Babylon is not, however, aware in the depths of her being that He is her supply, and therein lies her ultimate undoing, for the Lord said, ‘She did not know that I (the Lord) gave her corn and wine and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold...therefore will I return and ***take away my corn in the time thereof and my wine in the season thereof and will take away my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness, and now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers and none shall deliver her out of my hand.***’

“Babylon is a rich woman — but it is with these very riches from the hand of God that she has prepared her own idols, having held the truth in unrighteousness and changed these riches and truths of God into a lie. That is what the Lord says in this passage: ‘She did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil...which THEY PREPARED FOR BAAL.’ Deceived by the very riches that were given to bring her to God, Babylon exalts herself because of that which she possesses, saying within herself, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow’ (Rev. 18:7). Now, I am aware that the highest meaning of Babylon does not mean the organized church system but is, rather, a condition in the mind or spirit of man, which means that we have all, at one time or another, and perhaps even until now, are partakers of her. But the Spirit of the Lord quickens to me that in this case He is specifically talking about the ***church system***, as such. All that the church possesses was given to her out of the anointing of God, imparted to her through anointed men, and these men of bygone generations she admires. Nothing has changed, however, since the days of Jesus when He said to the religious leaders, ‘You garnish the sepulchers of the dead prophets — but kill the living ones.’ The anointed word has been set in concrete in the church system, and like the *rephaim* — the physicians of no value who *embalmed* Israel — so has the church system so ***embalmed the Christ*** — fixed Him in a ***static position*** so that He can move no further. Holding the very *form of truth*, the church system denies the essence and life of that truth...and boasts in her wealth! Yet, the Lord says, ‘Because thou sayest, ***I am rich and increased with goods*** (doctrines and forms and rituals and eschatology charts) and have need of nothing (not even the anointing) and ***knowest not*** that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked...’ Because of all this, ‘I will spew you out of my mouth!’” — end quote.

Our text reveals two significant truths. First, the battle of Armageddon is fought for the destruction of Babylon. Second, in this battle the Lord comes upon Babylon *as a thief*. He comes in a spiritual visitation of judgment to strip and purge from His people in Babylon the death of the carnal mind; those outer, earthly things they cherish above the spirit and truth and glory of Christ. That is what a thief does — he plunders the house, carrying off those things treasured by the householder! He appears as a thief in the night, and there have often been times in the lives of all of God’s called and chosen elect when He has stolen out of the dark hour of our ignorance some carnal concept, some religious tradition, some perverted doctrine, some Babylonish garment of exquisite design that we have hidden in our tent of experience. Ah, we must stay *awake* to joyfully receive Him in His coming to us, His appearing in us; if we fail to do so He will come like a thief, He will come into our world uninvited and unannounced, He will overtake us unexpectedly and break up our life style and smash our religious games, exposing our pretense. Those who

are *awake to reality* do not have their houses plundered. These willingly yield up the things they once prized, which now are counted but dung that they might win Christ.

Armageddon happens to every individual in a personal sense. Every man's heart is an Armageddon, a battlefield in which the forces of flesh and spirit struggle against each other. Within our own inner man is where the great battle of the day of God is fought, and God in our spirit must prevail against the world, the flesh, the devil, and the spirit of Babylon that are striving for the mastery there. No person who comes to the full knowledge of the truth, no person who comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, no person who comes either to manifest sonship or to the marriage of the Lamb can escape this battle!

As we have previously shown, Armageddon is a Hebrew word signifying the "mount of Megiddo." The town of Megiddo occupied a very marked position on the southern edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, and commanded an important pass into the hill country. This locality was the great battle-ground of Israel, on which were fought many of the famous battles of Old Testament history. There Gideon and his little band alarmed and discomfited the Midianites, who destroyed one another in their flight (Judges 7:19-23). There Deborah the prophetess met the enemies of Israel, like grasshoppers for multitude and armed to the teeth, and without a weapon, just when it seemed Israel was being surrounded to be totally exterminated from the earth, out of heaven God sent His deliverance (Judges 4 & 5). There the backslidden king Saul was defeated by the Philistines (I Sam. 31:1-6). There king Josiah was slain by Pharaoh-Necho in one of the most disastrous conflicts in the history of Israel (II Chron. 35:22-25). There also king Ahab and his wife Jezebel lived, in the city of Jezreel, where Jezebel afterwards met a horrible death (II Kings 9:30-37). Because of its commanding position, many other nations, according to secular history, warred around Megiddo — Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Crusaders, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs have all pitched their tents on the Plain of Esdraelon.

Today, the "mount of Megiddo" or "Armageddon" lies in ruins. Actually, the city had been deserted for more than five centuries when John saw his vision on Patmos! But the choice of Megiddo as the type of the greatest of battles was no accident. In John's day, even after so many years, Megiddo's violent history still commanded fear. The ruins aren't impressive. The palaces and temples were destroyed, removed by archaeologists on an expedition in the early twentieth century as they uncovered city after city built one on top of the other. The huge trench they dug now dominates the site. Megiddo's magnificence derives from the fact that a visitor can stand on a ledge overlooking the trench and see fragments of life from more than twenty different cities — five millennia of human history cut into bedrock. Each group that came built on top of the ruin of the city there before it.

The one thing of importance here is that the book of Revelation is a book of *symbols* in which is set forth in symbolic form the final and ultimate struggle within the Lord's people between truth and error, the mind of Christ and the carnal mind, righteousness and unrighteousness, spirit and flesh, light and darkness, the Lamb and the dragon, the world system and the kingdom of God, and the true church and Mystery Babylon. In this portrayal are used, on the one hand, such symbols as "beast," "dragon," "false prophet," "Babylon," "harlot," "unclean spirits," "frogs," etc.; and on the other hand, "Lamb," "manchild," "144,000," "overcomers," "bride," "holy city," and others. "Armageddon" is another of the symbols used in the book, and it is associated with the great and final deliverance of all God's redeemed people from the carnal church systems of man and all the ignorance, delusions, errors, carnality, and limitation of that realm. It is the day when

Christ arises as the Mighty Conqueror within His people! It introduces the third spiritual feast — Tabernacles!

When we take these important facts into consideration, the word Armageddon assumes a significance just as definite as does Waterloo, although a very different one. It reveals a struggle in which God is specifically interested and in which HE totally and completely directs the issue, assuring final and glorious victory for the spiritual forces of His kingdom. Since this is the last great spiritual battle to be experienced by those who comprise His church on earth, it must result in the defeat of all the agencies and influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil — thus opening up the way for the deliverance of all God's people from the Babylonian religious systems and their growth, development, and perfection into the fullness of Christ. This is why it is described as "the battle of that GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!"

When we consider this great battle, we are not, therefore, to expect any gathering of the nations *literally* to the hill of Megiddo. Rather we are to look for that which is symbolized by that mountain. Armageddon is to be viewed in a ***spiritual sense*** as is everything else in the book of Revelation. It is first and foremost a spiritual battle ***within*** the Lord's people, yet it also involves the great red dragon and the manchild — the manifest sons of God. The battle actually begins in the heavenly realm and then spreads to the earth-dwellers and the sea-dwellers. "*And there was war in heaven: Michael (Christ) and his angels (messengers) fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels*" (Rev. 12:7). This is why, when the sons of God have prevailed and have cast the dragon out of the heavenlies, the cry goes out, "*Woe to the inhabitors of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time*" (Rev. 12:12). The devil's passion and determination meets head-on with God's passion and determination — and Armageddon begins! We shall, therefore, see this battle carried forth in both the heavenly and earthly realms — both individually and collectively.

All through the ages men have, by faith, reached out and appropriated some measure of deliverance from the carnal mind and the carnal nature; but corporately as the body of Christ and as the church we have never really done so. But let me say that the deliverance of the Lord's people ***as a body and as the church*** is just ahead and the completion and consummation of that perfecting work the Spirit has been progressively bringing forth in a company of saints over the past several decades. God's people have been groaning with the apostle Paul for the past two thousand years, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (Rom. 7:24). God has certainly heard our cries, and soon He shall bring His Army into a glorious liberty in the spirit, wherein they shall be completely delivered from their sins, from their carnal minds, from the spirit of Babylon, and from all sickness, pain, and death! The perverted soul of man shall finally be restored under the dominion of the spirit and in union with the spirit, and even this vile body shall be transformed, fashioned like unto HIS body of glory. This great deliverance **MUST COME!**

Let us stop trying to justify ourselves, insisting on our outward holiness of conduct, when we ourselves know that inwardly we are yet raving beasts, and beholding our strife, pettiness, envyings, and fleshiness it is apparent to everyone about us that we do not possess it. "*Living epistles*" do not have to tell the world how holy or how spiritual they are! This world will see it and will be amazed to discover something real and genuine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. The victory of which we speak is the victory of CHRIST HIMSELF. When we attain to this victory, there will be no need to formulate weak excuses why the victorious saint can again fall

into carnality and sin and suffer defeat — for this place ***in Christ knows no defeat.*** We shall not have to explain how Satan gained an advantage over us and planted a new seed of unbelief in our heart, and the victory we once had was lost; for this victory *is the very victory of Christ.* “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died ***unto sin once...***” (Rom. 6:9,19). Here victory over ***death*** is linked with victory over ***sin!*** Christ died to sin once, that is, completely — *therefore* He was raised from the dead to die no more! He that overcometh enters into the very victory and triumph of Christ — a victory which is complete and can never be lost, reversed, or forfeited. It is the very victory of Jesus Christ Himself ***over sin and death,*** and the overcomer is therefore “more than conqueror” through Christ that loved him.

And now the faithful dealings of God to bring this very thing to pass have come: the purgings, the strippings, the processings, the refining fires, together with the raising up of the faith, nature, character, revelation, wisdom, and power of Christ within us. Ah, it is truly a picture of darkness and gloominess on the one hand, but on the other hand it is “the morning spread upon the mountains!” It is indeed — Armageddon! It is the battle which shall finally usher the Lord’s people into the FULLNESS OF REDEMPTION, spirit, soul, and body, free from the curse, delivered out of Babylon, having passed through ***their Armageddon,*** to lay hold upon the fullness of Christ’s victory and triumph! Yes, friends, we are still talking about Armageddon! The *last battle!* Armageddon is the end-game. That is what final judgment is all about! For you it will not be 2,000 years from now. Your Armageddon may be today, ten years from now, or in the next twenty-four hours. I dare say, it is going on right now! It is within you, it is within God’s elect, it is coming within the whole church, and it is coming wherever the beastly carnal nature and the bestial world system seeks to place its mark of ownership on men. Whenever it comes, it will bring an ***end*** to your rebellion, to your struggles, to your captivity. It will bring glorious and eternal deliverance! And in this battle the *last enemy* that shall be destroyed is ***death!*** And ***sin*** is the enemy destroyed *just before death!* How much greater, grander, more glorious are the fruits of this victory than any that could be obtained by some carnal war over in the Middle East!

This is Armageddon! The battle of the ages. The overthrow of the adversary, and of sin, sorrow, limitation, and death. It is here, within, that the devil, carnality, bondage, error, sickness, pain, and death must be dethroned. It is here that the flesh, the carnal mind, and the world must be overcome. It is here, within, that the kingdom of God must come in righteousness and power. The death in us must be conquered. Sin in us must be overcome. The curse in us must be removed. Rebellion in us must be subdued. Life in us must break forth in fullness. Then we will really have something to minister to a sin-weary world in its darkest hour of despair and hopelessness. We will possess within ourselves the answer that can lift men out of Satan’s bondage, out of sin’s clutches, out of religion’s grip, and out of death’s darkness — once and for all. Church history has never produced a people that could do this. But the day of the Lord is at hand! Press on, saints of God, for we are on the winning side! I know, for with anointed eyes I have read the last chapter of the Book!

KEEPING YOUR GARMENTS

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, *and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame*” (Rev. 16:15).

In the midst of this conflict, Jesus inserts a word of encouragement and warning. He lets us know that we are dealing with a ***spiritual truth — not a natural event.*** He states that we must be

watching. It helps to note just what “watch” means. It does not mean counting dates. It does not mean standing gazing up into the sky. It does not mean keeping up with world events on the news. But “watching” means being ready, that is, alert, attentive, vigilant, awake, alive to what God is doing, aware of what is taking place, and guarding, protecting, and preserving our *garments*, our spiritual covering, and in so doing we shall be *blessed!* Those who do not do so will be found *naked*, and men will see their *shame*. Our text above proves beyond any doubt what this battle is all about! To be naked means **to have one's flesh exposed**. Therefore, during the heat of the conflict “keep your garments,” your spiritual covering, so that you will not be found naked — your flesh exposed — and people behold the shame of your carnality! Therefore the great purpose of the battle is to conquer and get rid of ALL CARNALITY!

In the very earliest pages of man’s history we read of Adam and Eve, “And they were both *naked*, the man and his wife.” It seems to the unenlightened mind that this little statement could have been omitted. Of what importance is it whether Adam and Eve moved about in Paradise naked or clothed? Yet it is an important and necessary little statement; it uses a rather insignificant fact, as it appears to us, to show forth something wondrous in the whole economy of God. Ah, beloved, the story of Adam and Eve in Eden is far too intricate and wonderful for my little mind to fully grasp, but I am able to see that the Holy Spirit has been very faithful and remarkably specific in recording the exact state of being of man in the beginning and of us IN OUR BEGINNING!

Adam and Eve were both...NAKED! That is the divine assertion. I do not see, as some teach, that Adam walked in the Garden clothed upon and enveloped in some kind of effulgent light. There is not one verse of scripture in the whole Bible that even suggests that Adam was originally **clothed in heavenly light**, or that he lost his vesture of light when he sinned. What is stated, unequivocally, is that he was NAKED..and in that state he was **not ashamed**. Following the fall there was a great difference, man was still naked but...**was ashamed!** He did not don the apron of fig leaves because he was newly naked, but because he now **knew, understood** that he was naked! Can we not see by this that man’s first state in Eden was that of **innocence** — naked but with no shame. Little children are naked and are not ashamed simply because they are innocent! Among all the creatures which God made, Adam-man stands out unique...stark naked...which means devoid of true wisdom and knowledge, with his inner nature revealed, opened up, exhibited, and made bare. Oh! that God may give us understanding to see that to be naked simply means to have THE FLESH UNCOVERED AND EXPOSED!

Then suddenly “they *knew that they were naked*” — they became conscious that their flesh lay bare and exposed — sad fruit of the tree of the **knowledge of** good and evil! No sooner does a man discover his nakedness than this knowledge gives birth to a sense of **condemnation** and there follows the impulse to make an effort to *cover* the nakedness. Thus, in the case of Adam and Eve, the discovery of their nakedness was immediately followed by an effort of their own to cover it — “they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons.” This is the first record we have of man’s attempt to remedy, by his own device, his condition, but this was not the single act of Adam of old, it is truly the act of each of us, yes, OUR VERY OWN! The Spirit would make very real to our hearts, dear reader, that Adam’s effort to cover his nakedness was not a mere physical or moral act, it was a RELIGIOUS ACT. The nakedness in Eden bespeaks the revealing of a carnal state of being, and the attempt to cover that nakedness was indeed an expression of RELIGIOUSNESS!

In an attempt to appear other than he is man sews together very wide leaves of the fig tree, that is, he tries every device he can, including multiplied religious works and observances, to gloss

over his true condition. But all the garments which men devise to hide their nakedness become mere "spider's webs" when the dazzling light of God's revelation shines upon them. There is nothing more obvious than the fact that leaves quickly wither, turn brown and brittle, and fall off and, indeed, clothed in all the dead works of religion ***man's flesh shows through*** and it becomes manifest that his covering is pitifully insufficient.

What is this "flesh" which can be "exposed," making a man "naked"? The word *sark* is the Greek word translated "flesh" in the New Testament. *Sark* means the *meat of a physical body*, whether it be man, or beast, or birds, or fishes of the sea; not the outer layer of skin immediately visible to the eye, but the *raw meat under the skin*. To physically have the flesh "exposed" in this sense would mean to have the outer skin removed, causing the raw meat underneath to be visible. Thus, the flesh speaks of more than just our physical body with its normal needs and desires for food, clothing, comfort, rest, exercise, etc. God made our body, He knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust, and there is no condemnation for being tabernacled in this body of clay. But "***the flesh***" literally speaks of that *inward nature* which is earth-minded, with its lusts and self-centeredness, its ego and I-will which are in rebellion against the spirit. Thus, the flesh is not the outward, visible man of meat, muscle, and bones, but the inward nature.

The flesh is the name by which scripture designates our NATURAL LIFE, our HUMAN NATURE — soul and body. The soul at creation was placed between the spiritual or divine and the physical or worldly, to the end that both soul and body might be raised up into perfect union in the spirit which would result in man attaining his destiny — a *spiritual body*. When the soul yielded to physical lusts, it came under the power of the body — it became flesh. And now the flesh — human nature, soul and body united in one — is not only without the spirit, but even hostile to it: "The flesh lusteth (wars) against the spirit!" (Gal. 5:17).

To be naked means to have the flesh uncovered and exposed. Good flesh or bad flesh, it really makes no difference. In the "knowledge of good and evil" both the good and the evil are *flesh!* The "good" of that tree will kill you just as quickly as the "evil" of the tree. Adulterous flesh or religious flesh, it matters not. I can guarantee you that I've been seen naked a few times! Oh, yes, I had my natural clothes on, perhaps my finest J. C. Penney suit, but I was nonetheless caught naked! Have you ever been caught naked? Have you ever had someone slip up from your blind side in a moment when you were not expecting them and you didn't reveal anything to them but what you are in your flesh, by some ungodly act, some angry outburst, some un-Christ-like attitude, some trait of religiosity, or some carnal self-assertiveness, and you could only hang your head in shame and confess that for whoever saw you, you didn't leave one ounce of witness of the life and nature of the son of God that you are, nor did they behold the glory of God at all in you? Then dear brother, precious sister, YOU WERE CAUGHT NAKED, you were discovered with your flesh exposed, you were found with your carnal nature displayed! You may have had your store-bought clothes on, but you were no less naked than Adam and Eve in Eden.

It means that in that moment your carnal state was made bare, laid open, exhibited, and men did not see the Lord's life, all they saw was your natural, Adamic life. They beheld your nakedness and then you felt ashamed when you realized what you had revealed unto them. In innocence there is no shame when our flesh is exposed. Before God has dealt with us and revealed His robe of righteousness to us, there is no shame. But after He speaks and clothes us with the robe of righteousness, there is always the sense of shame when our nakedness appears before men. And never forget, dear one, that "good" flesh is no better than "bad" flesh! Ministering without the anointing, serving God out of human zeal or with man-made methods, going through the religious

motions of worship performed by rote rather than from the spontaneous arising of His life within — all this is as much an exposure of **our flesh** as if we were caught in bed with our neighbor's spouse!

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." This gives us the picture of a Roman sentry supposed to be on guard duty through the night. They wore a garment, a robe, a uniform; the robe was the profession they made to be guards, the insignia or proof of their position, just as nurses, policemen, and many other professions wear today. There was a captain. At certain and unannounced hours the captain made his rounds to inspect and relieve the watch; sometimes he took one guard and left another. At times a guard became weary and slumped down. Presently he was asleep. Is there anything more despicable and criminal than to sleep at the post of duty? What must be said of a captain who sleeps on the bridge? Or a soldier who sleeps at his post? Or a light-house keeper who sleeps in the night? Or a soul who sleeps in the deceptive bed of religious activities, unaware of the movings and woings of the Spirit? When the captain of the guard discovered the sleeping sentry, as the custom was, he grabbed the tunic from him without waking him. When he arose his shame was evident, the captain had come and gone, had stripped off his profession, made him naked and put him to an open shame.

So we are exhorted to "watch" for the Lord's coming at Armageddon, for He comes *as a thief!* Those who are faithless will be stripped of their profession, naked and ashamed before the bare light of day. He comes like a thief to steal from the "professing" church the garment that has under it no "possession." This is the Lord's warfare against Babylon! He is coming to snatch away the religiosity, the mere profession, and make it naked before the gaze of judgment. He warns all who name His name to be on the watch, and for each one to keep his garment; that is, to "hold fast" to the robe of righteousness. *"Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown"* (Rev. 3:11). Cling fervently to the hope within you today, dear child of God. Embrace and never let go the reality you have found in the Christ within. Trade it not for the worthless tinsel pandered by the harlot system in the broad ways of Mystery Babylon. Treasure the truth you know as you would treasure the most priceless gem of earth, and guard it with all the vigilance of your being, for there, and there alone, is reality, life, immortality, and glory eternal!

The great truth of being spiritually "clothed upon" appears early in the revelation of God to mankind. As soon as man sinned, *God made them garments*, the Bible declares. Some say that the "skins" with which God clothed Adam and Eve were the outer covering of a mortal body, the "skin" of the flesh. It is my conviction, however, that the sinning couple *needed a covering* just because they *were flesh* — for suddenly they "saw that they were naked" and commenced to sew together aprons of fig leaves. It is obvious that in their sense of guilt they perceived that **their flesh was exposed!** The slain lamb is the figure all through scripture for God's gracious provision of "atonement," and the word atonement in Hebrew simply means "to cover." Was it not, therefore, the "skins" of the slain Lamb with which the Lord, in a figure, clothed father Adam and mother Eve? And that is the "robe of righteousness"! These are beautiful word pictures with which the Holy Spirit conveys to our understanding eternal and heavenly truths!

The first thing God does is strip away all the artificial, man-made, religious coverings, and presents His own glorious covering, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world! In the symbolism of the garden of Eden story Adam and Eve silently watched as the Lord God selected a lamb and slew it there, fastening it to a tree before their wondering eyes, the victim then being

made naked, stripped of its skin, that a covering might be provided for the naked ones. Thus, with this one wondrous act does the God of heaven introduce *the cross, the atonement, and the Christ as man's covering!* When God clothed Adam and Eve in the skins of the slain Lamb, yet dripping with the precious blood, He showed that they were COVERED WITH THE LIFE OF THE LAMB! When God covers a man with the covering of His own Lamb the covering is so complete that ***no flesh will be seen — only Christ!*** This is not merely a reference to our initial salvation, but speaks further of the finality of our perfection as the sons of God! Fully clothed in the life of the Lamb, we bear the Lamb's own image, likeness, and identity. Therefore, blessed is he that ***watcheth, and keepeth his garments,*** lest he walk naked, and they see his shame!

THE BOWL POURED INTO THE AIR

"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done" (Rev. 16:17).

The previous bowls have been poured out upon the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, the sun, the throne of the beast, and the great river Euphrates. This, the last and greatest, is poured into the air; and immediately there is heard a voice out of the temple in heaven, proclaiming, "It is done!" What, then, is symbolized by the plague poured into the air? Of what is the "air" the emblem? In the Revelation the whole of nature is used as a great complex parable or symbol. What does the atmosphere especially signify? And the answer is not difficult. If earth, sea, rivers, fountains, the sun, a throne, etc., denote *manifest spiritual realities*, the air obviously would symbolize an *invisible spiritual realm*. And here we are helped by sundry hints of scripture usage.

This plague is certainly not any natural phenomenon like the explosion of an atomic bomb or a nuclear device in the atmosphere or in outer space above our earth, causing a deadly fallout and contaminating the very air we breathe. Nor is it some form of biological warfare spread through the atmosphere by terrorists. To aid our understanding of the symbolic significance of the term "air" in scripture, let us turn to another mention of it. "*We...shall be caught up together with them...to meet the Lord IN THE AIR: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*" (I Thes. 4:17).

Many years ago, while meditating upon this precious passage of scripture, the Spirit unfolded within my consciousness the significant truth that our catching up "into the air" can never be properly understood apart from the inspired words of the same apostle Paul wherein he states, "*And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR, THE SPIRIT THAT NOW WORKETH IN THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE*" (Eph. 2:1-2). There are several key words or terms that unlock the storehouse of spiritual truth contained in these verses. Consider — PRINCE, POWER, AIR, SPIRIT, WORKETH, and IN. According to these plain statements of scripture there exists a "**power** of the **air**." This "power of the air" is identified as a "spirit," and this spirit is located "in" the children of disobedience, wherein he "works." Can we not see by this that the "prince of the power of the air" is not something or someone outside of us, but a spirit-power that operates right here **WITHIN MAN**. Furthermore, this spirit-power that works within man also emanates from man, exerting an influence throughout the atmosphere that surrounds the earth, giving motivation to the myriad activities and events that transpire in the world, which Paul calls "the course of this world" that men walk in under the control of this "power of the air." Thus it is called the "**POWER** of the **AIR**."

Dr. Charles Price wrote a little book entitled *Made Alive* in which he shares this instructive information: "Every atom of matter — every piece of mineral — indeed everything which is the

result of God's creative intelligence is surrounded by an 'aura' or an emanation which is identical with and corresponds to the *nature* of the substance from which it comes. There is a sense in which personalities are possessed with this 'emanation' and 'extension' of themselves into their surroundings. It is a radiation which can be felt when someone walks into a room in which you may be seated. Our personality becomes affected by their personality. They have power to elevate or depress."

I would like you to really get a grasp of this thought. We all know people who by their very presence can lift us up, and impart a sense of well-being, who can lift our spirits up to heights of joy and happiness. Others can leave you feeling depressed just by spending a few minutes in their presence. The thought I want you to get is the fact that every created thing has this *aura* surrounding them, which is an actual radiation of their nature and personality into their surroundings. It is an extension of themselves into their environment on an invisible spiritual level. This aura or emanation is our nature and emotions radiating from us into our surroundings, and it affects everything and everyone around us. It is a radiation that flows from our spirits or our souls, and the stronger our spirits or our souls are the greater the radiation. If you find it difficult to believe the very atmosphere or air waves are charged by the emanations of energy, positive or negative, then go directly from a worship service where the saints are worshipping in the spirit, and enter a night club where ungodly men and women are drinking, cursing, lusting, laughing, and singing, and the difference you *feel* in a very real and powerful way is the difference between the positive and the negative life force.

Grasp it! A couple centuries ago we could not have understood as we do now how communication by sound and picture can be broadcast instantaneously THROUGH THE AIR. Wherever you are as you read these words, chances are there are myriad voices, pictures, and music IN THE AIR around you. A radio, television, or other electronic device tuned to the right wavelength would make them audible to you. You may not have realized it, but both spirit and soul in every man are a receiver and a transmitter. You may be tuned in on the wavelength of the Holy Spirit or you may tune in on the wavelength of the negative realm, the demonic, the *spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*. Prophets are uniquely sensitive to the spirit realm of God, whereas "psychics" are often sensitive to the soulical realm of man. You don't hear anything with your natural ears because spirit and soul do not broadcast in audible words or sounds. Spirit broadcasts in thoughts, attitudes, impulses, and emotions. The flesh broadcasts in thoughts, attitudes, impulses, and emotions of lust, perversion, greed, vanity, jealousy, anger, envy, deceit, fear, competition, strife, hatred, rebellion, violence, bitterness, debate, etc. Here is the real cause of all the world's evils! Why do movements like communism, New Age religion, the hippy movement, the rock culture, the drug culture, casual sex and sexual permissiveness, and a hundred more movements contributing to the deception of masses of people and the moral breakdown of society, suddenly rise up and sweep across the earth within a few short years like a plague, permeating everywhere, changing the attitudes, outlook, societal character, and moral fabric of everyone, including the people in the churches? What is this? It is the work of SPIRIT — invisible, intangible **energy — power!** Invisible, but very real. And very powerful! There is constantly in this world a transference of spiritual energy from the invisible world into the visible. Ah, it is the **power of the air, the powerful spirit organization in earth's atmosphere, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience!**

That awesome **negative spiritual energy** permeates the atmosphere, producing a SUPERCHARGED ATMOSPHERE, influencing, impressing, affecting, impacting, swaying, impelling, changing and altering the opinions, convictions, desires, and actions of vast masses of

the population. The people hear no audible voice, they do not see a visible Satan, and they comprehend not from whence come such attitudes, impulses, and desires. The adversary has a large elemental power. The natural man breathes in, as it were, the satanic influence. In their daily lives they think and live by this spirit influence and according to this world's system of things. On the other hand, when great and glorious revivals spontaneously break forth and sweep across a community, a nation, or around the world, it is the ***spirit of the living God*** moving, energizing, quickening, transforming, permeating the very atmosphere, sweeping men up into the living presence and power of God! Oh, the wonder of it!

The word for "air" in the Greek language is *aer* meaning "to breathe." The "power of the air" is thus the ENERGY OF BREATHING! Thoughts and influences from the invisible realm and unconscious realm ***breathed in*** and ***breathed out*** — expressed in words in the conscious realm and lived out as deeds in the physical world — going forth as energy, power, spiritual influence in the atmosphere of earth. These are not *merely* thoughts or *merely* words, for both spirit and soul of man are tapped into the timeless sphere of eternity wherein is that which is called by the scriptures "*the powers of the heavens.*" This is the realm of PURE ENERGY, and the unconscious mind of man is tapped into this vast supply of energy, and not only tapped in, but when the mouth is opened, the energy is brought forth from the unconscious realm and released into the atmosphere of man's physical world, carrying a very real power capable of either blessing or cursing mankind. The ungodly movements of the world, be they social, entertainment, political, religious, educational, or otherwise, are the direct result of negative spirit influence transmitted to the masses through faithful ministers of unrighteousness who have become filled with the un-holy spirit, and consequently transmitters of the same, producing the supercharged atmosphere of sin and death. In this way Satan is indeed the "prince of the power of the air," meaning that he is the ***invisible ruler***, which activity and authority he exercises ***in*** and ***through*** men — "the ***spirit*** that now ***worketh in*** the children of disobedience!"

The air is the realm of the firmament, or a dimension of heaven; therefore the air signifies the spiritual atmosphere, either positive or negative, where men walk. All realms of life have their "atmosphere" — the air. If you go to a bar there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a brothel there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a rock concert there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a Baptist church service there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a Pentecostal church service there is an atmosphere there. The atmosphere at a Catholic mass is altogether different from the atmosphere at a Charismatic meeting. Every realm has its atmosphere! When you enter the presence of a son of God who knows the truth as it is in Jesus, who walks in the wisdom of the mind of Christ, who expresses the unconditional love of God, and dwells in the glory of God — there is a clear, powerful, victorious, confident, peaceful, transforming atmosphere there!

The message is just this — "the air" in its spiritual sense bespeaks the atmosphere of man's ***consciousness*** and ***understanding*** — especially his ***spiritual understanding*** which today is super-charged by fleshly and satanic energy radiating from the cosmic heart of unregenerated and religious men. But I have some good news for you, my friend! Satan shall be bound, removed from his sphere of influence and authority "in the air"! "*And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done!*" What does this mean? It means that when the seventh angel pours out his bowl "into the air," he is pouring out GOD'S WRATH OR PASSION on the realm of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, which in this context signifies particularly the SOULICAL RELIGIOUS CONCIOUSNESS AND THE FALSE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT OF BABYLON and its fruitage among the Lord's people. It is the intervention of God into the consciousness of His

people who are captives to carnal church systems of man. We must always remember that above all *Satan is religious!* Oh, yes! When “the prince of the power of the air” is judged and cleansed from the realm of the “powers of the heavens,” THAT POSITION IS NOT GOING TO GO UNFILLED. ANOTHER POWER MUST BE RAISED UP INTO THAT VACATED REALM OF DOMINION TO BECOME THE ENERGY FORCE THAT INFLUENCES, AFFECTS, IMPACTS, SWAYS, IMPELLS, CHANGES, AND TRANSFORMS THE UNDERSTANDING, CONVICTIONS, DESIRES, AND ACTIONS FIRST OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD, AND EVENTUALLY OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE WHOLE WORLD, GIVING DIRECTION AND MOTIVATION UNTO TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS!

THAT, my beloved, is what it means for the saints of God to be “***caught up IN THE AIR!***” As Satan and all the religious spirits that control God’s people are dispossessed from their position in the heavens of man’s consciousness, God’s chosen and separated elect are caught up or elevated into that place of influence, power, and authority. God is now preparing a company to fill that place, that sphere of spirit-energy and control that has been occupied by the false religious spirits, and thus the sons of God *become* “the power of the air” and “the powers of the heavens,” and our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed as the *true* “Prince of the power of the air.” Glory to God! We are raised up into that realm now, in the measure that we have appropriated it, but the fullness remains to be revealed. What a prospect! God’s people now under the power of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, delivered, enlightened, quickened, renewed, transformed, and filled with the glory of God under the power of the Righteous Ones! What changes shall yet be wrought in the church and in the earth! What righteousness, peace, truth, and joy shall then flow forth unto the people of the nations! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

The natural-minded Christian is looking to be suddenly snatched up into the air, away from the earth, to inhabit mansions on golden streets somewhere in the blue beyond. The spiritually-minded child of God looks to be *laid hold upon by a higher power* and lifted into a heavenly realm in the Spirit from which he can do something for this world. The almighty Father is preparing a people who shall bind the devil and all his false religious spirits and usurp their place of cosmic power in the atmosphere of man’s consciousness, supercharging even the very atmosphere of earth with vibrations and influences of life, light, love, righteousness, truth, and glory! When the Righteous Kingdom is in power, the cruel usurper will be absent; when the Righteous Kings hold sway, and the great tempter is overcome, men’s motives to godliness, truth, and life will be unhindered. The present activity of God is devoted to selecting, training, testing, developing, and perfecting this conquering, ruling company. Just think — you have the unique potential to be a transmitter of the LIFE-GIVING ENERGY of God Almighty here upon this earth!

The glory of God is the emanation or radiation of His nature, and this glory surrounds Him. As we become partakers of the divine nature, we also radiate the glory of His essence. This is the real purpose of our calling, and the meaning of being caught up in the air. Recognize, O saint of God, the radiant glory that is even now vibrating from your being, and seek His presence, that the glory and power might be greatly increased for the sake of His body as well as a lost world. Release the Christ within! Praise God, what a day! You can change the atmosphere about you, regardless of how dark or hopeless it may appear. You can radiate with His power and glory, like a blazing light where darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. Arise and shine! Your light has come! The glory of the Lord has risen upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon thee!

Chapter 188

The Battle At Armageddon (continued)

"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, saying, ***It is done***" (Rev. 16:17).

A great voice as of a multitude comes out of the temple of His body in the heavens of the Spirit, saying, "***It is done!***" While the words "it is done" are translated from a different Greek word, the meaning is essentially the same as that triumphant cry of the Christ upon the cross at the moment of His spirit's departure — the conqueror's cry, "*Tetelesti*," — "It is finished!" More exactly, "It is accomplished." The idea is not merely that a thing is ended, but that it is rounded out perfectly. That piece of work, that heavenly purpose, was Divinely Finished. Nothing can be added to it. Nothing can be taken from it. The word of the preacher in Ecclesiastes, comes with wonderful power in this connection. "*I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should reverence before Him*" (Eccl. 3:14). It is that sense of completeness, of unchangeable fulfillment and consummation, which is wholly divine. Jonathan Mitchell has given some alternate renderings of the Greek: "It has come to be." "It has been birthed." "It has come into existence." "It has occurred!"

When *men* say, "It is finished," the world laughs at them. The ink is not dry upon the page of a Constitution before many people are clamoring for an Amendment. The law is not printed, oftentimes not signed by the proper authority, before defects are found. What a cry of triumph there was when the work on the formation of a Constitution for the United States was completed! But tell me how many amendments we now have. Twenty-seven! And it needs twenty-seven more! The moment a church organization says, "Now we have finished our creed," and says of it, "We have the purest doctrine on earth," that very moment the organization ceases to progress. Let anyone dare to interfere with the truth as they perceive it, which they have set in concrete, thus making it a *static creed*. "This is the creed," they say, "it is the *whole truth and nothing but the truth*." If you do not agree with this thing which we have finished, Anathema; to the faggot, to the stake, to the cross, to the gallows, to the prison, to death with the man who dares to contradict this finished creed of ours! *Throw him out!*" Through the years various ones have written asking us for a copy of our "Doctrinal Statement." We have never written one, and never will. Do you realize how many revisions we would have had to make just during my brief lifetime? The moment you write your creed you cannot go any further with God nor have any more truth shed upon your pathway, for you have crystallized truth into a restricted form. How wonderful the knowledge that the Holy Spirit is ***still leading us into all truth!*** How blessed the realization that we are still progressing from glory to glory, from experience to experience, from faith to faith, and from one level of truth to another!

You have probably seen cars on the road that have a primer coat of paint on them. They are on the way to becoming great-looking cars, but they're not there yet. They are "in progress." People are like that. God's elect are like that! If you look around you today at those whom the Lord has called to sonship, you will see people who are unfinished products. I'm sure you have seen the button some people wear that says, "Please be patient, God isn't finished with me yet." Sometimes we forget that our brethren are people "in progress." We are offended when they manifest some imperfection. Sometimes we also expect ourselves to be perfect, and we become

discouraged or distressed if we fail to measure up to our own expectations. The great news we can focus on today is that God will bring His work in us to completion! Oh, yes, He will! That is the great revelation and comfort shining brightly through the words of our text. God has appointed a day — there will come a great voice out of the heavenly realm, out from the throne-room, proclaiming, "*It is done!*" Oh, yes, we will be God's *finished product!* HE is the one who started the work. He planned it in eternity. He revealed it and has carried it out in history through the progression of the ages. He is GOD and He will finish His work in His apprehended ones! The *seventh bowl* brings the end of God's perfecting work in all His people. The work has been carried forth through the opening of the seven seals, through the sounding of the seven trumpets, and now we have come to the pouring out of the final bowl of the *seven last plagues*. We stand at the end, the finish, the termination of the limitations and weakness of the flesh, the turmoil of the carnal mind, the pressures of the world, the testings of the devil, the deception and bondage of religious Babylon — the end of all that has hindered and defeated God's people. "*It is done!*" What a word that is!

Meditate upon the words of the preacher in Ecclesiastes, and realize the completeness of the divine. What the Christ did was a complete, finished work. Nothing can be added to or taken from it. He accomplished the work the Father gave Him to do, and all that His death meant and effected was carried forth successfully to its divine conclusion. Yet it was only laying a finished foundation for that building that was to be built up throughout the ages. Christ did not finish everything in the divine plan, nor even everything included in our redemption, when He yielded up His spirit on the cross. But the specific work He was accomplishing by His *death* was wrought out and brought to its divine conclusion. The foundation was complete. He finished the work, and upon the altar of His own completed work which He had Himself erected, He laid Himself down to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. *It is finished!* It is significant to note that "It is finished" are the very words the priest would say when the Passover sacrifice was completed! Christ our Passover is slain for us, and having died once...he dieth no more! Hence it never needs to be repeated. IT IS DONE! "*Nor yet that He should offer Himself often...but now once in the consummation of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*"

While all men everywhere were *reconciled* to God by the death of His Son, they were not *perfected*, nor were they conformed to His image, nor were they matured unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Right there is where many brethren misunderstand the "finished work" of Christ on the cross. If every saint of God would diligently and prayerfully study all the New Testament says about what was accomplished by the wonderful *cross* of Christ they would see clearly just what all is included in that "finished work." And if every member of God's elect would then carefully consider all the "shall" and "shall be" statements in God's Word they would also be enlightened and instructed concerning those great and glorious things that are *not* included in that "finished work," and therefore remaining to be accomplished in each of our lives by the mighty on-going *processings* of the Spirit of God. Time and space do not permit us to go into the many passages touching on this great truth, but in one precious verse we have an indication of just what was "finished" at the cross and of that which was not finished at the cross, yet to be wrought out in our lives by a very different process of God. "*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we SHALL BE SAVED by His LIFE*" (Rom. 5:10).

And now, in our text, there is a great voice out of the temple in heaven, *from the throne*, and who can deny that it is the voice of the One who sits upon the throne, who also said: "*To him that*

overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). Observe, then, how it is the Lord Jesus Himself, not Jesus on the cross on Calvary’s hill, but the resurrected, ascended, and glorified Christ who now again proclaims a *finished work* — “***It is done!***” This obviously cannot be the *same* finished work He announced on the cross! Ah, now that all His redeemed people have had visited on them the passion of God through the seven last plagues, to bring them out of captivity in spiritual Egypt, to deliver them from the tyranny of religious Babylon, to purge, refine, purify, perfect, and mature them into the image of Christ, there comes a voice, not from the cross, this time, but out of the heavens of the Spirit, out from the throne of power; THAT was *atonement, reconciliation, redemption* — THIS is *deliverance, purification, perfection*: “***It is finished! It is done! It is accomplished!***” ALL DONE! All the fleshiness, all the carnality, all the foolishness of religion, all the immaturity and childishness, all the sin and lack, all the misunderstanding, all the doctrinal delusions, all the unbelief, and all the worldly ways — the day of deliverance has come and now, “*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb*” (Rev. 17:7-9).

Paul Mueller commented on our text, “When the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air, which is the same ‘air’ that once was the devil’s realm, a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, said, ‘**IT IS DONE.**’ Something has been concluded, finished, and terminated. It is the continuing conflict between flesh and spirit, and between sin and death and the Life of God that has been terminated. For us, all that pertained to the past death-life will then be over. The attacks of Satan will then be over. Our bondages also will be over, and ultimately those of all mankind and of the whole creation. When God says, ‘**IT IS DONE,**’ we may be sure that it is done! The proof of this will be our transformation and the final fall of the evil powers of Babylon. The old creation, that was created by the old, carnal man, Adam, as ‘he’ was inspired by Satan, shall pass away. And the new creation, created by Christ and His brother-sons, shall then come forth to the glory of the Father.”

Just as the “it is finished” of Calvary refers to a different work than the “it is done” of our text, so there is one more “it is done” in the book of Revelation which also signifies a different work than either of the two preceding. “*And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make ALL THINGS new...and He said unto me, IT IS DONE. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*” (Rev. 21:5-6). No longer just the body of Christ, but now the Lord moves to renew and restore ALL THINGS, the entire creation of God. All things which John had seen up to now were for the church, the people of God. But now the vision allows us to peer through the glory and to the very end, to an end which includes *all things everywhere*. Who would not longingly look toward that blessed consummation? And so certain is the Christ of the throne that all will be made new, that He declares “**IT IS DONE!**” And the glorious result is revealed in the words which immediately follow: “*I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.*” Even the rich man in hell will hear those words! Think of it!

VOICES, THUNDERS, LIGHTNINGS, AND A GREAT EARTHQUAKE

“And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great” (Rev. 16:18).

Let us look a bit more at what John sees when the seventh angel pours his bowl into the air. Out of the atmosphere are seen proceeding voices, and thunders, and lightnings; then there is a great earthquake, the greatest ever recorded in human history. Three other times in the Revelation it speaks of voices, thunders, and lightnings. These things, of course, are the familiar accompaniments of a storm. It is significant that each time they are named in the book it is in connection with some direct action taken by the Lord out of the heavens of the Spirit which produces a reaction and has an effect in the earth realm. And each time there is some added action intensifying the scene!

A physical storm is caused by two areas of unequal temperature coming together. The storm is the process of the coming together and equalizing of the atmospheric conditions. The inference here would seem to be that the storm is created when the two "atmospheres" of heaven and earth meet, that is, when the atmosphere of the spirit realm touches the atmosphere of the earthly, carnal, soulical realm, and a storm results which equalizes the atmosphere, bringing clear weather, or true clarity in both the atmosphere of the spiritual *and* the soulical. It suggests that the Lord is taking the next step in bringing forth the *revelation of Jesus Christ in all His people!* He has risen up from His secret place, spoken from His heavenly temple, and come forth to bring judgment in the lives of all who name His name! And my, what a storm that creates within God's people and throughout the church world! And what commotions of voices, thunders, and lightnings this produces in the midst!

The "storms" of the book of Revelation are interesting. In chapter eight a storm is created when something symbolically represented as "fire of the altar" is cast into the earth and becomes a disturbing element in the atmosphere of the earth causing great disturbance there. When the Lord comes in His Holy Ghost fire it always changes the temperature and creates a disturbance! The fire of God *heats up* the atmosphere of Adam's world, quickening the spirit within man, and the heated atmosphere of the spirit meets the *cold atmosphere* of man's soulical life, and a great storm is generated! God *speaks* out of the storm, and there are heard voices proclaiming heavenly things! In the storm God manifests His *power* in the thunderings! He gives brilliant flashes of *illumination* and *revelation* by the lightnings! By this storm He *shakes* (symbolized by the earthquake) everything of the old carnal understanding, the old natural life, the old worldly system of things, purifies the atmosphere, pours down the rain of His Spirit and Life, and MAKES ALL THINGS NEW! The vision reveals the great truth that in the outworking of God's kingdom purposes, *first* something happens in *heaven*, and then as a *consequence*, certain *events* take place *in our earth*. And the outcome is glorious indeed!

Throughout the scriptures the earthquake was a regular feature of divine visitation. When God descended upon mount Sinai, "the whole mountain quaked greatly" (Ex. 19:18). Isaiah prophesied that men would hide in caves from the terror of the Lord, "when He ariseth to shake mightily the earth" (Isa. 2:19). "Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth," writes Haggai (Hag. 2:6). Earthquake denotes a sudden, powerful, and violent disruption of the normal state of things. No human power can control or bring about earthquakes. Many times we have seen on the news cities that were shaken by temblors, and have seen the wreck of some of the finest dwelling places and commercial buildings the ingenuity of man can devise. In a few seconds, while the hearts of men stood still with terror, while no human hand could possibly aid them, the great concrete structures crashed and shattered to ruins in the street below. Men and women grabbed their babies and fled blindly for shelter — they knew not where. No human power can stay an earthquake, or even definitively warn of its coming.

Since Armageddon is the final battle in the saint's perfection into Christ, it is fitting that the earthquake accompanying this battle is described as "a great earthquake, *such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*" Now if that were a *literal* earthquake it would be horrendous indeed, for there have been historically some catastrophically devastating earthquakes. Pompeii was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 63. In 1556 there was an earthquake in the Shensi Province of China which took 800,000 lives. In 1693 an earthquake on the island of Sicily took 60,000 lives. Early in the eighteenth century the Japanese city of Edo (now Tokyo) was destroyed with the loss of 200,000 lives. In 1755 the city of Lisbon, Portugal lost 60,000 persons to an earthquake, the shocks of which were felt as far away as southern France and North Africa. In 1797 40,000 people were killed in an earthquake at Quito, Ecuador. In 1819 an earthquake caused 2,000 square miles to sink and become the bed of a lake in the state of Kutch in India. In 1883 a violent eruption at Krakatoa in Sunda Strait caused the deaths of 36,000 people. In 1896 an earthquake in Japan took 26,000 lives. So there have been some mighty *literal* earthquakes which serve as faint shadows of the powerful ***spiritual shakings*** to come to God's people in the battle at Armageddon!

On the physical level, an earthquake occurs where the cooling of the earth has caused two layers of earth to overlap rather than to come together flush. As they try to settle into a more natural position, great pressure and stress is created and suddenly they release energy, there is a mighty movement, and an earthquake takes place. Spiritually, this is fulfilled within each of us in those areas of our life where the flesh and the spirit, the carnal mind and the spiritual mind, truth and error, or our will and God's will *overlap within ourselves*, causing intense pressures to be formed, evoking instability in our lives. We have these places deep within us where things do not fit together properly, where there are flaws in our thinking or defects in our character, and pressure builds up, for soul and body have not been synchronized with the spirit, so that they do not "mesh" together. When we meet a situation that begins to trigger these pressures and conflicts, a mighty rumbling and movement is set off! The flesh *wars* against the spirit, and the spirit *wars* against the flesh! When both the spirit and the flesh want to dominate great pressures are created deep within. When God sets His hand to finally and ultimately deal with every aspect of our flesh-life He gathers us straight to that place called Armageddon!

As the Spirit of God moves sovereignly in our life, exerting a force beyond the capacity of the natural man, the great "earthquake" then ensues! The earthquake touches the fault-lines of our life, not just the surface things, but the very depths of being where the foundation is defective, imperfect, and unsound. It should not be difficult to understand that *no man* can be conformed to the image of God apart from spiritually devastating and destructive earthquakes! In order for creation to be delivered and restored into God everything of the natural constitution, the human mentality, the Adamic consciousness, the carnal mind, the flesh life, our own will and ways, yes, and even all our former heavens of spiritual experience must be shaken, utterly removed, and demolished! And when He has finished His great work, in the most powerful earthquake we have ever experienced or any man has ever experienced, the carnal mind, the human nature, the flesh, and religious Babylon will lie in ruins and eternal desolation! But the Christ-life will be exalted on high in our lives!

When the earthquake comes there are great commotions within and we react and feel in a spiritual way exactly like those people experience naturally who are victims of physical earthquakes. Cars in the streets roll back and forth, trees thresh about, broken like toothpicks; buildings collapse, the terrain moves violently, bridges buckle, hospitals are devastated, water supplies are broken, communications are cut off, highways and railways are split asunder, our

whole equilibrium is thrown off balance, and there is great suffering and death. Oh, yes! When the spiritual earthquake occurs within us, the old world of our carnal understanding, the powerful citadels of the flesh, and all the entrenched spirit of man-made religion are wiped away! This is the awesome work of the earthquake that strikes when the word of our Father comes in power and shakes us out of heaven!

Some years ago Rosemary Garzon wrote, "We have recently heard of a prophecy given concerning a terrible earthquake this summer in this country. Through the years we have heard of similar prophecies being given, which most of you have also heard. Be that as it may. We do know that the hour of the manifestation of the sons of God must surely be nigh at hand. There is enough proof in His word that when we have a breakthrough of great intensity from the natural earth realm into the realm of His Spirit, an earthquake is assured! We might liken this reaction to the 'sonic boom' we are all familiar with when a jet plane breaks through the sound barrier. This reaction is one of God's laws in His vast universe. When Jesus Christ broke through His flesh body and 'yielded up the ghost' we read of what took place. '*And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent: and the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many*' (Mat. 27:51-53).

But there is a truth beyond just the personal application. It is significant to note that in chapter eleven of the Revelation we see a *token* fall of the great city Babylon, which is the fall of Babylon within God's chosen and separated elect, while in chapters sixteen through eighteen we are shown Babylon's *total collapse and destruction*, which is the fall of Babylon within the lives of ALL God's people! "And the same hour there was an earthquake, and *the tenth part of the city (Babylon) fell...*" (Rev. 11:13). What is a tenth? It's a tithe, a firstfruit, an earnest — that which is uniquely God's and guarantees the balance! All of Babylon, the "great city," will fall, but here it is a partial fall. The manchild company, the sons of God themselves, are the "tenth" part of Babylon that is now falling. As the Spirit of the Lord has destroyed the strongholds of Babylon within us, we are all aware that not all of this symbolic city has fallen! The other nine-tenths, the structure of the carnal church systems, has continued till today, but it has suffered some loss from the earthquake that has freed God's elect from its clutches. What it has lost and is losing from itself is here called "a tenth."

This reminds us that, when the prophet Isaiah was told about the destruction coming upon Jerusalem and its kingdom of Judah, he was told "there will still be within it a tenth, and it must again become...like a massive tree in which, when there is a cutting down of them, there is a stump; a holy seed will be the stump of it" (Isa. 6:13). The "stump" or "holy seed" proved to be the faithful remnant that survived the exile in Babylon and returned home to rebuild the holy temple at Jerusalem and restore the kingdom of Israel. Though the application is a little different, the principle is the same — the "tenth part" is the promise that the whole kingdom of Babylon will come down! Only after the blessed sons of God are manifest and the glorious bride of Christ has "made herself ready" will the entire city of Mystery Babylon be eternally desolated, burned with fire, and reduced to ashes!

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of

those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably" (Heb. 12:25-28).

Reference to the *shaking of the earth and heaven* comes closer home than just the upheaval and doing away with man's earthly orders, governments, institutions, cultures, and religious systems. Certainly all of that, too, shall pass away! It also speaks of God's dealings with all who aspire to become sons of God in the here and now. Not only *the earth* in us — our humanity with its faults, weaknesses, limitations, emotions, ways, powers, and attributes — but also *the heaven* in us must be shaken! The heaven in us embraces all our spiritual blessings and experiences of the past. The purpose of this shaking is not to destroy but to replace what has been of God in our spiritual journey but only intended for a specific time and purpose in our growth and development in Christ. The removal of those things is to reveal something far greater! Never does the Lord take something away unless it is to give us something better! He removes the natural to give us the spiritual. He replaces the good with His best. He takes away the "in part" to reveal in us His fullness. When the transitory (shadow, letter of the word) has fulfilled its purpose, He then introduces us to what is real, heavenly, and eternal (divine substance). Therefore let us be grateful for the shaking of even our heavens and for receiving a *kingdom that cannot be shaken!* This wonderful kingdom of our Father is *earthquake proof* — it will never pass away, and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be NO END!

THE SHAKING OF BABYLON

"And there was a great earthquake...and *the great city was divided into three parts*, and the cities of the nations fell: *and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath*" (Rev. 16:18-19).

What dreadful thoughts and feelings are awakened in the soul by the very sound of the words *Mystery Babylon!* They are terrible words. They bring before us at once, that vast mass of professed Christians who call themselves "the church," but are not. Mystery Babylon is a dark and dreadful anomaly. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is not "Israel, nor the Gentiles, nor the church of God." The "great city" spoken of is neither natural Jerusalem nor is it the heavenly Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all. It is a corrupt mysterious mixture, a spiritual malformation, a hideous mutation, the masterpiece of Satan, the corrupter of the truth of God, the distorter of the character of God, the perverter of the ways of God, the destroyer of the souls of men, a trap, a snare, a stumbling block by which men are made two-fold more the children of hell than before. It is the corruption of the very best thing — the body of Christ — and therefore the most vile of corruptions. It is that thing which Satan has made of professing Christianity.

It is worse by far than Judaism; worse by far than the darkest of pagan religions; because it has higher light and richer privileges, makes the very highest profession, and occupies the very loftiest seat. It is without doubt that awful apostasy for which is reserved the very heaviest judgments of God — the most bitter dregs in the cup of His righteous wrath. If the words penned by John on Patmos do not say this, then I have no understanding or comprehension of language. I doubt if one Christian in one hundred thousand has anything like an adequate sense of the true character and inevitable doom of that system together with all the teachings, rituals, traditions, holy days, programs, organization, promotions, and religious exercises which surround them. If they had it would solemnize their minds and hearts, and cause them to sense the urgent need to flee at once out of Babylon's clutches, and stand apart in holy separation from Babylon's

ways, that they might escape such awful judgment as is about to be executed, for “strong is the Lord that judgeth her.”

In our text, as a result of the “great earthquake,” the “great city” was *divided into three parts*. Elwin Roach gave the following commentary on this thought, which I think is excellent. “Divided into three parts’ indicates a division of a whole unit. In God we have one unit with three parts, but not divided: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In man we also have a tripartite being: spirit, soul, and body. To be complete, whether it be God or man, there can be no division. It is the same with a natural city which consists of man. If it is divided in its common interest then it will surely fall. Not only that, all the other cities in her dominion will also be desolated. ‘*And the cities of the nations fell.*’ This is what we see happening to this “great city” — a division before the fall. This division also happened in seed form with Eve. She was tempted, seduced, divided herself from her husband, conceived sin, died spiritually, and was judged of God. We should be able to see the parallel here. The city is divided, but this time it is by the hand of God — an earthquake! But before the shakings could cause the division she would have had to already have separated herself from God. Otherwise the earthquake could not have moved her, for that which is founded in God cannot be moved!” — end quote.

In another sense the great city, Babylon, is split into three parts by the shaking of God, that is, it is brought to a *complete break-up*, to *complete ruin* — for three is the number of completeness. The two statements — “the great city was divided into three parts” and “the cities of the nations fell” — indicate that the whole city and every structure in it fell in a heap in utter ruin. Every structure collapsed, one wall falling to the right, another to the left, the roof and the floors falling down between them. It is total disintegration! There is, of course, an individual and personal application as the Babylon within each of us is judged. The mighty earthquakes come to each individual as the Lord shakes each believer from the death-hold of the spirit of Babylon, to be loosed unto the complete control and Lordship of Jesus Christ through the indwelling Spirit. All the cities (the religious strongholds, dominating hierarchies, denominational headquarters) of the nations fall. They fall within the affections of each of us! They all fall before the greater revelation of Jesus Christ! Every island of religious gatherings flees away. Every mountain of religious achievement, fame, and power crumbles and are no more. The ultimate truth of God’s great hail falls unrelentingly upon every thought, concept, doctrine, and tradition of man, crushing it into the earth. The spirit of Babylon is marked “finished” because the Lord, by His Spirit and His Word, puts down all rule, authority, and power! Isn’t it wonderful!

EVERY ISLAND FLED

“*And every island fled away*” (Rev. 16:20).

This also is the result of the “great earthquake” as God shakes the kingdom of Babylon within us. Islands signify that separate, individualized, independent gathering and effort of man to do his own thing, build his own kingdom, gain a following, and make a name for himself. This is one of the roots of the Babylonian religious system which separates, divides, and exalts itself into a domineering, cultish form — “WE are the true church, WE are the body of Christ, WE are the repository of all truth, WE, and WE ALONE, are God’s anointed instrument in the earth!” How many times have you heard that! Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox, Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, certain “sonship” groups, and the list goes on and on. But all spiritual egotism, self-centeredness, self-exaltation, and sectarian spirit will be dealt with by the Lord! All this is the “way of Cain” who “went out from the presence of the Lord...and *he builded a city*” (Gen. 4:16). He

sought to exalt his own name, gain a following, and build a kingdom around himself. The final result of that spirit became Babylon — first ancient Babylon and now *Mystery Babylon*. But all the efforts of man will fail, for God sends His great earthquake and the “great city” is divided and demolished and every *island flees away!* Oh, yes!

THE MOUNTAINS ARE NOT FOUND

“*...and the mountains were not found*” (Rev. 16:20).

Mountains always occupy a dominant position in relation to the surrounding terrain and are imposing and strong, consisting primarily of rock. From this standpoint they fittingly picture kingdoms, governments, organizations, and strong dominating powers which impose themselves over men. Thus mountains signify great and strong kingdoms of man, either within ourselves or that which is built up outwardly. The kingdom of God itself is symbolized by the stone cut out without hands which smites the image in its feet, grinds it to powder, and then grows to become a “great mountain” that fills the whole earth! The prophet Micah saw that *“in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain (kingdom) of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains (above and over all other strong kingdoms), and it shall be exalted above the hills (above and over the smaller kingdoms), and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord...and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths...”* (Mic. 4:1-2). As the prophet Daniel reveals, the end result shall be that all these earthly “mountains” shall be swallowed up by THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD! “*...and the mountains were not found.*” All the kingdom-building of man shall cease. The empires — religious, economic, or political — which were monuments to the abilities of the flesh will be brought low.

HAIL

“And there fell upon men a *great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent:* and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for *the plague thereof was exceeding great*” (Rev. 16:21).

The plague of hail is also reminiscent of the seventh plague that God sent upon Egypt at the hand of Moses. It was this plague that brought total devastation to the land of Egypt. Men, animals, and plants were violently killed by the hail and lightning that rained down from heaven upon Egypt. This plague was somewhat unique because Yahweh constantly reiterated the fact that this plague was intended to prove to all the Egyptians that He was the one, true God who was to be reverenced and worshipped (Ex. 9:14, 16, 27, 29). This plague brought “very grievous hail, such as hath not been seen in Egypt since the foundation thereof” (Ex. 9:18). Many gods of the Egyptians were humiliated by the events that came to pass as a result of the plague of hail. Because many cattle were killed, the bull and cow gods were again proven to be powerless. Because the trees, plants, and crops were destroyed by the hail, *Renenutet* — the harvest goddess was shown to be impotent. *Seth*, the god of storms and protector of crops was ineffectual. As cattle and men died in great numbers, *Isis*, the goddess of life was humiliated by this plague, as was *Shu*, the god of the air, *Tefnut*, the goddess of moisture, and *Osiris*, a god of vegetation. And there were others! The plague of hail was undoubtedly a direct affront on more Egyptian gods than any other plague that had come before! And without doubt, the plague of hail in the Revelation is a powerful and devastating judgment against the many “false gods” of the religious systems of man!

The size and weight of this hail is designated to be “about a talent.” A talent is estimated at various weight figures, and this need not surprise us when we consider that the modern concept of having a standard gram or kilogram had not pervaded the ancient world. Suffice it to say that it was probably in the vicinity of 95 pounds. Hail of such magnitude, weighing almost as much as a 100 pound bomb, would indeed be an unquestionably lethal weapon! To be struck on an arm or foot would mean certain severe damage, and a strike landing directly on the head would bring instant death. The property damage to buildings, cars, planes, and infrastructure would be incalculable. Here in Texas I have heard of hailstones as big as baseballs. A lady in Iowa said she could top that — she had seen hail fall in great chunks. Yet most of us have seen how hailstones no bigger than the end of your thumb can devastate a cornfield, a cotton field, an automobile, or a house roof. The destruction of hailstones of a talent weight can hardly be imagined. The Roman catapults threw stones this size into Jerusalem, according to the historian Josephus.

This, of course, is all *symbolism*, emphasizing the power and effectiveness of God’s judgment upon spiritual Babylon! Job 38:22 asks the piercing question, “*Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?*” The sweet singer of Israel spake unto the Lord the words of a song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hands of his enemies, and from the hand of Saul; in one place in that song David says concerning the intervention of the Lord on his behalf, “*The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice; hailstones and coals of fire*” (Ps. 18:13).

Notice now the sublime message in the words of the prophet Isaiah wherein he says, “*Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies...and your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand*lies!

The elect of the Lord should be aware that water, especially rain falling from heaven, is used in the scriptures as a type of God’s word and God’s spirit combined, that is, the *living word of God!* Usually it indicates that He is sending a blessing in the time of drought. When God sends the rain that refreshes, sometimes it has come to us as a prophetic word. The Spirit speaks words like these, “Yea, my son, thou art mine, thou art precious in my eyes; I have called thee, I have chosen thee before the foundation of the world unto a high and holy calling. Yea, thou shalt be a great one, a mighty one in my kingdom! My goodly spices shall flow out from thee and thy fragrance shall fill the earth in the day of my moving! I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, I will be with thee in all of thy ways, yea, my hand shall bring thee unto thy appointed place, saith the Lord!” Oh, yes, we all love a word like that, and in days past the Lord has spoken in just such

endearing, encouraging, and faith-inspiring promises to many of us! But not so when He sends His word that comes as *hail!*

Water flows, and also it becomes sometimes hard as ice and hail. When it falls as hail it is not a blessing, as we think of blessing. When it falls as hail it always brings destruction, depending on its size, quantity, and duration. Hail is water, but it is frozen water, thus it bespeaks a **hard word** from the Lord! It is the word of God that strikes us and knocks the carnal-mindedness out of us! It is the word that rebukes, chastises, and corrects us! It gives us an attitude adjustment! It is not an easy word, not a flowery word, not a sweet, soothing word, but a word that devastates our field and beats down the carnal mindset, ways, and works that grow out of our earthly nature. What large hailstones of a “hard word” fall from the heavens of God’s Spirit into our land as He smashes our religious idols and all the things we treasure more than His will and way! The “refuge of lies” speaks of all the false ideas, false concepts, false doctrines, and false ways of the Lord’s people!

You can be a good Christian and embrace these false teachings and practices, but you’ll never be a *son!* The dealing hand of God must come into our lives to thoroughly correct, purge and purify us from all the defilements of religion! Multitudes of believers want only the *rain* of God’s word and God’s spirit, only the blessings from above. To these the Lord says, “*Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto sons, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every SON whom He receiveth. And if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement...then are ye bastards, and not sons*” (Heb. 12:5-8). Oh, yes, the Father will give us His glory, His nature, His wisdom, authority, and power, and raise us up to judge the world and rule the nations with a rod of iron. But before He entrusts into our hands such awesome responsibilities He will put His finger on every aspect of our lives, He will bring training, discipline, order, and judgment to our house. He will send the **hailstorms** into our lives to beat down and destroy all the refuge of lies, all the *falsehoods* of the doctrines of men, all the foolishness of the religious systems, in which men take refuge, in which they trust for their blessing and eternal salvation.

In the statement above I substituted the word *falsehoods* for *lies* because lies infer a deliberate, intentional, malicious deception. Very few preachers, teachers, and church systems deliberately intend to deceive God’s people. They themselves are *deceived* and the message they proclaim is laced with falsehoods. The hail is a strong, hard, corrective word from the Lord which He sends into our lives with such SOLID IMPACT that it sweeps away our refuge of falsehoods. I have experienced the hail, and I tell you that in just a very brief period of time the word of God can come to us in such power that it completely lays to ruin all our strongholds of carnal thinking and religious error! The ultimate result of this wonderful deliverance is that He will abolish our covenant with death and destroy our league with hell! (Isa. 28:17-18). It is a complete salvation, yet it cannot be wrought apart from the hailstorm of God’s strong and powerful word which sweeps away the falsehoods that have kept us from laying hold upon life and immortality. He is doing this now in the life of each member of His called and chosen elect, but before it can be said that “the bride has made herself ready” He will also accomplish this same work in ALL OF HIS REDEEMED PEOPLE! Aren’t you glad!

This certainly edifies me more than to think Russia is going to invade Israel or that there will be some kind of nuclear holocaust over on the plains near Megiddo, somehow causing giant hailstones to fall upon the people. If any of this is *literal*, we have some glaring inconsistencies.

Notice — if the great earthquake has shaken everything apart, the great city split into three parts, the cities of the nations fell, great Babylon was judged, every island fled away, none of the mountains could be found — who or what could even be *left* for the hail to fall upon! We have all kinds of carnal-minded prophets of doom and gloom in the land today talking about hailstones as big around as beach-balls, Godzilla monsters walking down Main Street, giant insects invading the homes, hideous demons riding horses, scorpions as big as bulls crawling up out of the earth, and other foolishness too ridiculous to enumerate — all of which they imagine is revealed in the book of Revelation! I often wonder how people who have received the Holy Spirit of God can fail to see that all these things are symbolic, they are metaphors representing great spiritual realities within our lives and in the experience of mankind. I really have to question whether a man has truly been filled with the Holy Spirit of Truth if he can listen to such literalistic trash, such carnal drivel, and never say, “Wait a minute — there’s something about this that doesn’t add up — how can that be *the revelation of Jesus Christ!*”

I’m sure there are some who read these lines who have attended seminars where the literalistic doom and gloom were taught, and when you left there you thought, “You know, that really doesn’t bear witness with my spirit,” but for lack of a better answer you thought, “This brother *must know* what he’s talking about!” Yet, a voice way down in your inner being whispered to you even then that it wasn’t true. There was a sudden flash of lightning, a momentary burst of illumination, that suggested to you that there was a truth deeper and higher in God! And today prophets of God are openly proclaiming that truth which you knew in the very depths of your life but which you were unable to clearly focus or articulate. The truth does not speak from outside of you. Truth speaks from inside of you, out of the inner sanctum of your spirit. If it is the voice of our Beloved it will make our inner-son leap! That is what is happening within God’s elect in this hour as the message of Christ in the Revelation is quickened within our hearts!

THE BLASPHEMY OF MEN

“...and *men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail;* for the plague thereof was exceeding great” (Rev. 16:21).

For a time men will blaspheme God “because of the plague of the hail,” for it will be devastating in its working. This verse, however, it is not placed at the end of the judgment upon Babylon and the final deliverance of God’s people. This work continues on through chapters seventeen and eighteen. Only *then* does the seventh plague complete its grand purpose! Therefore, the “blasphemy” of men is a response along the way in the process of judgment. When the work is finished Great Babylon will fall to rise no more, the church — the bride — will have been purified and made herself ready, the city of God will be adorned with the glory of God descending out of the heavens, and the nations will walk in the light of that city which *is* the bride of the Lamb. The whole of creation will be subdued before Him, joyfully to live in His sight, *all things* will be *made new*, and all will be gathered into Him — for HE *is the beginning and the end!*

It is the Truth that is to fall on men and cause them to blaspheme. The carnal mind and the old Adamic reasoning always resist the mind of the Lord, for they are enmity against God and cannot receive the things of the spirit of God, because they are *spiritually discerned*. The truth *hurts* carnal-minded men and causes them to resist it in resentful blasphemy. This is the natural man crying out because his death-knell has arrived, his day has ended, his time has come, and he will now sink into oblivion to be reckoned with no more! The Lord employs nothing with which to defeat error and correct men except the Truth. The adversary attempted in the beginning of

human history to defeat the purposes of God and destroy the life of man by and through *deception* and *falsehood*, and not through the employment of physical or any form of super-human power. God will likewise send a *hard word* with such *devastating power* that it will prevail and *sweep away the refuge of lies*. Falsehood swept away, Babylon is disarmed and helpless, and her armies must perish by *the sword of the Spirit!*

Chapter 189

Mystery Babylon

As we approach chapter seventeen of the Revelation the visions of John move rapidly toward a double climax. We are in the ascending foothills beyond which are the towering twin peaks of the Revelation — the fall of Mystery Babylon and the ascendancy of New Jerusalem. This seventeenth chapter has sometimes been called a “twisted rope” or a “tangled web,” for there are many ambiguous, puzzling, and somewhat perplexing and bewildering scenes which seem beyond comprehension or understanding. However, we will not find the chapter too difficult if we proceed with patience and holy waiting upon the Spirit of Truth to quicken our hearts and enlighten our minds with that wisdom which is from above. Let us pray for the spirit of understanding to understand that which is written for our blessing and edification!

No word given to a prophet from the Lord by the Holy Spirit can be truthfully understood or interpreted unless the same spiritual understanding is given to the reader by the Holy Spirit that gave it originally to the prophet. God’s elect in this hour is being given the ability to “*Hear what the Spirit saith*,” and it is the same anointing wherein it was spoken and written. The book of Revelation, like any other part of the scriptures and prophecies, must be “spiritually” understood. Understanding came to the disciples of Jesus when He “opened unto them the scriptures.” Before that their natural understanding was unfruitful. They didn’t have a clue! They read all the scriptures and never saw Jesus there until He “opened” the scriptures to them. And it wasn’t a doctrine that He shared with them, it was *spiritual illumination* that burst forth within their hearts!

We must remember that what John is writing is prophecy, and prophecy is not merely history written beforehand. The prophet’s distinguishing characteristic is not **foresight** but **insight**. He peers behind the appearance of things to the spiritual realities they represent and he announces the things that he sees in the most vivid and arresting ways as they are communicated to him in signs and symbols. This does often involve prediction as to the future yet the vindication of the truth of his message does not lie in the exact correspondence of event with prediction but in the true apprehension of the eternal principles and spiritual realities revealed therein. O that the saints of the Lord might see that the value of any prophecy of scripture does not lie in the ability of the prophet to forecast the future, but in the insight it shows into the purposes of God and the power it has to quicken discernment and understanding in the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God.

Chapters seventeen and eighteen of the Revelation present us with a description of the great harlot, Mystery Babylon, and of her fall. It is of utmost significance that we obtain a clear conception of the picture of the appearance and essential character of this harlot, as given us by the spirit of wisdom and revelation. In the first place, it is my deep conviction that this is necessary for the clear and definite understanding of the rest of the book of Revelation. But, in the second place, this clear conception of Mystery Babylon and her essential significance, is also necessary for one important reason. The voice comes to the people of God in the eighteenth chapter, “*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*” This cry of the Spirit signifies an irresistible, effectual call unto everlasting glory, the final deliverance of the church of Christ from its captivity by the flesh and the spirit of the world. The Lord’s people are being asked to come out of a system where they have lived, dwelt,

participated, and been comfortable and contented. But in this system there is more of the flesh and the world than there is of the spirit and the truth! This whorish system has captivated the minds and hearts of God's people, causing them to bow in worship at its idolatrous shrine, binding them in slavery to a thousand activities which are *religious* but are not, in fact, activities which are of the spirit or the truth. These organizations, programs, creeds, philosophies, traditions, rituals, ceremonies, and efforts of the sects which to the carnal mind appear so spiritual are in truth just a repetition of the Pharisees of old. They make the word of God of none effect by their traditions. Their doctrines are full of distortions and corruption which blind men to truth and reality, preventing them from being made one with Him, or having Him come and take His royal seat upon the throne of their hearts. In order to get out of this harlot system and refuse to have fellowship with her we must be able to discern her among the many movements of our day. Hence, the clear understanding of the character and manifestation of Mystery Babylon, the great harlot, is of utmost importance for every child of God who longs to know the Lord in all His glorious and eternal reality.

When we come to this wonderful book of Revelation, in order to receive the *message*, we must first understand the *symbols*. Like most of the rest of scripture, the whole book of Revelation is conveyed to us in the language of signs and symbols. In the Old Testament we find that Israel celebrated two time cycles in their experience with God; they had a religious or sacred calendar and also an agricultural or farming calendar. Both of these calendars were related to one another so that the crop that was planted in late October began to come to fruition in the spring when the first month of their sacred calendar began and they celebrated the feast of Passover, at which time they waved the green sheaf of the firstfruits of the harvest. Now — what does all this have to do with us? Well, my beloved, nothing in the scripture is about dirt, or seed, or about wheat or barley, or dates on the calendar! It's all about *the work of God in His people!* There is absolutely nothing in the Bible that is about cows, or donkeys, or lambs, or lions, or beasts!

The law stipulated that "*Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn*" (Deut. 25:4). The apostle Paul, in referencing this, asked the pertinent question, "*For in the law of Moses it is written, You shall not muzzle an ox when he is treading out the corn. Is it only for oxen that God cares? Or does he speak certainly and entirely for our sakes? Assuredly it is written for our sakes, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher ought to thresh in expectation of partaking of the harvest. We have sown spiritual seed among you...*" (I Cor. 9:9-11). Did the Holy Spirit give the law about the ox for the ox's sake or for our sakes? Reading this passage we understand that everything in the law and the prophets is written for OUR SAKES! Then Jesus comes and begins to teach concerning the kingdom of God. He says the kingdom of God is like a sower who went forth to sow, and like seed cast into the earth, and like leaven, and like a treasure hid in a field, and like pearls, and like a net, and like fish, and so on, and so on. All these outer, natural things point to higher, spiritual things! In like manner, the book of Revelation is not about lambs, and beasts, and heads, and horns, and harlots, and altars, and incense, and thrones, and seas, and mountains, and monsters, and marks, and fires, and pits, and chains, and millenniums. Oh, no! The book of Revelation is about YOU! It's about the revelation of Jesus Christ in His body with all the forces and powers and instruments and workings and dealings and warfares and purgings and purifications and victories that are involved in the process! Oh, yes! Aren't you glad!

The book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the Christ of God *revealed!* By the very nature of things, included in this revelation are negative things which are uncovered, exposed, and brought to light — things which are *hindrances* to His appearing and therefore must

be removed, eradicated, and destroyed. This very removal *is the unveiling*, taking away the cover, tearing away the obstructions so that HE MAY BE SEEN! Without the removal and destruction of those things which conceal, hide, and obscure Him there can never be His revelation. The revelation of Jesus Christ is Christ appearing in fullness of life, nature, stature, power, and glory in His body, within the saints. Therefore the whole book of Revelation is about — YOU! It is not about Russia, China, Israel, the European Union, the Third World War, or a superman antichrist sitting in a temple in Jerusalem. It's not about a city called Babylon over in Iraq. Oh, no! When we come to the judgment and destruction of the Great Whore, Mystery Babylon, we are viewing the destruction of a system which spiritually enslaves God's people — but first and foremost the judgment and destruction of the very *root* and *power* of the Babylon spirit *within each of us*. That is the mystery!

"And there came unto me *one of the seven angels which had the seven vials*, and talked with me..." So begins chapter seventeen. We first meet the *seven angels with the seven vials* in chapter fifteen, verse one. "And I saw *another sign* in heaven, great and marvelous, *seven angels having the seven last plagues*; for in them is filled up the wrath (passion) of God" (Rev. 15:1). This passage introduces the deep mystery the Holy Spirit now reveals to the called and chosen elect of the Lord. John beholds here "another sign," that is, a similitude, something like a parable, and the sign is in contrast with the other signs he previously beheld in spirit. The sign which he now sees in the heaven of God's Spirit is great and marvelous. It is, in other words, awe-inspiring and wonderful! And no wonder: for the sign which he now beholds is of the greatest importance. It cannot be looked upon or understood without moving us deeply and filling our hearts with the overflowing of wonder and joy.

And although, without doubt, the sight of these seven shining heavenly messengers positioned side by side is already breathtaking — for they are glorious and beautiful, resplendent in their appearance, pure, radiant, dazzling, and powerful — yet their purpose and message is still more majestic and sublime! These are the seven messengers who have the *seven last plagues*. Evidently they do not have the seven plagues of themselves, but the power of these seven plagues is *given them*, and they now hold this power. They possess the power of pouring out these plagues into the earth-realm, the carnal and soulical religious realm of man, and completely devastating it — for the destruction implied in these plagues is complete. We have only to recall that we are dealing here with spiritual realities represented in the form of *signs* and *symbols* to understand the great truth revealed in this scene — the seven messengers in their symbolism represent a seven-fold message, ministry, and moving of God by His Spirit and by His Word to bring an end to the soulical power of man's natural life and the soulish religious realm of man.

The messengers are seven in number, the number of completion and fullness, signifying that by their seven plagues the work of God's wrath or passion shall be fully fulfilled, finished, completed. All the soulical operations in the lives of God's dear people, all the self-hood, every vestige of the believer's own mind, will, emotion, desire, and inclination to religiosity shall once and for all and forever be brought to an end! Seeing that in the order of John's visions this wonderful work has already been accomplished in God's called and separated elect, the manchild company, the 144,000 on mount Zion, it follows that this dealing of God is now ready to come upon the masses of the Lord's people who still walk in a carnal realm and serve the Lord as slaves to the carnal church systems of man. Seven is the symbol of the completion and triumph of the kingdom of God in the lives of God's own people! What anticipation this stirs in our hearts!

Furthermore we read, “And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles” (Rev. 15:6). The ministry of the symbolic “seven messengers” streams forth from the precincts of the ark within the temple — from the very throne of God — from the very heart of God — the heart-throne of mercy and judgment. The seven last plagues come *out of the temple!* It should be plain to any thinking mind that when we look at these seven last plagues we are not seeing something that is coming from the Russians, nor from the Red Chinese, nor from a nuclear holocaust, nor from some ecological disaster, nor from some alien attack from outer space, nor out of the bottomless pit, nor from the mouth of the great red dragon, nor from the antichrist in Israel, for these are things which proceed out from the very *glory in the temple of God*, that is, out from the *midst of God's called and chosen elect!* The vials are indeed judgment vials — and is it not the *saints* who shall **judge the world!** Judgment is coming out of God’s temple, but keep in mind, my beloved, that nothing breaks forth out of the temple of God that has not been first *inworked into* that temple! Ah, yes, His judgments BEGIN AT THE HOUSE OF GOD!

COME HITHER — I WILL SHOW THEE!

The apostle John was one of the three mighty ones who walked with the Lord in the days of His flesh; he was with Him in the Mount, he lay in His bosom and, above all others, has received the distinctive title as “that disciple whom the Lord loved.” It was fitting that the man who had leaned upon the breast of God’s Son and heard the inmost beating of His heart should become the depository of His most intimate thought in respect to the course of the church in this age. And such is the case. To him the Lord gave a graphic picture of the development of the bride of Christ and the sons of God over the past two millenniums. The risen and ascended Lord descended in a vision of glory on the lonely isle of Patmos, and there meeting His startled disciple, gave him a communication concerning the church, commanding him to write it in a scroll and send it to the seven churches in Asia.

At this juncture the seven bowls of plagues have all been poured out by the seven messengers in chapter sixteen — but the end is not yet — for now with wondering eyes John stood transfixed as there came to him *one of the seven messengers* by whom the bowls of God’s passion had been poured out and spoke with John, saying, “COME HITHER; I will show unto thee the judgment of the GREAT WHORE that sitteth upon many waters (Rev. 17:1). What John is now shown is the **final result** of the pouring out of the seven bowls of God’s passion! As John beheld, however, and pondered, the scene abruptly changed and he saw an even greater wonder as the same angel came to him again, and said, “COME HITHER; I will show unto thee THE BRIDE, the Lamb’s wife” (Rev. 21:9).

These words take on new depth of meaning when we understand that in the book of Revelation the word “come” always signifies **an invitation to revelation**; the whore and the bride are two women; the invitation goes forth to come and see by the spirit how they are related and what they mean; and I do not hesitate to tell you that it requires A REVELATION FROM GOD TO SEE EITHER! Of the harlot it is written, “So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy” (Rev. 17:3). Of the bride it is written, “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (Rev. 21:10). Of the harlot it was said, “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON

THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:4-5). In contrast of which it was said of the bride, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:8). The bride is described as, "...the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious" (Rev. 21:10-11).

Though there is a great gulf between the abominations of the religious harlot and the glory of the exquisite bride of the Lamb, there is a connection between the two which is divinely orchestrated. This angel, this messenger, one of the seven, who in chapter seventeen conducts John on a guided tour of that great city, Mystery Babylon, later guides him on a tour of the holy city, New Jerusalem. This reveals the important truth that the seven messengers — the full and complete revelation of God's purpose — are the instruments both of the *destruction* of Babylon and the *perfecting* of the bride of Christ! Then follows the wonderful truth pertaining to the true nature and character of both Mystery Babylon and the Holy City Jerusalem — **IT TAKES A REVELATION TO SEE EITHER!** "Come hither — and I will show thee...the great whore." "Come hither — and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." It is the voice of the same messenger revealing to our hearts two diverse realities. It is the invitation to revelation!

The church of Christ is called a MYSTERY. She is presented as a virgin. She is called a bride. Finally, she is presented as a city, the New Jerusalem, the city of peace, righteousness, glory, and divine order. The scarlet-clad woman is called a MYSTERY. She is not a virgin, she is a harlot. She is not a wife, she is the paramour and mistress of the kings of the earth. Finally, she is that great city which is called Babylon, the city of confusion, filthiness, shame, and the denial of divine order. As to Babylon, John adds, "When I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman...the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. The waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues...and the woman which thou sawest is that great city (a corporate people) which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:7,8,15,19).

These prophecies present two broadly contrasted WOMEN, identified with two broadly contrasted CITIES, one reality being in each case, doubly represented, as a WOMAN, and as a CITY. The harlot and Babylon are one; the bride and the heavenly Jerusalem are one. My prayer is that the Spirit of the Living God will enlighten the eyes of all who read these lines and give understanding, shedding forth abundantly of the spirit of wisdom and revelation that each may be able to discern and easily differentiate between the *virgin church* without spot or wrinkle, which Jesus Christ is preparing for Himself, and that *filthy harlot system*, full of names of blasphemy, who with her multiplied sects and denominations, seduces the inhabitants of the world with the unspeakable lie that she is, herself, the bride of the Lamb. One would certainly think that God's people would respond to the invitation to revelation whereby the Spirit says, "COME HITHER, and I will show you," and that they would look with anointed eyes and readily perceive the difference between the virgin and the harlot, but sadly such is not the case. Would God that all men could now see that this hidden mystery of the bride of Christ has nothing in common with that tradition-ridden system, that gaudy harlot, which all men everywhere believe to be THE CHURCH.

Of all the contrasts in this book of weird opposites the most remarkable one is that of the two women and the two cities. One thread of golden thought runs through the entire drama. The two women are contrasted in every particular that is mentioned about them; the one is pure as purity itself, "made ready," clothed in heaven's unsullied holiness. The other, foul as corruption could make her, fit only for the burning fires of judgment. The one belongs to the Lamb, who loves her

as the bridegroom loves his bride; the other is associated with a wild beast, and with the kings of the earth, who ultimately hate and destroy her. The one is clothed in fine linen, clean and white, and in another place is portrayed as clothed with the dazzling brilliance of the sun, and crowned with a coronet of stars, that is, robed in divine righteousness as her state of being, and resplendent with heavenly glory and power; the other is attired in scarlet and gold, in jewels and pearls, gorgeous indeed but with earthly splendor only, who, being increased with this world's goods and having need of nothing has made herself drunk with the blood of the saints and thrust Christ Himself outside her doors.

The one is represented as a chaste virgin, as was Mary the mother of Jesus, espoused to Christ. And both are mothers; the one is the mother of the *manchild* caught up to God and His throne. The other is mother of *harlots* and abominations of the earth, that is, the corruption of the flesh. She has the rewards of whoredom; while the other feels the pangs of delivery. The place of the one is in the heavens of God's Spirit, and there she travails; the seat of the other is in a wilderness of earth, and there she is drunken. The woman in heaven is watched by the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. The woman of earth is supported and carried about by the scarlet colored wild beast having seven heads and ten horns. The first woman is hated by the powers on earth; the second is loved, flattered, and caressed by them. The one goes in with the Lamb to the marriage supper, amid the glad hallelujahs of celestial realms; the other is stripped, insulted, torn, destroyed, and burned by her illicit lovers. We lose sight of the bride amid the effulgence of heavenly glory and joy, and of the harlot amid the gloom and darkness of the smoke of her burning that "rose up to the ages of the ages."

It is impossible to find in scripture a contrast more marked; and the conclusion is unavoidable, that whatever the one may represent, the other must prefigure *its opposite*. They are not two disconnected visions, but a pair — a pair associated, not by likeness, but by contrast. Now the word of God leaves us in no doubt as to the signification of the emblematic bride, the Lamb's wife, the heavenly Jerusalem. We read, "*For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might present it to Himself (as a bride) a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. This is a great MYSTERY: but I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH*

" (Eph. 5:23-32). Some suppose that the bride of Christ is fleshly Israel, the many nations of Abraham's posterity. Under the old covenant Israel was indeed made the wife of Yahwey. That, however, is an entirely different order than the new covenant bride of the Lamb. Nothing can be clearer than the words of the apostle Paul quoted above — Christ is the Head and Husband of the church, and the church is the spotless bride of the Lamb!

Armed with this understanding, what then must the contrasted symbol, the Babylonian harlot, represent? SURELY SOME FALSE AND APOSTATE CHURCH, some church which, while professing to belong to Christ, is in reality given up to fellowship with the world, and linked in closest union with the rulers of the earth-realm; a worldly church, which has left her first love, forgotten her heavenly calling, having no remembrance of her divinely appointed destiny to bring forth a manchild, the manifest sons of God, sunk into carnality and sin, and proved shamelessly and glaringly faithless to her Lord. If Babylon is indeed the *false church*, then the New Jerusalem bride of Christ must be the *true church*; the law of contrast demands that both women and both cities be *a church*! O that men might see that these symbols, a woman and a city, signify definite systems, corporate bodies, not merely a multitude of similar, but disconnected individuals. The true church of Christ is a body; its members are united in the closest union to their Head; one life

animates them. "Because I live, ye shall live also." One spirit dwells in them, they are one habitation of God. The link that unites them all is a *spiritual union*. The false church, however, can have no such *spiritual link!* The bond that unites it must therefore be carnal, outward, visible, and man-made; the church represented by Babylon dwells in the earthlies of the soulical nature of man, is an human organization, joined by outward ceremony, sustained by disciplines, boards, committees, creeds, rules, regulations, and conformity to her external laws and requirements. This church is visible and capable of being recognized outwardly, not in the spirit and by the spirit!

George Hawtin aptly wrote: "To see what I am saying you will have to go far beyond the edge of the crowd. You will need to go beyond the circle of that tired old thing men call *the church*. The word 'church' has become sorely desecrated, so much so that the picture of what *the true church* really is has faded away until men can see in the church nothing but million dollar temples standing on street corners or multitudes of people who dwell behind the high walls which they call denominations. But this, my friend, is NOT THE CHURCH. This has nothing to do with His...body. These denominations are only man made things, little self-appointed Christs who believe that they have the truth and that wisdom will die with them. I do not believe that they are divisions in the church or divisions in the body of Christ. Christ is *not divided!* He never can be. They are something altogether aside from the true church and something different from the body of Christ. The church which Jesus called 'My church' has never had a division in it. It is the habitation of God through the Spirit, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It is that wonderful habitation Jesus spoke of as 'My Father's house,' saying, 'In My Father's house are many mansions.' The house which the Father is building is the true church, the...body of Christ. This building *is rising* upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Jesus Christ, the first Son, is the corner stone or the cap stone of it. He is the Head of the body, the church, the head stone of the corner. All other stones are living stones, built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Christ Jesus" — end quote.

The New Jerusalem and Babylon are, to use common language, rivals to each other. In the one there is nothing of man, it is all Christ; in the other there is nothing of Christ, it is all man. The one is the expression and the exhibition of the beauty seen in Christ Jesus; it is His fullness. The great lesson for us is that in the *true church* there is nothing that is not of Christ. This comes home very practically to us for we may decide as to everything by the question: Is it Babylon, or is it New Jerusalem? Which is it of? Which is it for? Is it for man's interests or Christ's? Babylon is the aggregation or collection, the bringing together of everything that suits and appeals to man, while New Jerusalem is the exhibition of the divine beauty and the excellencies and virtues of Christ by the Spirit.

What dreadful thoughts and feelings are awakened in the soul by the very sound of the name MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT! It is a terrible name. Babylon is called "the great city," Babylon, "that mighty city." Ah, man always wants something "great," but God does not call His church great. No, another adjective suits her better — "holy." Beware when Christians, especially preachers, tell you of their "great" churches, their "great" meetings, their "great" programs, their "great" pastors, evangelists, teachers, apostles, prophets, and bishops, their "great" outreaches, their "great" crusades, their "great" congregations, and their "great" revivals. Babylon loves greatness, but we read of "the HOLY CITY, NEW JERUSALEM" descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Oh, that God's people could realize once and for all that it is "Not by *might* nor by *power*, but **by my Spirit**, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). The might and power here spoken of refer to man's might and power — not to God's! To the natural and not to the supernatural.

May we open the eyes of our understanding to the truth that there are two sources of power. Many “great” church organizations today boast of their “power,” “influence,” or “popularity” in the world. Their power and influence are derived from the magnificence of their huge church plants, their vast numbers of followers, their immense bank accounts, their grandiose programs to indoctrinate and entertain the people and, supposedly, to convert and change the world, and their connection with the “right” people — those with wealth and influence in this present world. Their accomplished talent, and soothing worship services, their beautiful forms, elaborate pageantry and cherished traditions, all help to make them popular — to give them prestige and power in a world of religious, respectable sinners! It is from such as these that Paul by inspiration has warned us that we must separate ourselves. *“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such turn away”* (II Tim. 3:5).

One would certainly think that the Lord’s people would readily respond to this invitation to revelation whereby the Spirit says, *“COME HITHER, and I will show you...,”* and that they would look with anointed eyes and quickly see the difference between the virgin and the harlot, but such is not the case. Would God that all men could see the hidden mystery of Christ and the church! Would God that all men could see the hidden mystery of the virgin sun-clad woman who delivers the manchild! Would God that all men could see that this hidden mystery has nothing to do with that monstrous, organized, man-made and man-controlled system which everywhere calls itself THE CHURCH and CHRISTIANITY! The glory of the sun-clad woman represents the pure, unadulterated *spirit* and *truth* of God permeating, overshadowing, and overwhelming the soul. When the soul is truly overwhelmed and overcome and subdued by the *spirit* and the *truth*, the seed of Christ begins to take form within. Think of this, dear reader, for it will lift the sackcloth from your eyes, and you will behold the white-winged dove of ***spiritual reality*** descending upon you!

There are two calls of the Spirit in relation to Babylon. The first is, *“COME HITHER, and I will show you...the great whore.”* The second is, *“COME OUT OF HER, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”* “Come out!” Simple to say, but much harder to understand and do. It is impossible to do it in the flesh or by any human decision or self-effort. If you attempt it, you will only bring the spirit of Babylon away with you and raise it up again in your new endeavor. You must rise up in the spirit, as John, just to see her. “Come hither!” Arise from the lowlands of ignorance, deception, fraud, cunning, and trickery of man; from the harlot Babylon, the soul encumbered with lies, misconceptions, misrepresentations, falsehoods, error, sense-knowledge, tradition, and static creeds and doctrines of men. Arise until you ascend the mount of God from whose majestic peak you behold the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, the city of *truth* and *life* and *reality* built into a living form and expression through a people who live out of the heavens of *the spirit*. Ascend until you become conscious of THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS, THE ETERNAL AND GLORIOUS REALITY OF THE SPIRIT, THE OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPOTENCE OF THE CHRIST WITHIN!

When one ceases to live out of the blindness of the carnal mind and commences to live and move and have his being in the reality of Christ within his spirit he has been transported, as was John, from the glitter and tinsel of Babylon to the glory of the holy city of God. O glorious City of God! City of Celestial reality! The description of the city as “foursquare” has a profound meaning. The four sides of our city are: Life, Light, Love, and Truth, “...and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.” All who would bring forth the manchild, the expression and manifestation of the Son of God, must dwell there, and walk in this Life and Light and Love

and Truth. Its gates open towards Light and Glory both within and without, for nothing can enter that city, which “defileth...or maketh a lie.”

There are *four* companies. The scarlet-clad woman (harlot), her many daughters (the church systems of man), the sun-clad woman (virgin bride of Christ), and the manchild (manifest sons of God). Some precious people, because they have separated from some Babylonish denomination and come out of the church systems *assume* that this was the “mother church” birthing them into sonship. This, my beloved, is a grievous *error!* The “mother” of the manchild is **not the harlot church system** but that **virgin church** made up exclusively of a people clothed with the living glory of Christ (sun), crowned with the twelve stars of God’s governmental authority, and having the cold, imitative, reflective light (moon) of ceremony, ritual, tradition, program, and creed put under foot. When the Spirit calls, “Come out of her my people,” this is not His call to sons. This is His call urging a people to come out of the defilements of Babylon and be *cleansed* — that they might by the washing of regeneration and the miracle of sanctification become an entirely new creation — a virgin — unto Christ. And it is this *virgin company* that shall deliver to this sin-cursed world a *manchild*, a *male child*, a full redemption company of saints, overcomers, partakers of the divine nature, fully developed unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, transformed in His pure and holy nature, imbued with His glorious mind, invested with His omnipotent power and authority, the many-membered “seed” of the many-membered “woman” which shall “bruise the head of the serpent” as he conquers sin and death, dethrones satan, blesses and rules the nations, and liberates the whole vast groaning creation from the bondage of sin, sorrow, corruption, and death. O how wonderful are these things! And should some unenlightened reader still entertain the mistaken notion that our Lord Jesus Christ alone is the “seed of the woman” who “bruises the head of the serpent,” I would point you to the wonderful promise of the Lord Jesus Himself through His apostle Paul, “*And the God of peace shall bruise satan under YOUR FEET shortly*” (Rom. 16:20). Jesus is the Head of that promised seed, even as we are the body. Isn’t it wonderful!

The sons of God shall be born of a chaste, virgin church, just as the daughters of the harlot are born of a defiled, false church. Both churches bear an offspring! Oh, yes! Without contradiction, this virgin church is the greatest mother that God has planted on the face of the earth, the Jerusalem which is from above. This church is not going out with a whimper or a limp. Nor is it going to be evacuated off the planet (raptured) while the devil runs rampant through the earth. Oh, no! The virgin church and her glorious son shall conclude this age victorious, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and riding a river of peace, power, wisdom, blessing, life, and redeeming love. It shall arise in freedom from all bondage and limitation, with its feet on the neck of every enemy, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. The tempter’s power shall be broken. God’s people shall be holy, strong, anointed, transformed — glorious conquerors. Yes — she will be a great WONDER IN HEAVEN as she brings forth this manchild who shall rule all nations with a rod of iron! That is the mystery.

Chapter 190

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of *the great whore* that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a *woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast*, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (Rev. 17:1-4).

The book of Revelation is without doubt one of the most important and wonderful books ever written! It is difficult for many people to understand because it is written in highly symbolic language, understandable only to the spiritual mind. Long millenniums ago Joseph spoke a significant truth when he asked the burning question, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Gen. 40:8). Moses said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may DO all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). Many preachers spend far too much time delving into future speculations about world events. Time invariably repudiates their futile predictions. God did not give us a heavenly version of *Newsweek* magazine, but the *Revelation of Jesus Christ!*

The ministers of God were not meant to be soothsayers but truth-sayers. We were not called to predict all the changing events in the kingdoms of this world, nor to be the heralds of a future antichrist, but to proclaim the ETERNAL PRESENT CHRIST. The book of Revelation is not primarily intended to teach world events. It is intended to teach *the purposes of God and spiritual realities*. The principal pictures deal with two churches — the true church and the false church — and the spiritual laws and activities represented by these two. The false church is "Mystery Babylon," the "scarlet-clad woman," who has apostatized from her true husband and is now committing fornication with the world. If she had not one time walked with Christ she would not be known as a "church," nor would her fling with the world constitute "fornication." What is a harlot? The harlot is a woman who sells that which is her characteristic honor and glory and lives in dissipation, a woman without honor, who lives in most intimate relation and intercourse with men outside of the sacred bond of marriage. In union with her many lovers this woman brings forth a vast company of *harlot daughters* like unto herself, filling the whole world with the filthiness and abominations of her lewdness and fornication. The true church is the "Heavenly Jerusalem," the "sun-clad woman," who brings forth a *manchild* who is destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. These two churches are in the world together and the world cannot tell the difference, but the destiny of them is very different. Babylon is utterly destroyed, and the true church becomes a kingdom of priests, reigning with Christ over all things; the nations of them that are saved shall walk in its light and the kings of the whole earth shall bring their glory and honor into it. Great is the mystery!

Have you heard about the Sunday school class studying the ten commandments? The teacher asked the class if anyone knew what adultery was. One child put up his hand and guessed: "It's the sin of pretending to be an *adult* when you're still a little kid." That definition may cause us to

smile (if we get it!), but when we look at it closely, we can see that the child's answer touches on something significant. Adultery is about a devastating form of *pretending!* The most common definition of adultery is sexual unfaithfulness in marriage. But that's not really at the heart of adultery, because marriage is not first of all about sex. The heart of a marriage relationship is about sharing love, pledging faithfulness, giving trust to someone and then, in return, receiving those same gifts from your spouse. When people play around with that trust and yet act as if things are okay with their spouse and with Christ, they are pretending to honor commitments that are being broken.

In the words of our text, therefore, we have a picture of the harlot church, the false church, the counterfeit church. The true church is the spiritual bride of Christ, engrafted into Him by a divine union of soul and spirit, by which we are made one in Him. But that counterfeit church is the church that still bears the name of church, still appears as the church in the world, still claims or pretends to be the church in the world, outwardly also looks like the church, has its ministers and sacraments, the preaching of scripture and teaching, hymns of praise and worship, and all kinds of institutions and societies besides, but employs all the blessings she has outwardly received in the service of antichrist. The officebearers work for antichrist. Publicly she displays all the signs of antichrist, and all her members she educates to work for the beast and his kingdom. She enjoys the favor, goodwill, and intimate attention of the world, of the great and the mighty and the strong and the rich and the accomplished in the world. And they bless and deck her with all kinds of precious jewels and gold. She becomes great and powerful, even underwritten by the government of the world with her charters, tax-exempt status, and governmental favors. And the more she labors in the interest of the antchristian kingdom, the further she rides that wild beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, the more she enjoys the favor of the dragon: for she is nothing but his whore, and allows herself to be the instrument of antichrist.

It is interesting to note that the American Banking Association has a training program to help bank tellers detect counterfeit bills. There is a two week training program in Washington, D.C. They do not listen to long lectures explaining and denouncing counterfeit money. Nor do they even touch it. Instead the trainees handle only authentic currency day after day, hour after hour, until they are so familiar with the real thing that they cannot possibly be fooled. This is also the apostolic approach to the spiritual counterfeits! To spot a counterfeit, one only needs to know and be thoroughly familiar with the true. Christ Himself is the true! Let us henceforth know that in all the universe there is no truth, no reality, and no life apart from Christ Himself. He is Himself the way, the truth, and the life, and He is the Lord and lifegiver of all, and there is no church apart from intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him and no kingdom apart from the kingdom of which He is the sovereign King. This is the only true ruling authority that men are called to give absolute allegiance to. God has allowed religious organizations and political organizations to exist for a time, and some measure of good has been accomplished through them. But when men look to these organizations and systems for truth and life and eternal reality they are going to be deceived by counterfeit words and activities.

You will understand a great mystery when you understand how all truth in the book of Revelation is *germinative in the seven churches in chapters two and three*. A great mistake that many have in their minds is the notion that the seven churches are one thing and the events described through the seals, trumpets, and vials are something else. Such is not the case! The messages to the seven churches are given first because **the church is the seed-plot for the development of the seed — both the wheat and the tares!** Oh, yes! The church is the seed-bed of everything else that happens throughout the whole book of Revelation! It all begins there! The

beasts, the women, the cities, the shakings, the judgments, the glory — all these things and many more are found in seed form in the seven churches. All the mighty things that manifest out of the sea, the earth, and the heavens are there in the seven churches in their embryonic form. As a plant grows and develops, and the blossoms and fruit come, so does every seed of good and evil in the seven churches become full grown and full blown in the chapters that follow! Chapters two and three are not about the church, while the rest of the book is about China, Russia, Israel, Europe, America, and an antichrist in Jerusalem. Oh, no! The whole book is written *to the church* and IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CHURCH!

Notice how it is that the little seed of Jezebel, the fornicating false prophetess in the church at Thyatira, grows and increases in numbers, organization, and stature until *she becomes* “the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (Rev. 17:1-2). Consider how the little seed of the doctrine of Balaam in the church at Pergamos, increases and intensifies until it brings forth in the earth the corporate beast of the false prophet who has “two horns like a lamb, and speaks as a dragon” (Rev. 13:11).

Then there is the little seed of the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes by which the Lord’s people are brought under the fleshly dominion of men who set themselves up as lords over God’s flock; and this click of pastors, bishops, overseers, superintendents, etc. these usurpers of Christ’s Headship over His body grows and aggrandizes until it *becomes* “that great city Babylon, that mighty city,” which “is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird...which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Then the seed of the struggling little “overcomer” in each of the seven churches, to whom such glorious promises are given, increases in wisdom, stature, and authority in the Spirit until *he becomes* 144,000 sons of God standing upon the heavenly mount Zion, the very pinnacle of power and dominion in the kingdom of God!

John sees the seven golden candlesticks — the church — later on in the Revelation, this time no longer a flickering light in the secluded darkness of the Holy Place of the Tabernacle (the church age), but now become a glorious wonder in the heavens of God’s Spirit, a city coming down from God out of heaven, having the glory of God: and her light is like a stone most precious...and the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it (Rev. 21:10-11,23-24). The little seed of the candlestick has now *become* the glorious City of God, which is also the bride of the Lamb! Within that city is the throne — and the little seed of the overcomer has *become* the manchild *upon the throne* that rules the nations! Oh, the wonder of it!

God has only one church, not one thousand and one. We nowhere read in scripture of “Christ and His churches.” No, no! It is always Christ and “the church.” Of course this one church is of necessity divided up into many local assemblies for the purpose of gathering together for worship, ministry, and fellowship. These various locales of gathering are called “churches,” just as we have the “seven churches which are in Asia” in the book of Revelation. But God does not have a “Baptist Church” and a “Methodist Church” and a “Pentecostal Church” and a “Catholic Church” and a “Seventh Day Adventist Church” which refuse to have anything to do with one another! The Holy Spirit gave the world but one body, one faith, and one spirit (Eph. 4:4-6), with the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole legislator. The many bodies, and many faiths, and many creeds, and many legislators of the present day, constitute nothing more than spiritual prostitution, they are harlots

one and all, who are living apart from their one and only lawful Husband and in love with and in intimate union with many lovers!

When I write these things, unveiling the apostasies of the various portions of the fallen church, they are not railing accusations. They are not the mere brawlings of an envious, unfriendly and unreasoning critic. They are not wholesale and unfounded recriminations hurled at these organizations in malicious and impotent fury. They are not charges brought in ignorance or in total disregard of the facts. On the contrary, they are the result of long years of experience and patient, painstaking and exhaustive study of the men and times out of which the various sects grew, and of a close, careful and unbiased observation of present conditions in all parts of the world. They are unsparing of evil and error, but they are inspired, not by envy, malice, or an inflated ego, but by Divine Love. There is, indeed, an intensity of hatred for the false teachings and practices into which the so-called churches have fallen, but that very intensity is a measure of Christ's love for the people who have been deceived and led astray. It is this same love which motivates the sound of the Spirit of God Himself when He cries, "*COME OUT of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!*"

We are not unmindful that a merciful and compassionate God has used all these in the salvation of souls and in bringing blessings to humanity. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead men to the Saviour. Some of these have found the blessing of the Holy Spirit and His gifts. Occasionally some of their number receive miraculous answers to prayer. But from here on, practically everything that is taught and done is nothing but carnality and flesh, defilement and shame: nothing but the precepts of the elders, the traditions of men, and the lies and deceptions of the antichrist. But there is a higher walk, an undefiled way, to which all must commit who would know the full blessings and favor of their sovereign Lord, and who would serve Him acceptably and know the joy of the ultimate in attainment and accomplishment in His glorious kingdom of Life, Light, and Love!

We have heard many so-called Gospels. The world is full of poor, deluded souls who are trying to establish their own particular creed of imaginings and mistakes. Today, everyone with a little bit of preacher's "itch" is attempting to get themselves a little congregation, a little following, trying to build a little kingdom. But a new day has dawned! A day when the pure and unadulterated gospel of the kingdom must go forth to the whole world! Religionists have tried in vain to lift the world out of its shame by preaching their own ideas and promoting their own programs. It simply would not work. The world has grown steadily worse! Right in the face of so-called "great revivals" and "outpourings of the Spirit" both the church and the world have slipped further and further into carnality, moral decay, ungodliness, licentiousness, unbelief, and religious errors of all kinds. Their lofty phrases, and text-book prayers, and apologetic platitudes, and flesh-oriented programs, and fraudulent claims, and lying signs and wonders, have utterly failed.

While the harlot has been on her wild ride upon her dust-stomping beast the Lord has been quietly, secretly, unobtrusively, and unobserved by the world, calling a people into union with Himself. There in the secret place of the most High the Bridegroom has impregnated his woman with an incorruptible seed, and that woman is even now in travail to bring forth a manchild — a mature SON! Now a new company is to go forth with a burning message of truth direct from the throne, a message stripped of all the ineffectual absurdities that have been preached throughout the years. The sons of God shall go forth in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost and they shall minister to mankind in the power of incorruption. Religionists have side-stepped, and mollycoddled, and pussy-footed, and backslapped too long. Their day is done. "Come hither: I

will show thee the *judgment* of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." A new army is being prepared, an army of the sons of God perfected in His image, radiating His glory, and manifesting His power. And there will be an exultant victory! For now the day is dawning when "A-L-L nations shall come and worship before Thee" (Rev. 15:4).

The following words by Joyce Morris add a depth of understanding to this contrast between the betrothed wife of the Lamb and the wanton harlot riding the scarlet colored beast. "Whatever you are having union with is what you are *becoming* (or producing)! If you choose to have a union with your soul, then it is impossible for you to produce anything except the flesh. If you are having a union with the Lamb, you cannot become anything else but the Lamb — Christ in the earth. There are, however, a lot of people who want a marriage with the Lord in name only. They want His name, and the benefits and blessings that go along with His name — but they do not want to make a commitment and *become His name — His nature*.

"I remember very clearly one day many years ago, while I was getting ready to go out and minister at a Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship meeting, the Lord spoke to me loudly and clearly about this. The Lord said, 'My people want my name, but they don't want to *become my name*. My people want my name so that their reproach will be removed and their sins forgiven — but they don't want to become my name. They want a relationship with me — but they don't want to marry me, because if they marry me that means they will have to make a commitment. They don't want the responsibility that comes with marriage. Just like Israel, my people still want to continue on in fornication and adultery. They want to have other lovers, and continue in idol worship. They love their families, relationships, money, homes, possessions, and businesses more than me! They want the things of the world more than they want me! They want their religions, doctrines, traditions, and beliefs more than me! They are not willing to love me *first* in their life! They are not willing to let me *be Lord* in their life! They desire my blessings more than the One who blesses them! They want the gifts that I give them, more than the Giver of the gifts. They want their ministries, knowledge, and revelations of me — but they do not want the responsibility and commitment that should come with them! They do not want to come to the marriage of the Lamb, because they still want to live separate and apart from me! Many in the body of Christ, and even many who call themselves my sons have sought to build their own kingdoms, rather than live as *one with me in my kingdom!* They want my name to open doors before them — but they do not want to enter in, through a union with The Door. They do not want to come to the marriage that I have prepared for my Son! They do not want to take their responsibility and *be* what I have called them to *be* — which is *my name — my nature!* They do not want to be one with me!' These are strong statements indeed — but they are true. This is what has been going on in the body of Christ and even in God's sons today! We still want the great revelations, the knowledge, and understanding — but we do not always want the responsibility and commitment that comes with them.

"Now we read in Isaiah 4:1, '***And in that day (the day of the Lord) seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.***' This speaks of seven women, and the seven women are the seven churches which are the body of Christ! It says that in that Day they shall take hold of one man — which is Christ. But the problem is that they still haven't buried their first husband! They're still holding on to their old man, Adam, and if they take hold of another man (husband) they are committing adultery. Right in this great Day of the Lord they are coming to Christ saying, 'Let us be called by your name to take away our reproach, but we still want to eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.' In other words they're saying, 'Lord, we want to be

called by your name, but we don't want to *become your name!* We want a marriage with you in name only, where we can continue to feed on our carnal (soulish) thoughts. We want to keep our religious traditions, doctrines, and ways, and be clothed in our own righteousness, according to our religious works. We want to continue doing our own thing to satisfy the lusts (desires) of our flesh (self will/our first husband — Adam). But Lord, we also want the benefits and blessings that come with your name. Lord, WE REALLY WANT IT BOTH WAYS!" — end quote.

THE HARLOT...IS US!

Many interpretations have been put upon the scarlet-clad harlot riding the wild beast having seven heads and ten horns. The two most common interpretations are that the harlot is either Pagan Rome in the days of the early church, or Papal Rome from the time of the rise of the Papacy until the present time. If the interpretation be that this lewd, garishly attired woman, holding in her hand the golden cup full of the abominations and filthiness of her fornication, be either Pagan or Papal Rome, at once the whole scene has little or nothing to do with the vast majority of those who read these lines. It has no concern with us; we can contentedly study the vision with the comfortable assurance that we, at any rate, have no connection with it in any way. If the scarlet woman be simply a representation of the Roman Catholic Church, then every member of the Protestant Churches can, as many so frequently do, gaze complacently on the picture and feel that of a certainty it has no spiritual application to themselves.

Once our spiritual mind is able to grasp the truth that the Revelation sets forth great *spiritual principles* rather than identifying specific institutions, governments, movements, etc., then this vision takes on an entirely new dimension with a far wider and truer view than any of the commentators have put upon it. Let us see clearly the deeply solemn truth that the woman on the beast *is to be found in every church, and that this vision of her reaches to all the existing church systems with all their vaunted orthodoxy, and then beyond that, this vision of her discloses a peril that besets every believer in Christ right down to the person penning these words and the one now reading these words.* Wherever the church allies herself with the world, and wherever the individual believer allows the spirit of the world to invade his spiritual life, there the vision of this chapter materializes anew. Yet, it is not alone the world *without* that creates the issue, but the world *within* as well! In fact I must repeat and reiterate with all the emphasis possible that the greatest danger to any man's spiritual life is not the world outside of himself, but truly the world *within!*

It is very necessary that we be able to see the great truth that individually the great harlot *is our very own soul.* Our soul does not want to be faithful to our man — Christ within our spirit! From the time of our birth into this fallen state our soul has sought union with the flesh. Can we not see by this that the root of Mystery Babylon lies right within each of us! The great harlot sits upon many waters — peoples, multitudes, kindreds, tongues, and nations. Every man has a soul, matters not who he is, where he is, what nationality he is, what race he pertains to, what culture he comes from, and every soul has departed from Christ and joined itself to the desires, passions, emotions, lusts, and all motions of the flesh. In regeneration Christ, the spirit within, our true man in the image and likeness of God, is woken and quickened and arises within us and begins to woo the soul unto Himself. This is a new experience for the soul! And as the soul vacillates back and forth between spirit and flesh, between Christ and Self, the soul becomes manifested as the great harlot when she joins the things of God with the spirit and ways of the world within herself.

The great whore, at her deepest root and in her inmost reality, is indeed our very own *soul*. This is the internal reality of that which we see in the external world of the carnal church systems of man. God is an internal God, though we behold His works and manifestations in the external world. The only way He dwells in any corporate expression or body is by His *indwelling in each individual member of that body*. Thus God's first and primary concern is not with the harlot church systems out in the world, but above all He's concerned with the Babylon whore within each of us! This whore is the unfaithful woman of the soul! My woman (not my wife, Lorain, but my soul), the feminine side of my life, was never faithful to the God who dwells in my spirit. She was never faithful to her husband, the Christ, until HE brought love into her heart. And when my man, Christ, stood up in my life, and showed love to my woman who was unfaithful, by the mighty working of grace and power, thanks be unto God, she **became faithful** because of His great love for her. He didn't cast her out, He didn't give her a bill of divorce, He didn't condemn her, rebuke her, fight with her, or destroy her. Oh, no! With a divine and eternal love He wooed her, turned her around, and redeemed her, for love never fails and love conquers all!

"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to that husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of that husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Rom. 7:1-3).

Now here is the key verse, because many preachers have used the scripture quoted above to abuse people who have been divorced and remarried, yet the truth is this scripture is not dealing with divorce and remarriage. Paul explains that he is speaking to people who know the law, and it is true that there are beautiful types, illustrations, and shadows of spiritual realities in the Old Testament law; yet the fact is that when it comes to the law, WE who are under the New Covenant of grace and truth ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW. Therefore, Paul's subject here has nothing to do with divorce and remarriage — he is clearly and unmistakably pointing to a higher truth. So he continues on by saying, *"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God"* (Rom. 7:4).

This fourth verse tells us who the second husband is — the second husband is He that has been raised from the dead, as God's called and separated elect we have been espoused to Him, and we shall yet enter into the fullest union with Him as His bride. Can we not understand that if our first husband was not dead Christ would never have espoused us unto Himself! The central truth here is that this is not about divorce and remarriage in the natural, but this is about our union with Christ in our spirit! He's the second husband! And the woman, His bride, is our soul! There have only ever been two men in the earth, as it is written, *"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven"* (I Cor. 15:45,47). Can the natural mind ever fathom the depths of the eternal truth that there has never been in the history of the world but two men? There is a deep and hidden meaning in the words, "The *first man* Adam" and "the *last Adam*." The natural mind would conclude that, if there were two Adams coming four millenniums apart, the first of these being the *first Adam*, it would logically follow that the next Adam would be the *second Adam*. The Lord Jesus Christ is here called *the last Adam*. But He who is called the *first Adam* is also called the *first man*. And He who is called *the last Adam* is also called *the second man*. It should be

clear to every thinking mind that the *first Adam* is the *first man*, and the *last Adam* is the *second man*, therefore the *second man* is also the *last man*.

These simple statements, which on the surface seem so insignificant and scarcely worth our notice, are in fact pregnant with meaning, and full of wisdom and understanding. The *first Adam* is said to be the *first man*. The *last Adam* is declared to be the *second man*. If the *second man* is also the *last Adam*, He is also the *last man*. Now if the *first Adam* is the *first man*, it would of necessity follow that there were no men on earth before him, for he was the *first*. And if the *last Adam* is the *second man*, then there were no men on earth between the first Adam and the last Adam, for the *last Adam* is the *second man*, and there can be no men between the *first man* and the *second man*. If there were even one other man between the first man and the second man, obviously the second man could not BE the second man; he would be the third man, the one hundredth man, the five billionth man, or something else. And since the second man is also the LAST MAN, there can not have been any men since Him, for if others have followed Him, He is not then the *last man*. So then, the first man was the first man, the second man was the second man, and the second man is also the *last man*, so that there have been only TWO MEN who have ever lived upon this planet — Adam and Christ! There were none before Adam, none between Adam and Christ, and none since Jesus Christ. Only two men. No more. No less. These simple statements portray as nothing else can the great truth that all men who have ever lived ARE INCLUDED IN THESE TWO MEN. These two men are *corporate men*, many-membered men.

Since all men are *contained in* these two men, what happens to these two men happens to us ALL. The first man is our flesh man who is also under the law! The second man is our quickened spirit in which the Christ, who is our life, dwells! And we have, *in our soul*, been married to both of them! Oh, the mystery of it! Our soul-woman has been torn between two lovers and our whorish vacillation back and forth between the two has made a great spiritual soap opera! I do not hesitate to tell you that our first husband is a wife beater and if we stay with him he will kill us eventually. Like many abused wives, we're afraid we can't make it without him and we're afraid to break the ties with him. So we compromise our spiritual life in an effort to placate him. That compromise is called — *religion!* In religion the flesh man and the spirit man are mingled, thus creating the Great Whore — Mystery Babylon!

I understand that Babylon is a system — but the root of the system is the mother of harlots, man's own soul. On a day in the long ago an apostle by the name of Paul penned these telling words: "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent **beguiled (seduced) Eve** through his subtlety, so **your minds (souls)** should be corrupted (seduced) from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:2-3). In this significant passage Eve in the garden of Eden is contrasted with two things: the *bride of Christ* and the *mind or soul (psuche)*. The mind is a function of the soul. The vision of the bride of Christ pervades the whole of scripture, from Eden onward, with ever-increasing clearness. Eve, the mother of the human race, is the first type of this great mystery! Let us not underestimate this remarkable woman from whom the whole human race has sprung!

In that ancient shadow Adam stands as a type of man's spirit, Eve is a type of the soul, and the garden of Eden is a type of the body, which Adam was to "dress and keep." Thus we see our tripartite being symbolically portrayed in the Adam-Eve-Garden story. The Garden was the earth, the land, the habitation; and Adam and Eve were the inhabitants, in the same way that our spirit and soul are the inhabitants of the physical body. It is through our "Eve," our soulical mind,

desires, will, and emotions, that we who have been espoused to Christ the bridegroom in our spirit, can be “beguiled” or “seduced” and turned away from our single and pure devotion to Christ, entering instead into intimate associations with things of the earth realm — the flesh, the world, and the devil. When the soul-bride is turned from the spirit-husband to fornicate with the flesh and fleshly things (including religion), we become disqualified from being presented to Christ as a chaste virgin! Paul shows that just as Eve was seduced from her singleness to Christ, so those espoused to Christ can be corrupted IN OUR MINDS from singleness to Christ.

I would now draw your reverent attention to a very significant point in the garden of Eden experience. The serpent can only speak to the woman! The serpent never spoke to Adam. The serpent cannot tempt the spirit, for the spirit speaks of the pureness of Christ. Let me state that again. The serpent can only speak to the woman! It was Eve who was “beguiled.” It was Eve who was “deceived” and was “in the transgression” (I Tim. 2:14). Can you not see the mystery? The serpent cannot deceive the spiritual man! The serpent can only deceive that which is less than the spiritual man — that which comes out of the man — the woman, the soul. The spirit of a man cannot be deceived, that is why scripture declares that the woman was deceived. The serpent cannot be where the spirit dwells! There is war in heaven, and Michael and his angels, that is, Christ and His many brethren, cast him out! The serpent can only speak to, prophesy to, teach and control those who settle for less than the spirit!

Thus, the woman, the soul, who hearkens unto the serpent, is deceived in all facets possible. The spiritual person is above the fray, but the woman is totally immersed into it. When the serpent spoke, the woman could have asked direction of the spirit, but she did not. The woman had not experienced God, was not conscious of God, did not know the life of God, as the man had. The woman needed to depend on the man, to consult with the man, to walk in union with the man, just as the soul needs to depend on the spirit! The woman, the soul, can hear two voices. It can hear the call of the spirit, but can also hear the call of the serpent. The woman, the soul, can rule over the flesh (body), but cannot rule over the spirit (Christ)! So the serpent seeks to make the soul, the woman, a *priestess* and a *queen* over the flesh through carnal religious activities, creeds, laws, and rituals. The soulish person must have a kingdom even if it is not truly real. So the serpent deceives the woman with the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil — *religion!* In Genesis it is the little serpent and the woman, Eve. In the book of Revelation it is the great red dragon and the scarlet-clad woman — individually, the soul, and corporately the carnal church systems of man! That is the mystery.

When we recognize what kind of person is soulish, it is not difficult to realize what kind of person is spiritual. Since a soulish person lives by the mind, emotion, will, and desire, a spiritual person is one who does not live by any of these! A spiritual person must live in the spirit, act by the spirit, speak out of the spirit and not the soul. He allows the spirit to be the master and source of all his action and behavior. The spirit in him occupies the preeminent position; it is the source of his behavior and the starting point of his action. The soul in this person is in the position of submission, under the government of the spirit, dominated by the spirit, and in loving union with the spirit. Thus he allows the spirit to be LORD in him! He allows the spirit to direct his whole being so that he becomes the expression of the spirit. Whenever he encounters a situation he does not consult his mind nor draw from his mind, desire, will, or emotion to deal with it; rather he draws from his spirit to comprehend and understand it, seeking first in the spirit for the Lord’s wisdom and purpose in the matter. This is the spiritual man, living by the life of the spirit, and the soul is but a vehicle of expression for the spirit. Isn’t it wonderful! It is the *one spirit*, our spirit

joined to His Spirit, that ultimately is joined to the soul — receives the soul unto itself — the marriage of the Lamb within ourselves!

The woman Jezebel in the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-24), like Delilah in the book of Judges, was a harlot. The name Jezebel means “one without a husband” or “one that can’t be touched.” Jezebel represents that soul that will not allow the Spirit of God in our spirit to touch her, or be a husband unto her. She will not enter into union with the spirit! She spurns the purposes of God and rejects the living word of the Lord, and will stone literally or figuratively any prophet who would speak the word of the Lord. She has multitudes of lovers, she follows after men and man’s way, man’s methods, man’s programs, man’s promotions, man’s organizations, man’s entertainment, but she seeks no intimacy with the Christ of God, nor does she submit to the spirit’s lordship.

Furthermore, Jezebel relates to the “strange woman” of the book of Proverbs, which speaks of a soul or a mind that is perverted and twisted and needs to change. Jezebel is your soul before it is transformed! Let me talk to you about an attitude. Let us explore that attitude, that mind-set, that soulish condition in your life that would seduce you away from the headship of Christ in your spirit. This seduction is carried out by Jezebel! Jezebel speaks of the soul-life and ever since Eve she is a woman who wants to do her own thing. She will not allow the spirit to touch her. She cannot enter into a mature relationship with the Christ within. She cannot be subject to One as her head. She cannot love and be faithful to one husband. She cannot walk only in the Spirit of God, for she is lusting after carnal, fleshly, man-centered, need-oriented, religious ways, involvements, and activities. She has roving eyes and a lustful, flirtatious, wild, rebellious nature. She wants blessings, chills, and thrills — a religious *good time* — not marriage!

Let us look at this “strange woman.” The wise man said, *“My son, keep my words...and live. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart...that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones (spiritually ignorant), I discerned among the youths (immature ones), a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner (church on every corner); and he went the way to her house (denomination). In the twilight, in the evening, in the dark of night (darkened fleshly understanding); and behold, there met him a woman (the untransformed soul, soulical church system) with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart. She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: now is she without (seeking fleshly things), now in the streets, and lieth wait at every corner. So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows (I am very religious, I go to church, pray, pay tithes, and serve God in all kinds of programs and activities). Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face (to invite you to church, get you involved), and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry (creeds, doctrines), with carved works (images, programs, rituals, ceremonies), with fine linen of Egypt (self-righteousness, works). I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon (false anointing, soulish worship, emotional appeals). Come, let us take our fill of love (soulish emotional thrills and chills, blessings, excitement, good times, fun, play) until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves”* (Prov. 7:1-18).

You will find in the book of Revelation that there is a true church and there is a false church. You will find in the book of Proverbs that there is a true church and there is a false church. In the book of Revelation they are called the bride of Christ and the whore. In the book of Proverbs the bride of Christ and the Jezebel spirit are presented under the figures of the virtuous woman and the

strange woman. Proverbs chapter thirty-one gives you the characteristics of the virtuous woman, and Proverbs chapter seven gives you the essence of the strange woman. Here's how you can identify a soulish or false ministry. First of all they will flatter you! Then they will substitute emotion and religious fervor for the anointing to seduce you. The main way this harlot's "anointing" is seducing the church is by preachers going forth in an entertainment-based, man-centered, need-oriented thrust, keeping the Lord's people in constant need so that they can come back every week and deliver them. The constant "altar calls" in which the same people go down front time after time to be prayed for for the same things, to dedicate, rededicate, and then rededicate again and again, to get all encouraged and blessed, to receive their weekly "fix" so they can make it through to the next meeting, is simply the young man *void of understanding* returning over and over and over again to the harlot's house for his fill of loves! Think of it!

A true ministry will grow you up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ! A true ministry will bring you to know God for yourself, and work himself out of a job! A true ministry will not desire to rule you or dominate you! A true ministry will support you and *serve* you, not control or manipulate you! A true ministry will give you the word of God by the Spirit and then commit you into the faithful hands of the Father to learn by your own experience the ways and dealings of the Lord! A true ministry will encourage you to hear from God by the Spirit out of the anointing that abides *within you* through the Christ in you, your hope of glory!

The mark of a harlot is that she **sells** her affections. To receive her love you must pay. With a harlot nothing is free. There is always a price. And let me say it kindly brethren, but let me also make it clear — one of the first marks of a ministry slipping back into the precincts of Babylonian religion is when they begin to **sell** the word God has so freely given them. When a price is put on their books, CDs, seminars, etc. — if you look closely you will soon begin to see other marks of Babylon upon them. True men of God minister the word and place no price, make no demands, seek no control, nor do they use any gimmicks, for their trust is in the Lord who called them and sent them. Putting a price on God's word is *spiritual wickedness*. It is wicked to put a price on that for which God Himself charged you nothing! Sure, it costs money to print and send out the word, and yes, even a minister of the Lord has to live. But if a man is doing God's work the Father Himself will see that it is supported in whatever fashion He chooses to supply. The moment a *price* is set, the poor among God's people, the widows, the unemployed, the elderly on fixed incomes, the prisoner, the little family struggling just to get the bills paid and put food on the table for the children, are all at once *denied* the word of God due to their inability to *pay for it!* And *that is criminal!* Can you imagine, dear heart, the apostle Paul sending a notice to the dear saints in Corinth stating that he had penned an epistle from Christ for their edification, and would also be writing further epistles which he would make available to any of them who would pay the annual subscription price of \$90.00! No check — no epistle!

Ray Prinzing stated it so well when he wrote, "Sad, but true, we also find present day fulfillment of Peter's statement, 'And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...' (2 Pet. 2:3). Feigned words — from the Greek word *plastos* from which we get our word 'plastic.' They bespeak words that are shaped, formed, sculptured, all for one purpose — to make merchandise of you — to use you for their own ends. They have a sales pitch that will coax you into buying their new book, their set of tapes, to support their cause, because somehow all this will make you more spiritual. They traffic religion and have a form of godliness, but they are trading your soul for present enhancement of their own schemes" — end quote.

It pains me to say it, but vast multitudes of the Lord's people today have been seduced by an imitation anointing. The land is filled with lying signs, wonders, miracles, and prophesying by those who will one day come before the Lord, saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" Then will the Lord profess unto them, "*I never knew you*: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (lawlessness)" (Mat. 7:22-23). That's not a heaven or hell issue! The Lord is saying, "*I never knew you as being your Husband, I never knew you in intimacy of fellowship and in vital union, I never knew you as a man knows a woman.* You did all those works, but *you* did those things in *my* name. You did things you wanted to do and you did it as by my authority and at my word — but *I had nothing to do with it!* *I never knew you as Adam 'knew' Eve when she conceived and brought forth a son!* Nothing that you did **led to sonship!** Everything that you have done 'in my name' that didn't originate out of union with me, will go up in smoke for all the world to see! Depart from me — there is a place for you, but it is not by my side, you cannot share my throne — for you worked iniquity, lawlessness, *unauthorized activities!*" Can we not see by this that within these folks the *innately religious soul* is acting independently of the *spirit*. It is the spirit of Jezebel!

Now, dear saints of God, this brings us to an important thought. I must confess that I have often been distressed by the lack of *understanding* among the Lord's people. Somehow so many seem to *miss the point*. And nowhere is this more true than when we come to the harlot church systems of man! Let me make this point as clearly as I can. *The mother of harlots is not the Roman Catholic Church.* The *mother* of harlots is a lot closer home! The *mother* of harlots is still birthing her children! The *mother* of harlots is the soulish dimension of man's life that through her carnal sense-consciousness and human logic and reasoning and soulish zeal *births* what *she believes* is pleasing to God, what *she feels* is the worship of God, what *she perceives* to be the work of God, and what *she determines* to be the way of God. The *mother* of harlots is our own soul — our very own *religious* mind, will, emotion, and desire! Where did the Roman Catholic Church with all her false doctrines, pagan practices, and carnal rituals, ceremonies, and sacraments come from? Did it not proceed right out of the soulish heart of man? You see, beloved, carnal church systems, creeds, rituals, methods, programs, and hierarchies are not really birthed out of the other carnal church systems at all — they are, one and all, birthed out of the *mother* of them all — the *soulish heart of man!*

God's people have been walking after the mother of harlots too long. We have been deceived by her prophecies, misled by her teachings, enticed by her attractiveness, seduced by her wantonness; we have been betrayed by the spirit of Mystery Babylon right within the midst of us! We have walked by the direction of the soulish nature rather than by the leadership of the spirit. It is time for "our woman" to keep silence in the church! I do not hesitate to tell you that most of the men I have met in my life-time who were concerned about "women preachers" were themselves under the control of the loudest-mouthed woman of all — their own soul! They were so stuck in their soulish dead-letter-of-the-word understanding that they could never hear the spirit! It is high time for "our woman" to be brought under subjection! This is one of the vital *keys* to overcoming! It is time for the spirit to BE LORD in the house of God! When we reach the place where we willingly refuse to accept as spiritual that which thrills and chills and *seems right* to the soulish realm, where we willingly refuse to identify with that outer world that stimulates the soulish affections, casting ourselves upon Jesus Christ who Himself *is* the truth, the light, the reality — then the spirit takes the throne of our life to reveal out of our innermost being the wisdom and the power of God.

The scarlet-clad harlot riding swiftly upon her powerful beast is the symbol of corrupt self-proclaimed ministry. They can't wait on God to develop something in them. They must be *saying* something and *doing* something *for* God! They will prostitute the life of God in them with anything which will be to their benefit. They care nothing about purity and will accept any mixture as long as they can profit by it. They receive their "life force" from more than one source. They seek out many lovers — join themselves to many causes, trying to receive life from each. What they receive is not life, it is purple and scarlet raiment, gold and precious stones and pearls, and the golden cup in the whore's hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. What they seek is bigger crowds, bigger programs, bigger buildings, bigger television ministries, bigger offerings, bigger, bigger, bigger — not **better!** Not more godly! Not more mature! Not more pure! Not after God's own heart! All the works of man are soulish; man's works exist in this world for the sensual, for the sole purpose of gratifying the desires of the carnal souls of all mankind. Religious soulishness is for the same purpose!

God has now called His elect to *overcome* this whorish spirit! Every son of God *has* overcome the nature of the harlot! Our spirit can only be satisfied by communion with our Father in the spirit! And our soul must find its life in the spirit, for God is the Father of our spirit! The carnal soul, on the other hand, rejoices at the sound of a man's voice, for the soul is fed and sustained by many voices of man. The soul is always playing the harlot, but those who are now growing up in Christ are wooing their souls, courting their souls, speaking life into their souls, delivering their souls, saving their souls, taking their souls by the arm and walking together down the isle of God's purpose unto the marriage of the Lamb! It is indeed wonderful!

Chapter 191

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (Rev. 17:1-4).

It was our purpose in Part 190 of this series to point out how very necessary it is that we be able to see the great truth that individually *the great harlot* John beheld in his remarkable vision is none other than **our very own soul**. Our soul does not want to be faithful to our man — Christ within our spirit! From the time of our entrance into this world of sin and darkness our soul has sought union with the flesh. It rides seated upon the scarlet colored beast of the fleshly nature! Can we not see by this that the root of Mystery Babylon lies right within each of us! The great harlot sits upon many waters — peoples, multitudes, kindreds, tongues, and nations. I understand that Babylon is a system — but the root of the system is the *mother of harlots*, man's own soulical life. Every man has a soul, matters not who he is, where he is, what nationality he is, what race he pertains to, what culture he comes from, and every soul has departed from Christ, and joined itself to the desires, passions, emotions, and lusts of the flesh. In regeneration Christ, the spirit within, our true man (identity, reality) in the image and likeness of God, is woken and quickened and arises within us and begins to woo the soul unto Himself. This is a new experience for the soul! As the soul vacillates back and forth between spirit and flesh, between Christ and Self, the soul becomes manifested as the great harlot and the *mother of harlots* when she mingles the things of God with the spirit and ways of the world within herself, thus birthing — *religion*!

The great whore, at her deepest root and in her inmost reality, is indeed our very own *soul*. This is the internal reality of that which we see in the external world of the carnal church systems of man. I cannot reiterate with too much emphasis that in the truest sense *the mother of harlots is not the Roman Catholic Church*. The *mother* of harlots is a lot closer home! The *mother* of harlots is still birthing her children! The *mother* of harlots is the soulish dimension of man's life that through her carnal human reasoning and soulish zeal *births* what *she believes* is pleasing to God, what *she feels* is the worship of God, what *she perceives* to be the work of God, and what *she determines* to be the way of God. The *mother* of harlots is our very own innate *religious* mind, will, emotion, and desire! Where did the Roman Church with all her false doctrines, pagan practices, and carnal rituals, ceremonies, and sacraments come from? Did it not proceed right out of the soulish heart of man? You see, my beloved, carnal church systems, creeds, rituals, methods, programs, and hierarchies are not really birthed out of a previous church system at all — they are, one and all, at their *root*, birthed out of the *mother* of them all — the *soulish heart of man!*

Now it's interesting that this woman commits fornication with the *kings of the earth*, that is, the kings of carnality and flesh. Though espoused to Christ, she continually has a fling with the flesh!

This woman, who is your own soul, commits fornication with the kings of the earth, the fleshly kings (powers, passions) that seduce and dominate the soul. She goes out on a date with pride, self-will, envy, sectarianism, heresies, witchcraft, idolatry, forms, worldliness, self-effort, human government, control, and a thousand other fleshly kings that rule men's lives and activities. What's even worse is that not only does she go out on a date with these tawdry lovers, she gets pregnant by them! She conceives and brings forth in the visible realm works, activities, efforts, programs, movements, organizations, systems, churches, seminaries, and a whole world more of things which are all the *daughters* of her harlotry.

This harlot of Babylon is the ultimate manifestation of the false prophetess Jezebel who first revealed her nature in the midst of the saints in the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-24). She called herself a prophetess and seduced the Lord's servants to commit fornication by mingling the truth of Christ with pagan idolatries. I think this understanding will give much greater meaning to the words of the writer to the Hebrews wherein he says, "*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright*" (Heb. 12:16). Did you know that the Holy Spirit calls Esau a *fornicator*? What made him a fornicator — for there is in scripture no record of Esau ever having sexual relations with any woman other than his wife. The Holy Spirit reveals that Esau was a fornicator because he was willing to sell his birthright for a bowl of soup! And today a person is a fornicator who is willing to settle for something *less* than the call and purpose of God in his life! Oh, yes, as God's called and chosen elect, members of the *church of the firstborn*, whose names are inscribed in the roster in the heaven's of God's Spirit, we, like Esau, have a *birthright*, and that birthright is our sonship to God! When one "sells out" his vision of the high calling of God for pleasure, convenience, acceptance, spouse, family, honor, blessing, recognition, finances, security, fellowship, or a ministry on a lower plane — he is a fornicator! It's amazing to me how many people in this world will sell their soul for a few minutes of pleasure, and then have to face all the shame it puts them in, all the hell it puts them in, all the wilderness and sometimes even death it puts them in. Others, of the Lord's own people, sell their very birthright — their call to sonship and the kingdom — for a mere morsel of *religious porridge*!

Patricia ("Gus") Savas, a dear sister with whom we have corresponded over many years, was led by the Spirit out of a nun's life in the Roman Catholic Church. She has such a beautiful testimony in connection with the things I now write, and I am moved to share a brief portion from her book *Gleanings from Gussie*. She writes, "Frequently I get asked what has happened to me since I wrote *Gus: A Nun's Story*. The following is a brief update. After my husband moved into the invisible realm, Father placed me in a beautiful senior apartment in Laguna Beach, approximately half-way between Los Angeles and San Diego. Even though it is small, the Presence makes it a garden enclosed, and I have a gorgeous beach to walk and play in. The earthen vessel has 72 years of wear and tear (this was written in 2009), but the heart is still young."

"I was called out of Roman Catholicism 40 years ago. After years of hanging around with Protestants, I saw that the daughter harlots bear a very close resemblance to the mother, and whereas many Roman Catholics worship their religion, many Protestants worship the Bible. At that point I was given the grace to hear and heed the call, *Come out of her, My people, so that you will not participate in her plagues*. I knew this meant religious, political, and economic Babylon. Although there was a high cost, I obeyed, leaving a very active ministry and family and friends who accused me of being uncaring, lazy, heretical and wasting the talents God has given me.

"When the GUS book came out, I was frequently asked to give my testimony. Sometimes I would look at the audience and say, 'Some of you out here have been delivered from drugs, from alcohol, from pornography or sex perversion, but I have had a major deliverance. I have been delivered from religion.' When you are under the control of most addictions, during moments of sobriety or lucidity, you know you have a problem. Religion, however, is a blinding spirit; it's actually like having a blindfold on. You're following these rules, this program, doing 'good works,' so you must be okay, right? I've got my religion; don't confuse me with the truth. I am a good person.

"As I pressed on in solitude to know God deeply, intimately, passionately — I was given more LIFE (John 7:3). In answer to my child's prayer, *Dearest Father, I just want to know You better, so that I can love You more* (still my daily prayer), Inner Teacher began to reveal His heart, putting in the pieces of the puzzle one at a time, then confirming them in the most unexpected and unusual ways. Perfect Parent is also Perfect Teacher. Among the revelations I was given is that the Word of God is a Person Who speaks in many ways; one of them is the scriptures. I have been like Elijah in the wilderness, crying, '*Woe is me, I'm all alone out here.*' Then that great El Shaddai/Mother responded with food from above — sometimes chicken soup, occasionally filet mignon. 'Oy vey! Stop complaining already. There are at least seven thousand out there who have not bowed the knee to Baal.' Well, they weren't next door or down the street, but they were out there — and I began to feel less alone, as I was sovereignly connected to God's remnant throughout the world. We all have only in-part knowledge, but I'm always willing to look at another person's perspective, and take it to the Holy Spirit to make alive the kernels of truth and blow away the chaff.

"Having been delivered from all the 'ologies' and 'isms,' I do not fit into any 'ist' category. Out of the box, outside the camp, I am simply a child of God, crazy-in-love with Jesus Christ, engaged in a divine romance and joyfully walking in the liberty of the sons of God. We are at the culmination of this present, evil age. I'm sure you have your seatbelt of **faith** fastened for the very bumpy ride, as our Sovereign LORD cleans up the mess man has made, preparing for the coming of His Kingdom Age. Father's judgments are always unto correction. God **in** Christ, **in** His saints, shall bring His Kingdom into the earth, as He has promised. He is faithful and true. Keep seeking His Face" — end quote.

THE WOMAN RIDING THE BEAST

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a *woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns*" (Rev. 17:3).

Picture the scene. A harlot is sitting on the back of a fearsome beast. The beast has seven heads and ten horns. The woman sitting on the scarlet-colored beast was a spectacle to behold. John marveled at her appearance and at that of the beast she rode upon. Now — what would **a woman seated on a beast symbolize?** Understanding John's great wonderment, the messenger rhetorically asked, "Why didst thou wonder?" He then proceeded to reveal the mystery of both the woman and the beast — a revelation that exposes the real significance of the amazing vision.

The one sitting on the beast — is the great harlot. She is gorgeously arrayed, excessively adorned. Precious stones and pearls are her ornaments. Kings of the earth-realm are her

paramours. Earthly-minded people are made drunk with the passion-inducing wine of her whoring. In her hand she holds a glittering golden cup filled with abominations — the unclean, polluted, filthy, corrupt things pertaining to her whoredom. Not only are her lovers drunk, she herself is also drunk, with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. John wonders greatly. Astonished, intrigued, fascinated, he does not immediately grasp the meaning of this picture.

We have seen that in scripture the woman is a sign-picture of the human *soul* (individually, inwardly) and of the *false church* (collectively, outwardly). The beast is a sign-description of the *flesh* or the *carnal nature* (individually, inwardly) and of the *worldly system* (collectively, outwardly) that supports and carries her. The soul is being carried along by the flesh nature just as the church is being carried along by the world! The beast is described as being full of blasphemous names (natures) and having seven (fullness of) heads (authority) and ten horns (power). So both the soul and the church are carried along by the bestial carnal and worldly nature and accrues to itself great authority and power in the lives of men. Observe then that there is only *one mystery*. The messenger tells John, “*Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her*” (Rev. 17:7). Notice that there is but *one mystery* for these two. They belong so intimately together that to know one is to know the other! Individually, the woman is the *soul*. Individually, the beast is the body realm, the *fleshy Adamic nature*. Corporately, the woman is the *false church*. Corporately, the beast is the fleshly, worldly, bestial *church system of man*. As in the words of the old song about “love and marriage,” you simply “can’t have one without the other!” That, precious friend of mine, is *the mystery* of the woman and of the beast that carries her! The woman sits on the beast, ruling over it, guiding and directing it, but at the same time she is one with it and dependent upon it for success because it carries her. Here, then, is a picture of the essential interdependence between the popular churches and the world!

No truer words have been written in this connection than the following statement by David Wilkerson published a number of years ago. **“Martin Luther and other Reformation preachers taught that Babylon was the Catholic Church, and the Pope, the beast.”** Many believers at that time were martyred for leaving the church — multitudes murdered by orders from the Pope. Anyone who knows church history can verify that the Catholic Church in the past has been stained with the blood of multitudes of godly souls. But Protestants have also killed Catholics and others — as in Ireland today. They are killing each other like madmen!

“But the Babylon John is talking about is something beyond the Catholic Church! The beast is something more powerful than the Pope! Babylon is still a great world power visible before our very eyes today. Its power and influence have grown incredibly in the past decade — until today it boasts tremendous might. Babylon is not a physical city, it is a *spiritual condition* — even as Zion is not a city in Israel, but also a representation of the true church of Jesus Christ. Babylon is the harlot church!

“A professor Milligan, in 1885, wrote: ‘**Babylon is not the church of Rome, in particular. No doubt that church has deeply sinned...but it is not the spiritual harlot. Babylon is ALL professed Christians who love the world!** It consists of those who love the world’s favor, rather than its reproach. It is those who esteem the honor of the world, rather than its shame. It is those who love ease rather than sacrifice; self-indulgence rather than self-denial; grasping, covetous. Babylon is all who anywhere profess to be Christ’s ‘little flock’ but who are not, because they deny Him by their actions.’

"Babylon, as far as I am concerned, is any church — any ministry — any Christian — in league with the world! It is made up of certain pastors, evangelists, and multitudes of Christians — all who have been seduced by covetousness and worldly-mindedness. It is religion that has been polluted by its ungodly methods — and a sanctuary corrupted by ungodly alliances" — end quote.

According to the spiritual symbolism of the book of Revelation the woman riding the beast signifies the soul acting upon the will, instigation, prompting, and motivation of the flesh; or the church influenced, carried about, bolstered, and supported by the world. Are not the church systems of today soulical and worldly? Instead of the mind of Christ, do they not think with the mind of the world? Do they not use every means to imitate, curry the favor of, and obtain the support of the world? Are not their programs, plays, dramas, theatricals, sports teams, trained psychologist counselors, puppet shows, concerts, banquets, fund raisers, Christian rock groups, Christian hip-hop, television talk shows, and a hundred other things patterned after the entertainments and methods of the world? Do they not organize with state-chartered, non-profit religious corporations just like the corporations and charities of the world? Do they not build temples of magnificence, crystal cathedrals, with plush pews, stained glass, gilt frescoes, polished wood, costly music, highly paid orators — just like the institutions of the world and is it not all designed to impress the world? I ask — could the church systems survive if all these worldly means and methods were withdrawn?

Is it not true that the world is the principal spirit and power *undergirding* all the lavish programs of the churches? Is not all of this nothing more nor less than the church seeking the favor and support of the world, rightly symbolized by the WOMAN SEATED UPON THE BEAST? The reader must be blind indeed if he or she cannot see that the church systems of man are wholly apostate; that the popular church as an outward, visible, human institution is wretchedly carnal and corrupt to the core — MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH! "Abominations of the earth" speaks not of planet earth, but of the religious "earth-realm," the realm of earthly-minded and carnal-minded Christians. Ah — but God has a people, a little flock, His beloved people, His jewels, scattered throughout the land and around the world, having no outward organization, no man-made bond of union, no outward program of pomp and splendor, no flesh-oriented appeal to attract the carnal-minded crowd, but only the indwelling life of Christ, the anointing and unity of the spirit, the power of a renewed mind, the divine revelation of Father's purpose and will, and a living hope and a divine faith by which they are being transformed into the likeness of Christ our Lord! "*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*" (Eph. 4:13).

Individually, the beast is the mystery of sin dwelling inside of every human being alive today, evidenced by most people living a totally fleshly life without regard for God, His ways, His word, His will, or His judgment. Either we overcome this beast or it overcomes us, and in fact, it *has* overcome all of us somewhere in our spiritual journey! God has allowed the flesh and its bestial system to make war against us for His greater purpose: to cause us to seek Him for HIS VICTORY to be raised up in us! This interplay between flesh and spirit is what eventually makes us strong in God! This is the blessed experience of all God's called and separated elect, called to sonship. The picture in chapter seventeen of the Revelation may seem dark and depressing, but it is a vital part of God's dealing purpose to bring forth the bride without spot or wrinkle and the manchild upon the throne!

SITTING UPON MANY WATERS

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters...the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, **are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues**" (Rev. 17:1, 15).

The whore sits upon the beast which has the dragon's power and she sits upon the waters, and the waters where the whore sits and fornicates with the kings and the inhabitants of the earth, are *peoples*, mark, peoples are waters; and the waters where the whore sits are *nations*, nations are waters; and the waters where the whore sits are *multitudes*, multitudes are waters; and the waters where the whore sits are *tongues* (*languages*), the waters are tongues; and this is the great whore that fornicates with all the kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the earth are made drunk with the wine of her fornication! This is not Jerusalem in the days of the apostles, as some teach, for the authority and power of this woman and her beast are *universal*, and the authority and power of Jerusalem barely reached beyond the tiny land of Israel, and was indeed at that time subdued and subjected by the mighty power of Rome! This woman cannot be, in fact, any limited city or kingdom recorded in history, for her seat is upon **many waters!**

Once your spiritual mind is able to grasp the great truth that the Revelation is given to the church *about the church*, you will see that this woman sits upon many waters, that's where she sits, that's what she thrives on, and it is the "peoples" who support her and give her her throne in the world. She sits astride all man-made, flesh generated religion — anywhere where *souls* are ruling, where *souls* have come together to *do things for God*, where the soulical powers are on display in the name of the Lord. She sits upon the waters! The great beast of Revelation chapter thirteen came *out of* the sea, but Mystery Babylon sits *upon* the sea, enthroned at that level where the sea, the lowest realm of human nature, and the earth, the soulical religious dimension of man's life, meet. She reigns where body and soul are joined, rooted and based not in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord, but in the carnal realms of flesh and soul.

On the one hand, the pure, virgin woman, the one who brings forth the manchild, is exalted high in the heavens of the spirit, clothed with the sun of Christ's own glory, with the moon of carnal commandments, ritual, ceremonies, and all outward sacraments and ordinances under her feet, and crowned with the twelve stars of divine government. But on the other hand, this lewd woman, the great whore, is seated upon the turbulent waters of the restless sea of man's carnality. The heavenly woman receives her life and seed from Christ and in turn brings forth Christ. The unclean woman draws her life and seed from the flesh and in turn brings forth the spirit of harlotry. She is joined to all her uncleanness, and the energy flowing from her is the fruit of her lewdness, and all nations are *drunk* on the wine of the passion of her fornication. Just consider this, dear friend — is there even one nation in the earth today where there does not exist what is called *the church*? Even in the most ruthless, tyrannical, despotic governments you will find the church, and it is a factor to be reckoned with! And in most countries of the world the church exerts *great power!* All who consort with her are unable to *think straight*, or see *clearly* with true spiritual understanding, or *walk straight* in the Spirit of the Lord! For all are **drunk**, all are in a stupor, confused about God, foggy in their comprehension of His nature, deceived as to His plan, purpose, and will, disoriented concerning nearly all things spiritual!

The prophet Isaiah spoke of this condition thus: “*But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts*” (Isa. 28:7-9).

It is not a pretty picture, for it uncovers the condition of those who would seek to feed you. The error of the Babylonish system is as vomit spewed forth from the priest and the prophet that are drunk on wine that has altered their discernment and understanding and perverted and corrupted their word. They handle the word of God and so mingle it with carnal understanding that, as they fill the tables whereon they feed those who have come to them for spiritual sustenance, vomit is the ideal characterization of the word they speak forth. Vomit is that which the body rejects, and the drunken ministers of Babylon fill their tables with the kind of teachings which the true body of Christ rejects. And then Isaiah reveals that this Babylonish state is rooted in *immaturity, spiritual childishness*, for he asks the instructive question, “*Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine?*” The answer follows at once, “***Those that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts!***” So, then, we see that the only solution for the childishness and foolishness of religion is SPIRITUAL MATURITY! Only by growth unto the full stature of Christ is one truly enabled to be *taught of God and understand the truth of God!*

Religious Babylon is running rampant today and perverting and corrupting the truth until people have no idea what truth is and what it is not. Its organizations, teachings, and indoctrinations are running swiftly over land and sea trying to make proselytes. Babylon has infiltrated government, finances, education, social services, the military, and every phase of national and community life. It is destroying men with its corrupted ways and teachings, and only the mighty power of God, by the universal outpouring of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and the manifestation of God’s celestial army of divine sons, can accomplish its destruction. It will be as the messenger told John, “*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow (she thinks she is joined to Lord, her husband), and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: FOR STRONG IS THE LORD GOD WHO JUDGETH HER!*” (Rev. 18:7-8). Ah, it looks like an impossible situation, but those holy sons of God who have been refined, processed, matured, perfected, and made strong in the power of HIS MIGHT shall arise to bring down the towering bulk of Babylon and bring order out of such massive confusion. For it is not the world system, you see, that will destroy Babylon, but the strength of our Almighty Father in His own people — “***FOR STRONG IS THE LORD GOD WHO JUDGETH HER!***” “*I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints...until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom*” (Dan. 7:21-22).

THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

“And there came one of the angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: *with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication*” (Rev. 17:1-2).

While men and women remain bound by their church traditions, truth kept secret from the foundation of the world remains hidden to them. They read, but perceive nothing. Eyes they have, but they see not. Ears they have, but they hear not. Hearts they have, but they do not understand. Natural-minded men read of the “kings of the earth” and can only conceive of the outward and the literal. To them it bespeaks the actual kings, prime ministers, and presidents of the visible nations of earth. Though there is on one level a fulfillment in the outer world of appearance, the quickening of the spirit upon the truth so vital for God’s elect bids me look beyond the *letter of the word*, and receiving of the *spirit of the word*, and turning inwardly, we find that all that pertains to the kingdoms of this world lies within the heart of man, and there have been so many kings which have **ruled within us**, and as His kingdom unfurls its banner over our lives, these kings are subdued and brought to nought.

In the symbolism of the book of Revelation “heaven” answers to the realm of the spirit, “earth” answers to the dimension of the soul, while the “sea” signifies the body realm of flesh. Armed with this understanding, the kings of the “earth” signify the kings of carnality, soulishness, and fleshly religion, that is, the sovereign rulerships and dominions — the very foundations of power in the soulical life of man. The *soul* is our inner, psychological part which as we have previously shown includes our *desire*, *emotion*, *will*, and *mind*. The desire is the organ for fancy, lust, inclination, drawing, and aspiration; the emotion is the organ for pleasure, anger, sorrow, and joy; the will is the organ for formulating opinions, making decisions, and inciting actions; and the mind is the organ for thinking, reasoning, and considering. The *senses of the soul* are PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSES and comprise man’s ego or self, giving him self-consciousness and enabling him to contact the psychological world around him.

There have been within all of us many usurping kings, possessed of the bestial spirit of this world, who are so very subtle, very powerful warriors, and very acute disputants. Each of us is like a huge, elaborate palace just full of these kings! Beloved! Examine yourself — do you not find this to be true? What mighty, powerful, persuasive, unwearied rulerships and dominions exercise their authorities within the courts of our souls and bodies, what strange, strong, and subtle reasonings are there? Insomuch that the old Adamic man carries all before him, and these lusts, these desires, these emotions, these imaginations, these reasonings, these habits, these religious inclinations, these compromises, these selfish and self-serving tendencies, these ruling kings of carnality bear away the day of it, and tread down all that stands in their way; by their false logic, their cunning sophistry, their deluding craftiness, and their powerful affection they run rough-shod over the voice of the spirit, over the word of God, over the ways of righteousness, and right over the revealed will of the Lord.

And this you know is, and has been of old, and shall be, my beloved, until Jesus Christ be revealed within His saints, until He be pleased, with His almighty power to arise within the soul and command obedience, and that He will now manifest Himself, and comes forth with regal, conquering power, else our lusts, and thoughts, and reasonings, and emotions make such a noise, such a blustering, such a clamoring in the soul until Christ cannot be heard. But when the *King of kings* within our spirit commands all the kings to gather on the field of battle He marches forth to command them all, to put them all to silence, answering, convicting, judging, and banishing every fleshly lust and every soulical, religious sentiment, with every vestige of carnal understanding, self-effort and self-will, and then great Babylon falls, the captivity of the spirit is ended, and then His kingdom comes in great power and glory, and He reigns in soul and body, becoming the King of the life. You see, precious friend of mine, before God will judge that great

Babylon in the world, He must first bring it to judgment *within the firstfruits*, the company of His called and chosen elect. What He first makes true *within us* He shall then manifest mightily *through us* unto all the ends of the earth. Great is the mystery!

With keen spiritual insight Ray Prinzing wrote: "How we desire that He REIGN IN US until every fragment of that which would rise up against the truth is subdued, until every desire within us is wholly purified, until every root that would defile us has been burned out — yes, until He shall have thoroughly dealt with all of our '*internal enemies*.' It is not the man on the street, the raging nations around us, but our own INTERNAL REALM that needs to be fully subdued. The *kings within us* that war against His will. Yes, until we are brought to that place where we can say with Jesus our Lord, '*the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me*' (Jn. 14:30). Praise God! Then He shall be able to look upon us, and declare — not just from a prophetic point of view, but from our experiential position in Him, '*He hath not beheld iniquity in this vessel.*'" — end quote

There are kings of self-will, of worldly ambition, of fleshly zeal, of ruling thoughts, of compelling desires, of religious dogmas, creeds, and traditions and commandments of men, of soulish emotions and impulses spirited by the world, of fleshly appetites dominated by the five senses, of fears, doubts, anger, rebellion, pride, weakness, and sin. The still small voice speaks a word, and immediately carnal reason tries to argue us out of it. We sense His direction and leading to "stand still," but human sympathy and sentiment tell us to get involved in things **He has not led us to do**. Oh, how those kings do rule! So we yield and obey these emotions and impulses, and wonder why we miss the joy and blessing of the Lord. But, praise God, in the days of *these kings* — while they flourish, control, and bear heavy in their rule — shall the God of heaven set up His kingdom and all authority and power shall be subdued before it. Into the midst of these kings has rolled THE STONE, and it is breaking in pieces, consuming all these, bringing all into submission to Him!

Again, Ray Prinzing has so beautifully expounded along this line that I am compelled to share a portion. "Many a battle has been fought *and won*, though devils were not rebuked, and there was no writhing on the floor in intense travail, nor any challenge by an antagonist against the truth believed — it was all INTERNAL. Battles of the mind, battles of inner spirit conflict, a warfare against the vision, against the *thing* which God had personally revealed, but which the flesh was not ready to receive and walk in. And while we would 'reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,' yet only HE can complete this work in us and make it an experiential reality. So we surrender, and He works it out. 'Now why dost thou cry aloud? IS THERE NO KING IN THEE? Is thy counselor perished?' (Micah 4:9). Israel was desperate, she was in travail, in pain to bring forth, and was crying out in her distress. God answered back, 'IS THERE NO KING IN THEE?' Praise God, there *is One* in the midst of us who shall take the reins of the government, and He shall rule in righteousness, so that we eagerly await the emergence of *His kingdom*. It is our own little INNER KINGDOM that needs the King, so it is to this realm that we ask the question, and praise God, can answer back positively, YES THERE IS A KING WITHIN!" — end quote.

I do not hesitate to tell you that the sphere of His kingdom is the *individual heart*. God's kingdom can never come in all the earth until it has been thoroughly inworked in *each and every individual heart of man*. It is impossible to have a reality corporately until it has been established in each member of the corporate body. There is no "mass miracle" by which the individual is somehow by-passed. Oh, no! This is the end for which man was made, the final cause of his creation, that

he might be a province and principality of God: the King eternal septerning him throughout his whole nature — spirit, soul, and body. When I pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," I do not feel that I am praying solely for my city, my nation, the world, or anything beyond. I do not think first or foremost about harlots, drunkards, drug addicts, criminals, atheists, Moslems, communists, Catholics, Protestants, or the masses of sinners and self-righteous religionists throughout the world. When I pray, "Thy kingdom come," I am not content with adding to the thought my unpleasant neighbors, those who call me a heretic, or those in our government who I believe are leading our nation to hell. No! When I utter the prayer it is with the deep conviction that I am praying for ***myself***. I am praying that God's rule may come fully and powerfully in my own heart, mind, nature, and life. Each man and woman of the billions who have lived and died on this planet will be brought to pray that prayer in the same way and in the same spirit as I — and only then shall the kingdom come and God's will be done in *all the earth* as it is in heaven! Oh, yes! The "kings of the earth" are within us!

There is no doubt about it, this prayer has reference to ***ourselves***. There is a problem and that is that we have our own kingdom, the kingdom of man. Within that kingdom is the kingdom of man's religion. It is *my business*, *my enterprise*, *my family*, *my church*, *my ministry*, *my elders*, *my belief*, *my people*, *my thing* that I am doing, that we are concerned with. I hear these frothy preachers all the time, including some who proclaim this word of the kingdom, sonship, and reconciliation, speaking of "*my church*" and "*my elders*" as though they were the Lord Himself. I have news for them. *They* don't have a church, nor do *they* have any elders; if indeed they do have these, then the church they have is not Christ's church nor are the elders ordained of God. And over against all that, Jesus sets His "Thy." "THY kingdom come." When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we pray, "Father, come in Thy Lordship into my own heart and mind; rule *there*; take Thy throne *there*: make me completely Thine." See what it means! It means that we are asking that every wicked way, every cherished sin and passion, every self-serving desire and ambition, every soulical religious inclination, every carnal thought, word, and deed may be cast out of our hearts. It means that neither money nor pleasure nor prestige nor the way that *seemeth* right should have any power over us. It means that the Father's will and not our own may dictate fully our lives. It means that neither the allure of the harlot, nor the nature of the beast, nor the authority of his seven heads, nor the power of his ten horns have any more place in us. It means that the precious mind that was in Christ Jesus so possesses us until all death is swallowed up into HIS VICTORY. Oh, that is a great prayer!

There is no department of human life where the kingdom can rule unless first God rules in the heart. God cannot rule *nations* until first He rules in the hearts of the citizens of those nations from the king, president, or prime minister all the way down to the garbage collector and the shoeshine boy. God cannot rule over *things* or *institutions* until first He rules in the hearts of those who form, own, and control those things and institutions. "The kingdom of God is ***within you***." Imagine God trying to rule over an army without first winning the allegiance of the general who commands that army and the soldiers who fight in it! Let us henceforth begin to see all things as *God sees them*. God does not rule anything or anyone by external force, from without. He does not rule by commandments or laws, nor by arms, nor by soldiers, nor by any external compulsion. He rules only by the power of an indwelling life, by the strength of an inner nature. Aren't you glad!

As brother Paul Mueller has so aptly written: "Indeed, God does not change the world by man's armies, nor by any of man's carnal systems of government. The Lord is beginning to change the world by first changing the hearts, souls, and minds of mankind. People shall be changed, not by

human agreements or by war, but by the operation of the Spirit of God in their lives. The Lord also is beginning to dispel the darkness in the world by imparting the greater Light of His presence in the hearts of His elect. This is the method by which the just and righteous rule of the kingdom of God is coming to the earth. In this way alone, all the evil and darkness in all the earth shall be completely dispelled. Then the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God shall be fully manifested in all the earth for the glory and honor of our sovereign and omnipotent Father. And His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!

"The kingdom of God has been planted as a seed in the fertile garden of the hearts of His people. And His kingdom has been growing in the hearts of His people ever since. His kingdom began in His faithful sons as a word or seed that sprouts in the ground. The kingdom seed is the very life of Christ that was planted within us. As a seed in the natural soil sprouts or explodes by its inherent life-force, so the seed of the Christ within us has burst forth with His life to manifest the fruit of the kingdom of God. The seed is Christ, the word of God and the word of His kingdom. The same kingdom that began in us has burst forth as a germinated seed to become a tender plant. When we receive the seed/word, and it grows within us, the kingdom of God will grow, and indeed has grown, to become the greatest tree on earth so that the birds of the air will find lodging in it. That seed/word within us has sprouted, bursting forth by the Life of Christ to manifest first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear, until its abundant fruit shall fill the whole earth. That plant is growing until the power and glory of the King who reigns within His elect begins to spread His influence far beyond into all the earth. With enlightened spiritual eyes, and the mind of Christ, we can see that as He continues to reign in us and in the earth, all things shall be gathered into the kingdom of God and nothing will be left outside of it!" — end quote.

Now let us return to our thought regarding the harlot sitting upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. We know, of course, that the harlot is not only the soul of our individual life, but she is also an outward and corporate expression in the earth as the carnal church systems of man. This realm has its "kings," too! And then there are the kings of the nations with which the wanton harlot also commits fornication. You see, my beloved, we are dealing here not merely with the specific kings of any particular one of these realms, but with the divine **principle** that includes and applies to them all! Hers is a long career of harlotry, spread out over long centuries of time, and experimented with in many different realms and on various levels of experience.

She has loved to mix in the politics of this world and to influence the course of politics for her own ends, in fact, to control and dominate politics in the belief that she is superior. To the political leaders and systems who will play with her, she gives religious satisfaction upon her bed, to make them feel comfortable and fulfilled in their worldly course. Sons of God, too, must watch this! It is easy to think that we are somehow establishing righteousness by voting at the ballot box for a particular politician, or by calling our senators and representatives to influence certain legislation. I do not believe it is wrong to vote or to speak up for a good law or ordinance, but we must know that neither our government nor any government on earth today in any way represents the kingdom of God! You cannot legislate righteousness, for the kingdom of God is righteousness *in the Holy Ghost*, not righteousness by a man-made law. A good president is better than a bad president, but in the vast majority of cases, after we have voted for the man we thought was the better of the two, we came to see that in reality we only voted for **the lesser of two evils**. Can we not see by this that we were still voting for **evil?** None of this is the kingdom of God! A good law

is better than a bad law, but no matter how good the law, it will not change the heart of even one man, it will not redeem even one poor soul, and it will only fill our jails and prisons with more and more offenders! Oh, yes! What then are we to conclude, seeing the futility of all of man's government and rulership. I admonish you to vote if the Lord so leads, but do not try to *mix* God's word, God's ways, and God's will with the carnal systems of man — for the ***joining*** of man's carnal system with the holy things of God is just the whore sitting upon her beast while fornicating with the kings of the earth!

As the harlot fornicates with the kings of the earth-realm, she prays for heaven's blessings upon their selfish, ambitious schemes; she blesses their military adventures as they go forth killing and to kill to promote their political or commercial or military agenda; she makes them feel they have heaven's approval and are in some way doing God's work, promoting His just cause. And for those who make the supreme sacrifice in this endeavor she holds impressive funeral services to make their life in the next world guaranteed to be in the bliss of God's favor on account of their heroics and patriotism — highly esteemed of the Lord. In fact, she carries on her prostitution with the governmental powers of man as a religious service, as a form of worship, to the god whom she worships, just like the ancient temple prostitute. This has influenced the inhabitants of the earth so that they view religion and politics as "bed-fellows" for the enrichment, uplifting, and blessing of society, and earth's inhabitants have been made drunk with the wine (teachings, influences) of her prostitution!

In closing, I would mention the "kings" within the church systems themselves which is but another facet of the harlot's fornication. Oh, let us once for all grasp this one great fundamental truth. Christ's church is not an organization, but an organism, a living body of many spiritual members. He, and HE ALONE, is the Head! But when man builds an organization of which he himself is the head, when he establishes for that church a man-made ***head-quarters***, and when he begins to legislate and pass church laws and formulate creeds and disciplines, and institute rituals and ceremonies, he is merely manifesting that both the system and he himself are spurious. Of course there are many of the Lord's people in these organizations: let us not lose sight of that fact. How could the Holy Spirit send forth the call, "*Come out of her, my people...*" except that they are indeed HIS PEOPLE! And let us not lose sight of the fact that many of the founders of these organizations were honest and sincere believers in Christ. Yet they were ignorantly sincere. The whole trend of organization is to lead away from Christ the Head of the organism, and it induces men to look to man, the head of the organization, thus making them the harlot, and the system the beast she rides upon.

Only such as obey Christ's command to become separate from all defilement can ever be entrusted with the true riches of His everlasting kingdom and glory. Only such as reject the flatterings, the seducings, the lies, and the deceptions of the harlot system can ever come to honor and power and majesty in the heavenly administration of God's ruling sons. Rebels and turncoats and spineless compromisers who have not the courage to walk in the righteousness of the kingdom of our Father, can only come to demotion and humiliation. Only such as faithfully serve the King of kings now, can ever be exalted to honor in His kingdom. Heavenly politics demand that those who will reign in the glory of God's great and eternal kingdom must now prove themselves true to the principles of the kingdom over which they are to reign. And while at the present time ear-ticklers and men-pleasers are popular with the apostate masses, yet all these shall come to shame. God cannot honor those who are working against His cause, no matter how loudly or lustily they may proclaim their own professions of sanctity and authority and their

attainments. Our God does not consort with harlots, but He is even now preparing a wonderful feast of glorious things for that little *virgin church* which He presents to His firstborn Son at the marriage supper of the Lamb! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

NOTICE

Patricia (Gus) Savas who wrote the book *Gleanings from Gussie* from which I quoted in this article does not sell her book, nor can it be obtained from her. The book is available only from the publisher and is free as long as the supply lasts. The publisher, however, does charge \$5.00 each for shipping and handling. Before ordering you may want to contact the publisher for the latest information and availability at:

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Chapter 192

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and *the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*" (Rev. 17:1-2).

In the ancient world all the major religions of the gods of Babylon, Greece, and Rome joined pagan worshippers to demons through sexual intercourse with religious (temple) prostitutes and sodomites. History reveals that such vile creatures, because they were in the service of demons, under their will, and actually in-dwelt by demon-deities, were called by the ancients, "holy ones," meaning "sanctified" or "set apart ones" unto the false god. They were "sanctified" or "set apart" by the will, presence, and nature of unclean spirits. Christians who had once engaged in those shameful practices before being delivered from the adversary's clutches by faith in the Lord Jesus and the washing of regeneration knew that the practical result of their sanctification unto the Lord was abstinence from fornication (I Thes. 4:4). The indwelling Christ, who of God is made unto us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," enables each to "know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of sensuality even as the pagans who know not God." We know that our bodies are the "temple of the Holy Spirit," and that fornication (physical or spiritual) is a formal act of turning ourselves over to the control of an alien power. Thus, uncleanness may be characterized as "SANCTIFICATION UNTO THE FLESH"—separation unto the flesh and sensuality! The calling of the believer, therefore, is to purity of life that he might be wholly sanctified both in attitude and action, in body and spirit.

The "fornication" of religious Babylon, the harlot church system of man, is a *symbol*, not the fornication of the flesh, but something spiritual, a joining on a religious plane to that which is not Christ. Women in the Revelation are likewise symbolic, either positively of the bride of Christ, or negatively of the soul, or of religious organizations and activities which are *soulical* rather than *spiritual*. These are those ministries, and multiplied millions of believers, who daily sow their seed, deposit their spiritual life of Christ, into man-made religious systems, mingling the reality of Christ with the traditions and commandments of men, joining themselves to carnal programs, promotions, methods, and worldly religious activities, as well as with the political systems and governments of the world, satisfying their own soulish appetites and lusts in the name of the Lord. It is *spiritual fornication!* The church is imitating the world! The church schedule is packed with flesh-appeal programs and activities that run day and night. They feel that unless every night of the week is taken up with some sort of activity, the ministry is an ineffective thing. They have the strange idea that nothing is being done unless someone is talking! So they fairly swarm to conferences, seminars, workshops, committee meetings, platform discussions, concerts, plays, programs, and outreaches of many kinds.

It is distasteful to have to admit it, but the plain truth is that the vast majority of Christians live their lives in *soulish lusts*. The further truth is that God's purposes are not accomplished by intellect or soulical activity! The church systems go forward today like a little Samson shorn of his locks of power. It parades up and down, boasting of its accomplishments, and like Samson, it knows not that the Spirit of God has departed from it. But even as Saul and his armies tremble in fear before the mighty Goliath, the Lord is raising up a little David with a sling shot of the spirit of sonship to

meet the enemy with all of his stratagems and come off with a mighty victory! The David company is still in preparation, far out in the solitude of the green pastures of a living word, and beside the still waters of the quickening spirit, learning by faith and obedience to slay their bear and kill their lion. But we are gaining new victories every day and learning within ourselves the power of God and the ways of His kingdom! Saul's armor will not do! The sons of God are being prepared to step forth in the majesty of the name of the Lord God of Israel! The preparation does not take place in the seven brothers who appear so tall, handsome, and articulate, so charismatic and accomplished, nor in the hustle and bustle of the streets of Bethlehem, but *alone with God* in the pastures of HIS choosing, outside the camp, in the secret place of the Most High!

Amid all the religious ruckus of the hour, and all the fuss of those who run after many lovers, fornicating with the flesh, the world, and the carnal mind, there is a *little flock* that has climbed the mount with Jesus. They care nothing for the flamboyant humbug of the gaudy harlot's house, but, having beheld the glories of the kingdom afar off, they are pressing through surging waves of flesh-oriented believers to *come apart* to receive instruction from the King of the kingdom. At His feet they hear the call to the heavenly mark and find a door opened for them to enter in to celestial realms and lay hold upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth! They lean hard upon Christ! They keep themselves unto Him, and to Him alone! They are not enticed by the heady wine of the harlot's house, with its numbing of the spiritual senses and its unrestrained religious passion and carnal sensuality. As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pant their souls after God! The spirit of sonship to God dwells richly within them! They are partakers of His mind! They have been granted the knowledge of His will! They comprehend with all His called and separated elect His great plan and purpose in the earth, in His sons, and throughout the unbounded universe! They have laid aside every religious weight and the sin which does so easily beset them! They are running the race with patience! They esteem the hope that is set before them higher than all the pleasures of Egypt and greater far than the prestige of Babylon! They are patient in tribulation, knowing that through much tribulation we shall inherit the kingdom! They continue instant in prayer to God, and He comforts them and upholds them with the right hand of His righteousness! To them the voice of the Father speaks in words of everlasting hope and assurance, "Fear not, *little flock*; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Isn't it wonderful!

Jonathan Mitchell stated it so well when he wrote, "The figure of the *drinking of the wine* speaks of participating in something that has an effect upon you. Here it signifies participating in the strong passion of her prostitution, which effected a departure from God and an entering into her sins. It causes a drunkenness, a stupor, to come upon the peoples who participate with her. They cannot think clearly, and are led astray like the fool."

Vladimir Lenin was not speaking an original thought when he said that "religion is the opiate of the people." The thought that we have before us now is exactly that thought! The Holy Spirit spoke it two thousand years before Lenin recognized it! Mystery Babylon is said to have *made the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication*. An opiate puts people to sleep; wine puts them into a stupor. It is only the gospel and the living power of Christ which causes people to awake from their sleep and arise from their death that they may walk in the light of the Lord. In all the *earth-realm* — the carnal religious realm — the people are made drunken — stupefied — by the ecclesiasticism of a counterfeit church and by the religious paganism taught and practiced by that counterfeit system. To be "drunk" means to be intoxicated, inebriated,

besotted, overcome by something induced, giving a false sense of reality. The **wine** of her fornication is simply her doctrines, her rituals, her ceremonies, her entertainments, her pageantries, her programs, her methods, etc. They are one and all laced with that which perverts the living truth and distorts spiritual reality in the minds and hearts of the people!

Her wine is that by which the people are seduced into her fornication. The love of a harlot is a *feigned* love; and its hatefulness consists largely in the fact that it is put in the place of the true love of a wife. The harlot's aim is to secure favors for herself. To that end she not only prostitutes whatever she may have of a womanly charm, but she brings into play all manner of seductive arts, and adorns her person with whatever may increase her attractions in the eyes of men. But specially reprehensible is her *pretended affection* for those she seeks to ensnare in the web of her fascination and enchantments. Such is the false church that feigns a deep solicitude for the spiritual good of the great ones of the earth, and exerts a mysterious and intoxicating influence over the *inhabitants of the earth-realm*, making them, as it were, *drunk with the wine of her fornication*; the religious exercises which conceal the basest of motives behind the mask of pretended affection and fondness. From the time the "greeters" meet you at the door until you become a dedicated member of the congregation her underlying motive is to aggrandize herself — to increase her numbers, to magnify her prestige and power, to expand her influence in the world, and to fill fuller her coffers! As the Holy Spirit testified, "*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously!*" (Rev. 18:7).

The wise man said, "*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise*" (Prov. 29:1). This is not talking about a glass of wine with your meal! "Deceived" infers inebriation, intoxication, liquored up — *drunk*. It could be rendered, "*whosoever is inebriated thereby is a fool.*" It is inebriating wine, wine that excites the passions and removes the restraints, leading to fornication — spiritual uncleanness. Furthermore, Babylon's wine is called, "*The wine of the wrath of her fornication*" (Rev. 14:8). Does "wrath" mean the harlot is practicing her fornication in a state of anger, rage, violence, and retaliation? Not at all! The word "wrath" in this verse is from the Greek word *thumos*, and surprisingly Strong's Concordance gives as the basic meaning of this word, "*breathing hard, passion.*" It has nothing whatever to do with vindictiveness or vengeance. It should have been translated, "*The wine of the passion of her fornication.*" Why haven't the preachers told us this before! Now, I ask, who ever heard of wrath being sweet, intoxicating, and seductive *like wine!* And who would ever think of the sensual pleasures of fornication as being angry, vengeful, full of fury and violence! When we consider the true meaning of the word *thumos* it becomes crystal clear — "*For all nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her fornication.*" What a difference that makes! People who have sex are caught up in *passion* — not *vengeance!* The King James translation makes no sense at all. The correct rendering signifies that all nations and all the inhabitants of the carnal religious earth realm have become "high" on the passion and seductive excitement of the harlot activities of Mystery Babylon! That is the mystery.

The apostate church has been given false teaching and has become drunk with it. She doesn't even know the truth because she's drunk! When people are drunk they lack perception; they're deceived; they cannot see or reason clearly. As long as men are inflamed by the heady wine of Babylon's seductions, they are not free to either know or love the truth. Those who are drunk on the false teachings in Babylon are so totally confused that they mistake "heresy" for "orthodoxy." They are so drunk on these false doctrines that they suppose that eternal damnation in hell-fire for the vast majority of men who have lived and died on this planet is the pure, unadulterated Word of God! In their eyes *you* are the heretic if you suggest otherwise! They are so drunk that when they

read of the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, with a street of gold, a river of life, a tree of life, and the throne of God, they mistake the *symbol* for the *reality* and drunkenly imagine that this city is *heaven as a place* and they will one day fly away up there and own a mansion, a robe, and a crown somewhere on Hallelujah Boulevard!

They are so drunk that in their stupor they are quite sure that the Bible clearly teaches that they are going to heaven in a “rapture” and everyone else will be “left behind” to face the horrors of the antichrist and the great tribulation. I do not hesitate to add that one *has* to be drunk to find that teaching in the scriptures! Others, in their state of intoxication, confuse law with grace, supposing that we are somehow under the Old Testament laws of meats and drinks, holy days, sabbaths, ritual cleansings (baptisms), tithing, and various other things. Preachers tell the people that if they don’t pay their tithes into the church, “*You are cursed with a curse,*” and under grace lay the curses of the Old Testament law upon the people. FORNICATION! FORNICATION INCITED BY DRUNKENNESS! Oh, yes! Many, many nations and untold millions of carnal-minded Christians are in bed with the harlot and have committed fornication with this wanton whore. Almost everyone you meet is religious, but you have only to discuss spiritual matters for a very few minutes to discover just how drunk they are on the teachings of Babylon! Multitudes of Christians are not serving God, they are consorting with the harlot’s house. The wine that all nations, and all denomi-nations, have drunk is the wine of false teaching and false religious practices!

The ministers of Babylon give their flocks to drink of the wine of the *passion* of her fornication — the *mingled wine* of the harlot, a *mixture* of truth and error, of spirit and flesh, of the ways of God and the ways of the world, which like any intoxicant, numbs the sensibilities, and causes him who drinks to turn from purity, truth, and singleness of heart. Babylon, the great Old Testament kingdom which offered the worship of idols with gross sensuality, is used by the Spirit in the Revelation to symbolize the church systems of man, which, like the Jewish nation in the days of Christ, mix the philosophies, methods, and spirit of the world with the truth of God, and offer this wine to men in the place of the living word of God and the precious mind of Christ. The church which does this, realizes its inability to reach the souls of men, and employs the flaming passion of the harlot to seduce people, utilizing all kinds of flesh-appeal activities, religious forms, programs, contests, entertainment, social and political action, and in some countries even the coercive power of the state, to suck men into the orgy of her sin. There is a form of godliness, but no power therein!

We have passed through a time of great darkness. But thank God, the first rays of light of a new day are painting the eastern sky! Thank God, a few of His chosen ones have arisen to behold the glories of the dawn and to drink in the exhilarating freshness of the morn! But the popular churches are still lost in dreams. They have not awokened. They know not of the dawn. And the scripture describes them and their shepherds in very uncomplimentary terms. The heads of the churches are symbolized by the Holy Spirit as “the drunkards of Ephraim” (Isa. 28:1-4). Then in Isaiah 29:9-11 we are told, “*They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your heads...hath He covered. And all vision hath become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed.*” And when these drunken shepherds spread tables for their flocks, instead of those tables being loaded with good wholesome spiritual food, the prophet says, “*ALL tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean*” (Isa. 28:8).

But those who are of the Day, who are not lovers of the mingled wine of Babylon, nor of the drunkenness of religious teachings and promotions, nor sleepers of the night, have a higher

heritage. “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation” (I Thes. 5:5-8). All who in this significant hour have received the love of the truth are heirs to a higher calling. We have privileges, and we have duties to perform. We must be about our Father’s business! It is time to forsake the shame and error, and time to look up, time to arise and shine. The day is at hand. The night is far spent. We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow. “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion (sons of God); put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem (bride of Christ), the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean” (Isa. 52:1). Because the church today has not received of God’s enlightenment, we find Christians in the pathetic state of darkness. Because Christians today, whether baptized in God’s Spirit, or not, have stopped far short of God’s fullness, and are still spiritual babes, they, with few exceptions, do not discern the things that pertain to the kingdom of God. Their human minds comprehend the natural side of things, but deep spiritual realities are veiled from their view. They have not arisen above the mists of night. But the Day which God’s called and separated elect has now entered calls for all who will to awake, and to go forth, beholding the more glorious scene of an **abundant entrance into the kingdom of God!**

THE WILDERNESS

“So he carried me away in the spirit *into the wilderness*: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns” (Rev. 17:3).

The messenger carried John “away in spirit” to a wilderness or desert. In chapter one, verse ten, John was “in the spirit” and saw a vision of the resurrected, ascended, and glorified Christ. In chapter four, verse two, he was “in the spirit” and saw the vision of the throne of God in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord. This time his experience is something like Ezekiel’s for he is conscious of being “carried away.” Here, in a new vision, he sees a woman in a wilderness sitting upon a scarlet colored beast full of blasphemous names. Since John is carried away “in spirit,” this signifies to us that what he sees is also “in spirit.” Just as Jerusalem was “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (Rev. 11:8),” John is now given the picture of a woman-city which is given another “spiritual” name — Babylon!

We meet this term “wilderness” in only two places in the book of Revelation — first in chapter twelve where the woman who births the manchild, that is, the true church, “flees *into the wilderness*, where she hath a place prepared of God...and to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly *into the wilderness*, into her place” (Rev. 12:6,14). This woman’s “wilderness” was a place of safety and liberation; a sanctuary to which the woman was taken to be **protected** and **sustained** by God. Here I would draw your reverent attention to the fact that this first woman, this virgin bride of Christ, flees into “**the wilderness**,” the well-known one, spoken of from the book of Exodus all the way through to the book of Revelation. Herein she is distinguished from the great whore. The great harlot of our present study is seen by John in “**a wilderness**,” or “**a wilderness in spirit**,” as we should most probably connect the words. The first woman’s flight was into **the** wilderness, signifying the spiritual condition into which many of the Lord’s people have fled to escape the fury of the adversary! This was the place of safety for Moses, after Pharaoh was angry and designed to slay him. Hither fled Israel from the face of the Egyptian king. To this refuge did Elijah betake himself from the threats of Jezebel. And Jesus

Himself retreated thither after John the Baptist was slain, and near to it He dwelt after His life was sought by the priests and rulers at Jerusalem.

The great whore, however, is not found in “***the*** wilderness,” but rather in “***a*** wilderness,” that is, ***another*** wilderness, a ***different*** wilderness, which is specifically described as “a wilderness ***in spirit,***” — a SPIRITUAL WILDERNESS! The portrayal of her dwelling place is very descriptive. It is a dry and unproductive place, a place of spiritual scarcity, lack, deficiency, dearth, famine, privation, and desolation. It describes a condition where no springs of God are found, no fountains of living water flow, and almost no spiritual food exists. I have been in stark deserts in Israel and Egypt, and elsewhere, where not a blade of grass grows, and no man lives. There are no houses, no cities, no oasis, no movement of any kind except for the howling winds and blowing sands. It is the place where those that are thirsty can never be spiritually satisfied, where leanness of soul prohibits any from growing up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. It is a state of barrenness, bleakness, emptiness, solitude, — a spiritual wasteland! To the anointed eye this is the very wilderness encircling far and wide this great whore of religion. In this wasteland she sits astride her scarlet colored beast of the bestial carnal nature and man-made organization, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

This is a picture of one’s spiritual experience. Whenever you are thinking in terms of being *in Adam*, or *in the flesh*, or *in the carnal mind*, you are viewing a wilderness. You don’t know where you are, you know not where you are going, nor do you know what you are doing. You are frustrated, confused, disoriented, lonely, hopeless, hedged in, shut up, lost, with no way of escape. All of the world is a wilderness! The people of the world have no idea where they are, where they came from, what they are doing, what their purpose is, or where their true destiny lies. We are amazed sometimes that men of learning, with brilliant minds, and great accomplishments and power do some of the stupid things they do. We ought rather to be amazed that they do as well as they do! They dwell in a spiritual wilderness. They are blind. They are dead. They know nothing as they ought to know. They are bound. They live in a state of emptiness and desolation.

Christianity is a wilderness. Of course all the pagan religions are a wilderness, a spiritual wasteland, but Christianity is a wilderness just as vast and great and terrible. In their wilderness they have substituted the reality of God with man-made methods and forms of worship. Speaking of this, brother Bennie Skinner once said in a message, “I know how those things work, I was educated in them. Do you know that I could have filled this building up many times over in the thirty-four years I have been in West Palm Beach if I would have just used the methods I was taught? We could have a church here with thousands of members in it! We would have had to sell this property and buy a larger plot of land. I was educated in those techniques, I know how to do those things. And it works! You can have thousands of people coming and getting all excited about their religion and activities and the programs and the outreaches and the success and the overflowing attendance and expanding membership rolls. I know all about that. I understand how to get others to work to accomplish all those things. You say, ‘Well, brother Bennie, why don’t you do it? We could sure use a few of them!’ I’ll tell you why I don’t. I am called of God to set before a people a High Way. It is called the *way of holiness*. It’s reality. It’s the real thing. It’s not joining a church. It’s not walking down the isle popping your chewing gum and saying, ‘I’ll take Jesus as my Saviour,’ and the preacher says, ‘Oh, wonderful, now you’re saved.’ There’s a lot more to God’s purpose than that! The fact is, there is nothing to that at all. There is a calling and a reality in God far deeper and greater and more glorious than any of that!”

Now I would draw your attention to a further, more personal, aspect of this great wilderness where the whore rides upon her beast. In the book of Hebrews the writer speaks of entering into God's rest. "*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief*" (Heb. 4:1,9,11).

What is this rest? We have to look at a type in the Old Testament to discover its meaning. After the children of Israel were delivered and saved from the land of Egypt, they were brought into the wilderness with the intention that they should go on into the land of Canaan. The land of Canaan was their promised land of rest, a type of CHRIST. Christ Himself is the good land of Canaan, and He is our rest! If we are going to enter into the rest, we must enter into Christ. The Israelites who were delivered out of Egypt (typifying the body, or flesh realm), instead of going on into Canaan, wandered for many years in the wilderness. What does this speak to us? You see, the wilderness was a blessed provision for their escape from Egypt — but it was not intended to become their dwelling place! It means that many of the Lord's people, after being saved out of sin and darkness, are simply wandering about in the wilderness of the SOUL...in the barrenness and unfruitfulness of their own carnal understanding, thoughts, desires, emotions, affections, and wills. The reason the book of Hebrews was written was that many believers were saved, but rather than entering in to possess for their entire being the fullness of Christ and the perfection, glory, and power of God deposited in their quickened spirit, they were still wandering in the restlessness, variableness, limitation, confusion, and defeat of their soul life. They had been saved from the gross sins of the body realm (the flesh), but they would not press on from the wilderness of the soul into the good land — that is, INTO THE MEASURE OF THE FULLNESS OF THE STATURE OF CHRIST IN THEIR SPIRIT, where there is the nature of the Father, the mind of Christ, and the power and glory of the kingdom of God!

Even though we may have been saved for many years, we must now ask the Spirit of God to lift the veil that is upon our minds and reveal the truth of whether we are presently living in the realm of the *body* (sensuality, sin), the *soul* (carnality, self-will, intellect, emotions, etc.), or in the *spirit* (divine life, light, love, victory, peace, joy, righteousness, power, etc.). With reverent heart invite the Lord to search yourself in order to be clear where you are! Frankly, many of the Lord's dear people are wandering day after day in the wilderness of the soul! The Lord is present with them even there, but they have not departed from the wilderness to enter into their full and great and glorious inheritance in Christ! In the morning they may have joyful countenances, but the pressures of the day soon take their toll and their peace, confidence, and victory flee away. Yesterday it seems they were in the heavens, but today they are making their bed in hell, discouraged, anxious, depressed, and defeated. Yesterday they were full of faith and courage, ready to believe God for exploits, but today they are disheartened with their walk in God and fearful about the future. They are continually wandering about in the soul, the wilderness, without rest, where no streams flow, and sustenance is scarce, circling the same dry river bed day after day, getting nowhere. They may have been walking with God for forty years, but are still going around in the same vicious circles, fighting the same battles, filled with the same concerns, experiencing the same weaknesses, encumbered with the same lack of understanding, just as the children of Israel, who wandered for forty years with no improvement and no progress. Why? Because they are living in the soul! The soul is barren and desolate, there is no life in it. When we are in the soul we are in the wilderness. The whole church world today rides the beast of carnal-minded religiosity in that great and terrible wilderness of the soul!

The word of God must pierce us so that we know how to press on from the wilderness of the soul into the heavens and the most holy place of our spirit, where the fullness of Christ dwells! We must know how to bring our body and soul into the most holy place of the spirit so that the whole man may find blessed rest in the incorruptible life of God and in the blazing glory of His fullness. Only God can teach us this, and He does so as we sit at His feet in adoring submission! Flee, my brother, my sister, from the desolate wilderness of your soul as you would flee from a bear in the forest and you shall find blessed refuge in the promised land of the spirit, for there is a realm there, right within you, closer to you than the air you breathe, nearer to you than the heart that beats faithfully within your breast, more continuously available to you even than the blood coursing through your veins, a sacred place within your spirit where the things of earth do not rule or affect in any way, for Christ dwells there as LIFE, LIGHT, AND POWER!

There is a people rising from the barren dust of the wilderness of the soul to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places of the spirit. God dwells *in your spirit*, dear one, and God in your spirit is infinite, omnipotent, and eternal; therefore, in finding all that is available in God's great kingdom one must be prepared to press ever onward and upward into the vast expanses of God *in the spirit*. If God is *infinite*, there is *no limit* to the experience which we might have in union with Him in the spirit. If God is *omnipotent*, there is *nothing that can stand or withstand* the conquest of His mighty power within. And if God is *eternal*, there can be *no end* to the measure of grace and glory into which He would lead us in the spirit. Think of it! When our astronauts began their explorations to the moon, it was not sufficient that they should have entered a rocket and pushed through the atmosphere for an hour or two. True, they were in space the hour they started. But space is vast — and they must go on, and on, and on — even to the surface of the moon. If God permits, man will yet go on to Mars, and eventually from solar system to solar system, and from galaxy to galaxy, through the unbounded heavens!

Now, God has made us partakers of HIS SPIRIT, and that simply means He has called us to explore the inexhaustible sphere of the DEEP THINGS OF GOD and the INFINITE SUMMITS of His glory, power, and holiness. Our spirit has been quickened by His Spirit for this very purpose: "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:12). The natural mind cannot discover these things, the religious mind can never uncover these things, hence the Spirit of God is sent into our spirit to reveal them unto us and to search out and explore "ALL THINGS, yea, the deep things in God" (I Cor. 2:10).

NAMES OF BLASPHEMY

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, *full of names of blasphemy*, having seven heads and ten horns" (Rev. 17:3).

Here we are informed that this beast upon which the woman rides, is full of names of blasphemy. It is not one name but many names, for the beast is filled with them. This word "blasphemy" requires special translation, or decoding. It was a familiar word in the New Testament era. It is not used so much today, but it does have its modern counterpart. Why did the Jews of Jesus' day call Him a blasphemer? That was always their charge against Him! It was because He dared to call God His Father and to call Himself the Son of God. Therefore, they called Him a blasphemer because He was not teaching and operating according to the rules and regulations which *they* had set down — His doctrine was not that of the scribes and Pharisees, but He said that He spoke only what He heard personally from His Father. His entire message and ministry was outside of the "box" constructed by the religious leaders of the Jews. Today if a lawyer is not

operating according to the rules laid down by the Bar Association he is called non-ethical or a *malpractitioner*. Just so, if a physician is not following the rules of treatment laid down by the Medical Association, he is labeled a *malpractitioner*. This gives you our modern counterpart of the ancient term *blasphemy*.

Thus we can see that this beast upon which the woman rides symbolizes malpractice, that is, he appropriates to himself what belongs to God; he dishonors Him, vilifies Him, shamelessly offends all that is true and godly — blasphemes Him. That is what both the world and religion do — they usurp the place of God in men's lives, putting their authority above God's truth, dominating men's lives through malpractice! They are not doing things *God's way!* It is not the Father Himself speaking and acting through them. Rather, it is the elevation of Self to either impress, influence, coerce, or control men. You see this plainly in nearly all the rulers of the world's systems, and if you refuse their domination you will be persecuted, discriminated against, fined, imprisoned, exiled, or excommunicated! Oh, yes!

I don't know whether you have ever looked up the word *blasphemy*, and what it actually means. You can look up the Greek word in Strong's Concordance or the English word in Webster's Dictionary, and you will find that *blasphemy* relates primarily to religious and spiritual ideas and efforts, or words and actions which are against God or sacred things. What could be more blasphemous than religion without the Spirit? One of the worst things men have done is to create false images of God in their thinking, their preaching, and their acting. Most of the church groups today place a name on the front of their building, and usually the name that they put there bespeaks the highlight of what they believe. I do not say that is wrong, however, when the name becomes something so obviously contrary to truth, as "Lutheran Church," "Methodist Church," "Mennonite Church," or "St. Peter's Church," it indeed becomes a *name of blasphemy*. Jesus said, "**I will build my church...**" If the church is *His* church, then when, where, and how did it become Luther's church or Menno Simon's church or St. Peter's church? When you see this beast kicking up the dust as he carries the harlot through the spiritual wastelands of the wilderness of the soul **full of names of blasphemy**, it is not difficult to understand that blasphemies point especially to religious names, concepts, and practices of all kinds. We must face this fact! The blasphemy may be that which *distorts, diminishes, or impugns* the character of God, the truth of God, the word of God, the purposes of God, the ways of God, or the will of God. Or it can be that which *supplants* or *usurps* the true things of God!

Sects, denominations, and cults have all come into being through the love and elevation of something else rather than the Lord Himself. Oh, how we need to learn that Christ is ALL! And then let Him be *all IN ALL!* Some are followers of man, joining themselves to some charismatic leader or eloquent preacher who can sway their emotions and tickle their ears. Some become followers of specific doctrines and name their movements after the doctrines. The doctrines take precedent over Christ, and unless one believes that doctrine just as they do they will have nothing to do with that person no matter how precious a saint he or she may be or how devout their love for the Lord. Different forms of church government and orders have divided the Lord's people into separate little groups who will not associate with one another. This is a heartache to God and hateful to Him! This is the sectarian spirit, and this is the very spirit that begets all the blasphemous names upon the beast of carnality! These systems are called harlots because the love which should only be for the Lord Himself has been transferred to someone or something else. They are not known for their intimate association with the Lamb, but for their allegiance to someone or something other than the Lamb! Even the Bible can be loved, revered, and exalted to a position in our affections above the Lord our Lover! There are churches which call

themselves “Bible Churches.” Where do they get that idea? The church is not the church of the Bible — it is the church of CHRIST! Christ is ALL! When the Bible is elevated to a position above Christ it is transmuted into an *idol*. I heard of one brother who had left a group known as “The Move.” When he was asked why he had left he answered, “Because the Move was being preached and exalted above the Mover!”

George Hawtin brought anointed insight into this great mystery when he penned the following words: “May the spirit of the living God lay His finger of inspiration upon all that is true, enlightening the eyes of our understanding, giving us abundantly of the wisdom of God that we may be able to discern and easily differentiate between that virgin church without spot or wrinkle, which Jesus Christ is preparing for Himself, and that bawdy harlot system, full of names of blasphemy, who with her multiplied sects and denominations now proudly boasts, ‘I set a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow’ (Rev. 18:7). One would certainly think that God’s people would readily see the difference between the virgin and the harlot, but such is not the case. Would God that the eyes of all men could now see the hidden mystery of Christ and the true church! Would God that all men could see that this hidden mystery, this pearl of great price, has nothing in common with that tradition-ridden system which men in all walks of life believe to be *the church*. So thoroughly do they believe this vast system of denominations to be *the church* that they willingly follow it all their lives, giving their time, their talent, and their abundance of wealth to the upbuilding of that which, being increased in goods and having need of nothing, has made herself drunk with the blood of the saints and thrust Christ Himself outside her doors.

“Thus it was that at the beginning of this dispensation of grace the Lord began that special phase of His aionian purpose, the calling out of a people who would be in the image of Jesus Christ, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, the *ecclesia of God*. Never did He call them to become members of one of man’s denominations. He called them to become members of *Himself, of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones*. That called out company, which was to form the *living body of Christ*, is the *true and only church*, the great *mystery* of this age of grace. There was then none other church but this. There is today no other church than this. Man has organized his multiple *imitations* of God’s church, giving each group some special name to add to the ever increasing confusion of saint and sinner alike, but God recognizes *none of them* as His. He wraps the whole mass of confusion into one great bundle and describes this abominable mystery of man’s making as a woman sitting on a scarlet colored beast, full of names, denominational names, sectarian names, which the Spirit declares to be *names of blasphemy*.

“This is the subtle foliage of church tradition which Satan has spread to bury and smother the true ecclesia, but the Lord recognizes none of it as His. He is still admiring that spotless virgin church which has been rising in the heavenly realm throughout the centuries and which He has kept separate and holy unto Himself, as pure today as it was in the beginning. In the very beginning the Lord added to the true church daily such as should be saved, and I have confidence to believe that every day since then during all these long centuries of time He has been adding daily and hourly to that same mysterious church such as should be saved. It cannot be otherwise, for just as there is still in the earth today that gaudy harlot upon her beast there is likewise still upon earth in this hour the pure and glorious virgin clothed with the sun who is in travail to bring forth a manchild.

“So important to the plan of God is this mysterious ecclesia, the *true church*, His body, that He chose *each member* of it *before* the world was founded or ever begun. Before the stars were rolled out in their orbits or the sun and moon took their watch in the heavens, the all-wise Father

brought forth the plan of the ages, rejoicing the hearts of the sons of God till the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. He chose the members of His ecclesia before the foundation of the world and ordained that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love (Eph. 1:3-10). This is the true ecclesia of God. It is farther removed from that many-headed monstrosity of man's building than day is removed from night, east is removed from west, or Christ is removed from Belial. The ecclesia, the true church of God, though still a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, sitteth together with Christ in heavenly places, far above all power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in that which is to come" — end quote.

Even some of God's elect have been deceived into taking upon them *names of blasphemy*. The firstborn Son of God, speaking of the scribes and Pharisees, commanded His disciples, "*But all their works they do to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi (Teacher, Master, Leader). But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Teacher, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased: but he that shall humble himself shall be exalted*" (Mat. 23:5-12).

How my heart is pained when I see men of God taking upon themselves the titles of Babylon! There is, I believe, no title assumed by man that is more a "name of blasphemy" than the commonly used title "Reverend." The word appears only once in the whole of scripture, and this is what it says: "*Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. He sent redemption unto His people: He commanded His covenant for ever: holy and REVEREND IS H-I-S N-A-M-E!*" (Ps. 111:1,9). And the Lord Jesus says, "**Be ye not called Rabbi (teacher, master, leader): for one is your Teacher, even Christ: AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN.**" We are not "reverends" — we are BRETHREN! Every son of God is the brother of every other son of God, and we are all the younger brethren of our illustrious Elder Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Yet even sweet men of God allow themselves to be addressed as "Reverend" or "Father" or "Bishop" or "Teacher" or "Leader" or some other name of blasphemy. I have known precious men of God who for years were my "brother" in Christ, until suddenly one day I discover that my brother is now called "Doctor"! And now I am expected to recognize him as "Dr. So-in-so." Do you know what "Doctor" means? In the Greek it is *didaskalos*. *Didaskalos* means "Master." One of its Greek synonyms is the word *kathegetes* from which the words "Rabbi" and "Master" are translated in the verse quoted above from Matthew 23:8. Both Greek words have the same identical meaning and usage in scripture. Both words mean guide, teacher, instructor, leader, master — *Doctor!* It is the same as Rabbi! It is instructive to note that the words Rabbi, Master, and Doctor disappear from the New Testament after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. None of the apostles or ministries in the church were addressed by these titles!

So do you know what it means when a man says that he is a "D.D.?" You know, the boys used to tease them and say, "Dead Dog," and I even heard someone say, "Devil Doctor." But it means Doctor of Divinity. And Webster's Dictionary defines Doctor of Divinity as "*a teacher of religion!*" Oh, yes! It is a title of Babylon, hatched in Babylon, used in Babylon, perpetuated by Babylon — by THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF MAN! There is no denying it. I must ask, Who made my

brother my brother? God made him my brother by begetting him with the incorruptible seed of the word of God and raising him up into the life of sonship! The question follows: Who made him a "Doctor"? Did the Holy Spirit confer that title upon him? Was it given to him by prophecy with the laying on of hands? Did an angel from heaven appear one bright morning to inform him that God was now making him a Doctor? Is "Doctor" a gift of the Spirit or one of the five-fold ministries? In fact, was it not a man-made *system* or *organization* or *theological institution* that granted him his degree, his *doctorate*, whether it be earned or honorary? Now "*Brother Brown*" is become "*Doctor Brown*"! Does that make him more spiritual? Does it give him a greater anointing or greater *spiritual authority*? Does it have anything at all to do with sonship ministry or the kingdom of God? Or is it not merely that which feeds the ego — one of the names of blasphemy borne by the beast carrying the harlot!

Notice — the beast which carries the woman has *many names* — is full and running over with them, in fact. The woman has *one name*. John does not give us the *many names* upon the beast, but he does give us the *one name* upon the harlot. "And upon her forehead was *a name* written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:5). Though the woman has but one name, she has *many daughters* and it should be evident that each of them has a name! Methinks the names of the daughters are the same names that are upon the beast, the very abominations of which she is the mother! This all seems so mysterious. But these are just varying pictures of the same reality. Any name, other than the name or nature of Christ in the spirit and by the spirit — worldly or religious — ***is blasphemy!***

Come now, ye ministers of the whore, did she not give you the names you bear, the names of Vicar, Monsignor, Priest, Reverend, Clerk, Curate, Parson, Father, Doctor of Divinity, Superintendent, Overseer, President, Bishop, and a score more — did not the whore give you all these names and titles and are they not among the vast number of *names of blasphemy* inscribed upon her beastly nature?

Well did brother Carl Schwing write: "Too long have we clung to the doom and woes of a tired, dying, old age. An age when the remorse for sin has fled from the peoples of the earth. An age when both Catholic and Protestant faiths sleep together in the bed of the great harlot, Babylon. An age when the people of God look unto men for the word...always dreaming that he is God's anointed for the hour...such hope and faith only bring forth the deception of Babylon and the wedge of gold. An age when those who led souls to the Lord, kept them for themselves and for their denominations, making them followers of men, thus robbing God of the souls that were rightfully His. Even to this great hour there are those who seek disciples...those who would attempt to revive the past and awaken that which the Father has put to rest.

"Some see the Reformation as the coming forth of the 'true church'...others see it as the birthing of the daughters of Babylon. While the multitudes search the scripture and argue over their own interpretations, there are a few that seek Him, and find Him, beyond the sacred page. While Christians wait for a 'rapture,' the sons of God sit with their Elder Brother in the heavenly places. Babylon is more than a duly recognized organization, she is more than creeds and doctrines...she is a body of men, both in and out of the system, being the heartbeat and source of her growth. She has deceived the wisest of men, the lowly of heart, and the hungry of soul; now she would deceive the very Elect...if that were possible. Every name of blasphemy upon her ugly forehead is called a 'church'...honored for centuries by countries, worshipped by mankind, and declared by all to be the bride of Christ. The church of Jesus Christ, which is His body, is holy, not having spot

or wrinkle. Though it appears to be few in number, the Father has always had a hidden number upon the earth known only to Him. They never bore a name other than His, and they withdrew from all who bore the names of men, movements, or organizations. At the Father's appointed time the members of His Christ Body shall arise in a triumphant display of manifestation.

"When I was a Catholic we waited for the word from Rome. After I was converted to the Lord Jesus Christ I attended the Assemblies of God, where we waited for the word from Springfield. And finally, as I sat inside the little 'Latter Rain' church, we waited for the word from Canada. I did not find life in any of it...because there was no life in it. Christ is Life! Christ is Holiness! Christ is Truth! Christ is the Word, and it is to Him, and Him alone, that we now look. Christ in us is the glory the whole creation awaits! Long before Genesis 1:1 *He was*...and long after Revelation 22:21 *He is*. Hallelujah! Many of you have wondered who I am and what I am. I am not a teacher or a prophet. I do not bear a great title, nor do I seek the praise of men. I am, so to speak, a 'sower'...I have gone out to sow the seeds of the kingdom. I seek no reward except the Father's good pleasure. I am one of you... I seek a better country whose Builder and Ruler is God. I am like you...I yearn for the spirit to rule over the outward man. I am part of you...for I too bear the suffering of Jesus in my body. And with you I look up...for total redemption draws near. I sat with you in another time and in another place...and we all shouted for joy! We share together our birthright in Christ Jesus and we share the longing for our manifestation: the hour of truth and freedom for all creation. Hallelujah!

"Truly we are Blood relations...born of His Spirit before there was time, place, or things. But most important is what He is in us. He is more beautiful than beauty. He is richer and fuller than life. We are not dreamers, we share a vision. We are seeing beyond the limitations of the past, beyond the consummation of the age...beyond the millennium. It is a vision we shared long ago within our Father's House. The vision of the finished plan — man in the image and likeness of God. The vision of a place in Him where condemnation and punishment are met by mercy, a place where light overpowers all darkness. A place where reconciliation replies to the cry of vengeance. And when '*It is done*' is heard, a beginning rises like ten thousand suns...for all things, good and evil, light and darkness, truth and error, life and death, hell and the grave, have all served in His perfect plan to establish forever His glorious kingdom upon the earth, within the hearts of all mankind, and upon all creation, unto the filling of the universe and all therein. This vision leads to attainment...and attainment is the accomplishment of predestination.

"Now, I must speak freely and plainly. This I can do since I am not bound to any man, or any group. This has burned within my heart and spirit for some time. I feel the time has come to speak of it. I have been watching this develop, and I know by the spirit that this thing must stop and be put to rest in the forgotten memories of things that are past. There are some that are building strongholds...they are, as it were, placing the names of men upon their foreheads. For, they are saying: 'I am of Hawtin'... 'I am of Eby'... 'I am of Mueller'... 'I am of Prinzing'... 'I am of Schwing'...and the list of names continues as long, if not longer, than the many names of Babylon. Consequently, there is an air of confusion...there is envy, strife, and division creeping into the place of sonship and the kingdom.

"Paul was displeased with the Corinthians for this very reason, and I believe the Father to be displeased today. We who write and minister are nothing...GOD THAT GIVETH THE INCREASE IS ALL! If we allow the people to follow us, or cling to us...we are just as guilty. Are we going to allow the spirit of Babylon to continue a birthing process among us? I know that some will disagree, but 'meetings' of all kinds have this 'fellowshipping' effect upon the people. First, just a

'few' gather for fellowship, then a special meeting with Brother ---- visiting the brethren...and more often than not a little 'clique' is formed, their get together then produces and promotes division...the positive proof of man following man.

"Please, allow me to share some things I have been hearing. 'I cannot believe that Brother ---- sat at my table and slept in my room.' 'Oh, I do not read anyone's writings except Brother ----.' 'You must come and meet this good brother, he is so wonderful.' 'God is calling this assembly, please come and hear this dear brother.' 'I feel so good after talking with Brother ----.' 'I don't want to hear anyone preach except Brother ----' 'I just love sending money to Brother ----.' 'The only time we hear truth is when Brother ---- is in town.' I was recently reprimanded for saying that Brother ---- is just a man. WE HAVE DRIVEN THIS WORD 'BROTHER' INTO THE GROUND! It takes very little to be rejected by the '*brethren*'...that is how shallow all this 'good brother' stuff is" — end quote.

What a timely word that is! May he who has ears to hear, *hear!*

Chapter 193

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a *scarlet colored beast...having seven heads and ten horns*" (Rev. 17:3).

In oriental symbolism a horn or horns stands for power and strength with their attendant glory and honor. The ancients thought of the horns of animals as being the focal point of their power, as well as their adornment or glory. They remind us of the rhinoceros, unicorn, bull, etc. Therefore majesty and might were often adorned with various horns, such as the turbans of the Magoi of Persia which were twisted into the shape of great horns, to indicate their power and glory. Furthermore, since animals used their horns in acts of aggression and defense, the horn was also used symbolically to speak of war and defiance. More than once the scriptures speak of the horns, or power, of God's enemies. On the positive side, the scriptures speak of the horn, or power, of God's judgments, and the horn, or power, of His salvation within His people. Not only are horns used symbolically to speak of military strength, of a proud and arrogant spirit blasphemously exalted against God, and of the saving power of the Lord towards His elect, but they are also used as Bible symbols for kings and their kingdoms. Of course this is in keeping with the horn as a symbol for strength and majesty as already noted.

The beast has seven heads and ten horns. Some have questioned the relative position of the seven heads and the ten horns — how many horns were upon each head? Were there one horn upon four heads and two upon each of the remaining heads — or one of several other possible configurations? The question is actually irrelevant. John tells us nothing about their relative position, so the way they are arranged on the beast is not the point and therefore has nothing to do with any spiritual truth. Rather, it is the *fact* of the "heads" and the "horns" together with their "number" or quantity that is significant to us. That is what the Holy Spirit is impressing upon us! The numbers *seven* and *ten* are symbolical numbers. They do not refer to ten kingdoms, or ten kings, or to seven kings literally; but they denote the *authority* and *power* of the carnal nature and the carnal church systems of man. Heads are the symbol of *authority*. When the scripture says that Christ is the "Head" of the church, and that the man is the "head" of the woman, it bespeaks a headship which expresses itself through a sphere of authority. Christ is the AUTHORITY over the church! He is the Leader, the Chief, the Commander, the Captain, the Controller, the Administrator, the Master — the LORD! That makes Him the Head of this body! The seven heads represent the realm of thoughts, plans, and designs. The seven heads of the beast bespeak the usurpation of the mind of Christ and the plans and purposes of God as the carnal mind within the Lord's people and within the carnal church systems of man seeks to dominate their thinking and their spiritual life. The powers of man's spiritual thoughts, desires, and plans are prostituted to the purposes of the great whore!

The Lord gave to Israel a covenant of AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS when He said to them, "*The Lord shall open upon thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath...*" (Deut. 28:12-13). This is also why prophets,

priests, and kings were both anointed and crowned upon their heads — it signified the absoluteness and supremeness of their **authority**!

Horns, on the other hand, are the symbol of *might, strength, and power*. The beast carrying the harlot has seven heads of authority and ten horns of power! Seven and ten are both complete numbers. Seven is a sacred number in this respect, that it generally is used of the perfection of spiritual realities and the completeness of God's purposes and kingdom. It denotes *fullness* in the things of God. In our text, however, it is used with a negative application, signifying the fullness of that authority which *purports* to be, *claims* to be, *pretends* to be the authority of Christ, but is in reality the fullness of the carnal mind usurping the place of Christ's authority in the church!

Now, the number ten denotes the measure of time or space or power as it is allotted and limited to any creature by God's decree. It is a full number, denoting that which is *complete*, yet of *limited duration*. It is completeness or fullness on the human, worldly level, the limit of man's power within himself. Ten stands for the maximum limit to which man can reach — ten fingers, ten toes, ten commandments — fullness in a limited realm! Ten is a number which is frequently employed in scripture, and it often occurs in the book of Revelation. Ten horns is the fullness of power, yet it is a power that is limited — it can only reach so far and continue so long according to God's allotment. The ten horns of power signify that the beast carrying (thus including) the woman has just exactly as much power as God has allowed him — no more and no less. They are not ten separate, literal kingdoms anywhere on earth at any time, but bespeak the usurpation of the might and power of the Holy Spirit by the strength of the flesh in any man or in any movement of the Lord's people! And when God's time comes for Great Babylon to fall within us and within the world, ***fall she will!***

It is not in the gross sins of the flesh that the harlot is known, for she has a name written in her forehead — MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT. She is very mystical, so that indeed, upon the workings of her mind and the intent of her soul there is written "MYSTERY". This whore works in a mystery, that is, in an enigma, a puzzle, a riddle, in ambiguousness — inscrutableness. You find her where you don't expect and in a way that seemeth right, and therein lies the deception!

Now, as we consider this truth, we should especially notice these significant statements made a little further on in chapter seventeen concerning these same ten horns. "*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet: but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful*" (Rev. 17:12-14). Some portions of this passage we will address later, but at this time I would draw your reverent attention to the statement, "*These shall make war with the Lamb.*" Now I query this of you: How do these "kings" make war against Christ, the Lamb of God? Do they make war against Him in the flesh, as the Jews did? Are they literal armies of nations coming against the Lamb of God with tanks and guns and bullets and bombs? They cannot, of course, seeing He is risen and ascended up far above all heavens! Everywhere in the Revelation the Lamb is seen *only* in heaven and upon the heavenly mount Zion! Therefore, I would ask you, how these ten kings make war against the Lamb, unless it be ***in the spirit — against His light, against His truth, against His life, against His spirit, against His nature, and against His will, way, and purpose!***

If these ten symbolical kings cannot war against the Lamb in the flesh, if you confess that He is exalted high above all principalities and powers, then do not such war against Him in His life, and against Him in His light, and against Him in His purpose, and against Him *within His people*? Indeed, the powers of the flesh and the carnal mind warring against the spirit of Christ, and against the spiritual mind, and against the spiritual life, bringing a man into captivity to the flesh, and to the fleshly mind, and to the fleshly life, with its law of sin and death — just there the battle rages! Obviously these kings are not outward kings of literal nations on earth! Obviously they have nothing to do with the outward warfare of military machines! Nearly all expositors of the book of Revelation assert that they *are* earthly rulers — either historical characters, or future rulers still to arise at the end of time. Many have been the efforts to identify them historically, or to speculate who they will be in some future “end-time” scheme of things. The revealing fact is that there are as many opinions about their identities as there are expositors!

The same crowd is all about us today. They look for an outward warfare between the kings and the Lamb, with an outward victory. They want deliverance from the government, from persecution, from socialism, from the antichrist, from terrorism, from the Jews, from the Moslems, from the Catholics, from the banking system, from the abortionists, from liberal politicians, and from all kinds of political conspiracies that are steadily pushing our nation and the world down into the dark abyss and nightmare of godlessness and tyranny. But I do not hesitate to tell you that none of these are the problem! The most powerful kings that rule in the world today are those that rule *inwardly* — and it is only as the kingdom of God takes its rightful place in our lives, that these kings are subdued and deposed. In the soul-realm we have the dominant king of self-will which has usurped control and ridden roughshod over the ways of God. There are religious kings of static creeds, false doctrines, traditions, commandments of men, carnal-minded methods, and sectarianism. There are kings of passion and desire, bringing the dominion of the flesh. There are kings of emotion which usurp unholy sway over people of God. There are kings of ruling thoughts and imaginations which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. There are kings of doubt and fear that destroy faith and rob men of victory. But, praise God! There is a Lamb upon the throne in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord and He is mighty within — King of Kings, Lord of lords — and He arises within us in the power of righteous conquest and dominion. This means victory! The old Roman conquerors, when celebrating a brilliant conquest, rode down the avenues of the Imperial City upon a snow-white steed, and received the plaudits of the people. And so Jesus Christ, in the spirit and by the spirit, astride a snow-white charger of righteousness and power rides in swiftness and strength into our earth, into our inner land. I have heard the hoofs of His horse thundering through the corridors of my soul as He has marched into my land conquering and to conquer, bringing all into submission to Him. The harlot’s beast with his ten horns of fleshly power, might, and strength are no match for the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

How easy it should be for the devout mind to understand that the Revelation was sent and given from Christ **to His church** — His body on earth. How easy it should be for the devout mind to understand that the Lord’s message to His people does not concern itself with such unspiritual things as the kings of Europe, past, present, or future, but with *spiritual realities* and *divine dealings* of God in the lives of His called and separated people! The great truth that I pray may grip your hearts, my brethren, is simply this: these seven heads and these ten horns will exert their carnal wisdom and fleshly powers right in the exercise of your spiritual performances and sacrifices to the Lord! If you can discern, you will see them appear in prayer, in humiliation, in fasting, in service, in giving, in preaching, yea, in all your efforts to fulfill the will of God and perform the work of God. You will see your desire for recognition, the pride of ego, arise right in

your giving and service to the Lord. You will see your own desires and they will exert themselves right in your praying, asking, and seeking. You will see your own wisdom and abilities subtly steal your heart from the Lord, by enticing you to walk after your own reasonings, ingenuity, and strength, rather than by the mind of Christ and the power of the spirit. Ah, therein lies the deception of the whore within us, in those things where we would not expect her she deceives us, and herein is plainly seen her **mystical apparition**. This whore and her beast with his heads and horns meet you, precious friend of mine, in the walking out of your spiritual life, and there she attributes all the goodness that is done to her self, usurping the glory, and you give consent to it, and thereby commit fornication with her.

All the way from the moment of our new birth to glorification and exaltation this inner antagonist — the seven heads and the ten horns — is present. This is why every revival that God has sent through the ages ended in apostasy. The flesh — that inward devil of fleshly wisdom, carnal understanding, sense-knowledge, soulish zeal, and spiritual pride has a subtle way of identifying himself with every move of the Spirit of God, so as to corrupt it from within. Many years ago F. J. Huegel wrote: "Students of the great Welsh revival (1900 — 1903) say that the wonderful stream of divine life little by little lost its saving efficacy, as another stream from a very different source, naturally very filthy, began to mingle with the river of the water of life proceeding from the throne and from the Lamb. '*Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.*' Beware the false fire! Beware the counterfeit glow! When the *soulish* takes the place of the pure working of the Holy Spirit, you have a 'revival' whose fires, though they purport to be from heaven, are more likely to be kindled in hell."

From the mists of the long ago Eden we read, "Now the **serpent** was more **subtle** than any **beast** of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Gen. 3:1). The word "serpent" in our language comes from the Latin *serpo* meaning "to creep," but the Hebrew term has no relation to the form or motion of any external attribute of a serpent. The word used here for serpent is the Hebrew word *nachash* which is a primitive root meaning "to hiss or whisper." It, furthermore, means "to search or scrutinize closely, to find out by experiment, to practice divination, augury, incantation, or enchantment." According to Webster incantation means "the chanting of special words or a formula in magic spells or rites." Incantation may speak in addition to hypnotism. The serpent, then, is a HISSER, a WHISPERER, a DIVINER, an EXPERIMENTOR, an ENCHANTER, a MAGICIAN, and a HYPNOTIST! And all this activity takes place from **within!** Now we understand how it was so easy for mother Eve to be **deceived!** The "inner voice," the "carnal reasonings," the "soulical suggestions" of the natural mind, yea, the religious mind, **sounded** so plausible, so logical, so **spiritual**, so **divine** — it just **had** to be the word of God and the way of the Lord! It **had** to be the **very highest truth!** As she listened to this voice Eve was enchanted, hypnotized, mesmerized — by this **high revelation!**

We do well to consider also the word translated "subtle" in this passage. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field..." The Hebrew word for "naked" in Genesis 2:25 is *arom*. The English word that describes the serpent's nature is "subtle," and the Hebrew word for this is *arum*. Both *arom* (naked) and *arum* (subtle) are derived from *aram* which means "to be bare, to be cunning." Hebrew scholars say that originally these three words were the same word. Now, why should the expression "naked" and the term "cunning" be the same word? What is the connection? We can answer with only one word: SEDUCTIVE. By way of illustration, a *naked* woman may be a *seductive* woman! There is a close connection between the two. The ideas of

naked and *cunning* come together in the words SEDUCTIVE and SEDUCE. Can we not see by this that the serpent was actually more **seductive** than anything in the bestial (fleshly) realm! Ah, when Satan transforms himself into an *angel of light*, he is the *most seductive* thing in the world! Under a different figure, that of the cunning serpent, even in that long ago Eden the lewd, alluring, tempting, enticing, tantalizing, bewitching, seductive harlot of CARNAL REASONING AND MAN-MADE RELIGION came riding upon her beast with the seven heads and the ten horns!

“And the ten horns which thou sawest are *ten kings*, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as *kings one hour with the beast*. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (Rev. 17:12-13).

From these statements of divine revelation we learn the great truth that the ten-fold powers of the flesh have no kingdom in their own right. It is only as they are given expression through the life of the *bestial system* of man that they truly have power. As an example, let us suppose a man who is possessed of a carnal desire to build a little religious kingdom over which he can be the ruler. Now that carnal desire has no kingdom as yet, nor *can it have one of itself*. It is a king without a kingdom! Only when the man goes out and is successful in gathering around him some people whom he can form into a movement, and then dominate them, does his desire for kingship “receive power.” It is only as the “kings” within are given expression through the system that they have power. These have one mind — the ego — and give their power and strength “unto the beast” of the worldly system. Thus they “receive power as kings” — but, notice, how limited is their power! “They...receive power as kings *one hour with the beast*.” The “ten horns” and the “one hour” taken together express *absolute limitation!*

The word “hour” appears various times throughout the book of Revelation. To the church in Philadelphia the Spirit says, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the *hour of temptation*, which shall come upon all the world, to *try* them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). Does the “hour” of temptation mean that the testing will last literally for one hour? Not at all! “The hour of temptation” is a metaphor indicating something of limited duration — it comes and soon it passes, with no indication whether the actual time is short or long, as man conceives time. In relation to a man’s life ten years of hardship might define the “hour of testing,” whereas in the history of a nation a hundred years or even more could bespeak their “hour of trial.”

Later we read, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth...saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the *hour of His judgment* is come...” (Rev. 14:6-7). “The *hour of His judgment* is come.” Does this signify that God’s judgment lasts only for *one hour*? Certainly not! Again, the expression indicates something of limited duration — the “hour” is simply the *time period* during which God’s judgments are manifest and apparent to the consciousness of men. Can we not see by this that the bestial systems of man, and the rule of the flesh in the lives of God’s people, is of limited scope and duration — it shall not last forever, it is not an eternal, indestructible, undefeatable, unchangeable, unending state or condition. Oh, no! O that men might see that the significance of the “one hour” of the rule of the flesh is explained by the verse which follows our text: “These (the ten horns) shall make war against the Lamb, **and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings!**” (vs. 14). That is how and when their “one hour” of fame ends — with the triumph of the Lamb within! Isn’t it wonderful!

THE ATTIRE OF THE HARLOT

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (Rev. 17:4).

This passage gives us the picture of a prostitute in the days when the Revelation was written. She is not clothed in white (as is the bride of the Lamb), but her dress is the same color as that of the animal which she rides, showing both her connection to the "beast nature," and the origin of her pollution. Let us, then, meditate upon her pretentious appearance as a woman. The text makes a distinction between her outward appearance and her essential character, a distinction which comes down to this, that she appears as a woman, but that her essential character is that of a prostitute. She is richly and beautifully arrayed with all that is glittering and luxurious in the world, decked with precious stones and pearls and arrayed in purple and scarlet, while holding in her hand a golden cup. Purple and scarlet were colors of royalty and magnificence in Bible times. The dyes were extremely expensive, and only the wealthy could afford them. Thus the woman's clothes and all her adornments speak of all the external signs of success that the worldly church seeks.

Yet — purple is a mixed color — it is compounded of blue and red. And what a revelation that is! In its spiritual significance it represents the mixture or confusion of the *heavenly* blue with the *earthly* red of Edom. And at this time all the church systems of man unite the earthly and the heavenly, joining flesh with spirit, mingling the anointing with carnal efforts and methods, mixing truth with error. False doctrine is for the most part a corruption of divine truth — error overlaid with a thin layer of truth, like base metal gilded. That very mixture yields a royal purple which is so awe-inspiring, powerful, and captivating to the souls of men! Gold, precious stones, and pearls are emblematic of spiritual truths and of the wondrous revelations of the riches in Christ Jesus. And who can deny that all the believers in all the churches have truly received from the Lord gifts of grace, truth, and salvation! Oh, yes, God Himself has enriched them with multiplied blessings according to their faith. The problem is, however, that even *these* are now employed by this woman, along with her other attire of the harlot, to attract people to her lewdness, thus *prostituting* even those beautiful truths and graces she has received and proclaims!

As we examine the rich and luxurious attire of this woman it is plain to see that this is no cheap street whore — she is beyond question what we would call today a *high-class call girl!* Her services would demand *thousands* of dollars per night! The message is just this: both the flesh nature and fleshly religious systems will *take everything you've got!* She certainly makes the impression of being rich and powerful, enveloped in a halo of worldly glory. The rich, beautiful, royal colors, with their attraction for the eye skillfully woven into her overall seductive appeal, reveal that she certainly knows her business well, how to make herself appear desirable! A woman in her profession often commands the finest jewelry, usually as gifts from her lovers. Her personal physical beauty of face or form is not mentioned. Her power to entice is pictured as lying in outward finery designed to capture the eye, the mind, the emotion, the imagination, the passion, and the heart of men. She is indeed a very rich, powerful, and successful woman!

The harlot religious systems have indeed been phenomenally successful when measured in terms of untold millions of members, inestimable wealth, costly buildings and ornate temples, impressive rituals and ceremonies, pomp, splendor, and worldly honor. It is successful because it is worldly minded; it loves pleasure more than it loves God; it loves feasting more than it loves fasting; it loves entertainment more than it loves repentance and waiting upon the Lord. It compasses land and sea to make one proselyte and frequently the proselytes are two-fold more the children of the

devil than they were in the beginning. Previously they were *sinners*; now they have become *deceivers*. Caught in her web of enchantment, those whom the harlot system “wins to the Lord” by teaching them the word of God according to the precepts of men, these babes are imprisoned within her fortress of forms, traditions, religious works, and organizational structures until they become hideously dwarfed and but grotesque caricatures of what a child of the living God should be like!

The entire church system is full of professional beggars who will fleece your money and steal your time and consume your talent in the name of their program just as a street beggar will beg in the name of his infirmity. From time to time through the years I have received these *lying letters* from men I have never met nor seen nor known, who tell me how the Lord has laid *me* and *my family* upon their hearts, how they are praying for me, personally, every day, and what wonderful things will happen to me if I will just send them an offering for their work. One dear friend shared a letter with me from a well known evangelist in which he informed her that he had seen a vision of her house with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. He was scheduled to be in Africa within a few days for a great healing campaign, but the Lord had told him, he said, to postpone the campaign until he could write to her and get her most urgent prayer requests to take with him to Africa. If she would only *send an offering of \$20.00* along with her prayer requests, he would carry them to Africa where they would be prayed over during the great crusade and she could expect miraculous results...as though God answers prayer more effectively from Africa than in the United States of America! These letters are mailed out by the thousands, monthly and weekly, all making the same claims. At my friend's query I suggested to her that she write to this so-called evangelist and tell him that she had her \$20.00 ready to send just as soon as he would describe to her what her house looks like and what color it is — since he had **seen it in a vision!** More than one widely known evangelist of our day has become a multi-millionaire, and that by peddling the whore's religious con-games to gullible Christians devoid of understanding, and deceived by their religious guile, though their wicked devices should be evident to the simplest mind.

Cursed be such wicked men! Cursed be the whore upon her beast! Cursed be the seven heads and the ten horns! Cursed be her gaudy garments of seductive enticement! The churches today are filled to overflowing with programs hatched out of carnal minds. It is not easy to write these things, my beloved, for I would rather share out of the storehouse of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in Christ Jesus. Yet, were it not necessary to establish these truths in the hearts of all hungry men who sense a call to something deeper in God, and who hear within themselves the call to come up higher to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus where sons of God follow the Lamb to the heights of mount Zion, then the Holy Spirit would not have dwelt for two whole chapters of the Revelation upon this important theme. Ah, wicked Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth! She professes to know God, and in a measure she has known Him, but in works she denies Him, being abominable and to all the true riches reprobate. No wonder Jesus said, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from me ye that work iniquity (lawlessness, that which I have not commanded)” (Mat. 7:22-23). No wonder the Spirit inspired John the beloved to pronounce *destructive judgment* against the great whore and all her filthy daughters!

This woman *isn't* gold (as is the New Jerusalem bride of the Lamb) but she is decked out with gold. All her appearances of godliness are external things. The adornment is only on the surface, and her character is the opposite of the beauty that she presents to the world that is under her

influence. She is decorating herself, and none can doubt that the church systems of today are gaudily bedecked with external works of righteousness, with pomp and ritual and ceremony and program and music and preachings and outreaches of all kinds which appear as godliness but in truth are not born of God at all. In our past religiousness have we not all been there! We decked ourselves with gold and precious stones and pearls and had all the appearance of the wealth and riches of God by the Spirit, but like the Pharisees of old we were impoverished in spirit and full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness. Only the deep dealings of God can strip away the garish adornment of the whore and transform us into the pure gold of HIS DIVINE NATURE. Of the beautiful bride of Christ it is written, "...and the city was *pure gold*, like unto clear glass" (Rev. 21:18). The harlot **wears** gold. The bride **is** gold. The harlot puts on an appearance, a façade. The bride exists as a **state of being** — in the gold of divine nature and the dazzling glory of incorruption. That is the mystery!

In the days of the Old Testament prophets the supreme mission of the prophet Elisha was to destroy that which had destroyed the anointing and work of God in the land of Israel. So Jehu (the king) went into Jezreel and the scripture says that when he arrived Queen Jezebel got her face all painted, her hair tired, and looked out of the window high upon the wall. The painted face wasn't what made her Jezebel — she was Jezebel before she put the paint on and had already done great damage by killing the prophets of God and leading the people of Israel into abominable idolatries. But she had herself all made up this day because she heard that something was going to happen in town. The painting of the face has the meaning of painting the eyes. Painting the eyes has the meaning "to allure, to look more appealing." What Jezebel was actually doing was appearing at the window high upon the wall with the tawdry appearance of a harlot. She counted on Jehu being a **man**, and she thought she could **seduce** her way out of her problems. Jezebel tried all her alluring and deceptive ways to dissuade Jehu from his appointed task! King Jehu, whom Elisha had anointed, was on his way to get her! Jezebel hoped to flatter her way out of King Jehu's advance to take her captive or destroy her! She plotted to get into a high place, up on the wall of the city, into a high and elevated position in the church, as it were, where she could see all that was going on and manipulate and control and create a resistance to the thing the prophet of God had said he was going to accomplish. But Jehu was on a mission for Yahweh and he wasn't having any of it!

Terry Crisp wrote once about the marks of harlotry. "In the natural, the spirit of harlotry was generally evidenced in a woman's countenance, and in her attire. It was easy to spot a prostitute by her appearance; by the way she excessively painted her face, and seductively dressed herself, the message she sought to convey was unmistakable. This is why the Lord admonished Israel to 'clear her face of the marks of harlotry.' He knew that as long as she adorned the countenance of an available woman, seeking to enhance her features in order to attract the attention of others than her husband, she would not be true to Him. No matter what she told Him, or how she tried to convince Him that she was doing it all for Him, the intents of her heart were obvious; the *image she projected told the story!* It was a manifest token that she was **not** committed to a monogamous relationship; and she was **not** ready to settle down and become **one** with Him. The underlying truth was that she sought *independence* from her Husband!"

THE CUP OF ABOMINATIONS

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, *having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication*" (Rev. 17:4).

The blessing of chapter seventeen lies to a great extent in the contrasts which it suggests. One can hardly think of the cup in the harlot's hand without being reminded of "the cup of the Lord." His cup is full of new covenant blessings, the divine and spiritual inheritance of His elect. It speaks of the remission of sins, and the knowledge of God revealed in love through the sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the firstborn Son of God. It is filled with heavenly, spiritual blessings, poured out upon all who are raised up to sit in union with Christ in the heavenly sphere. It ministers cleansing to the heart, peace to the conscience, joy to the soul, righteousness to the life, transformation to the mind, redemption to the body, and glory and power beyond comprehension to all who overcome to share His throne. But the harlot's cup is "full of abominations" — the common scripture word for what is idolatrous; that is, it is "the cup of demons" (I Cor. 10:14-21). And it also contains "the unclean things of her fornication." Being unfaithful and corrupt herself, prostituting the holy things of God, she can only bring men under the influence of unholy intimacy with the religious spirit of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Instead of offering the world the cup of salvation, she offers carnal satisfaction in the name of religion.

A *golden* cup entices to drink; for one expects the most precious drink from such a vessel. This is a figurative expression that means the apostate church systems use every device possible to entice all men to partake of her false doctrines and practice her flesh-oriented programs and promotions. The cup contains corrupt and false teachings, fleshly and perverted practices, pagan rituals, sacraments, and holy days, fittingly represented by harlotry. Many writers reveal the way the transference from pagan Rome to papal Rome was made. Eusebius in his *Life of Constantine* declares, "In order to render Christianity more attractive to the Gentiles, the priests adopted the exterior vestments and ornaments used in the pagan cults." Pope Gregory, instructing Augustine, is credited with saying, "Destroy the idols, never the temples. Sprinkle them with holy water, place in them relics, and let the nations worship in the places they are accustomed to." Cardinal Baronius is said to have made the statement, "The Holy Church was permitted to appropriate the rites and ceremonies used by the pagans in their idolatrous cult since she (the church) expiated them by her consecration."

Many works have been written revealing and documenting the pagan roots of practically every custom associated with both Christmas and Easter. The method of the church was simply to adopt the pagan customs, "Christianize" the pagan holy days, keeping the same old feasts with their rituals and ceremonies, under the new face of now employing them to honor and worship the Lord Jesus. Our text characterizes them as "filthy things," comparable to the disgusting activities of a man lying with a whore. The figurative speech is an allusion to a cup of drugged wine with which lewd women inflame the passions of their lovers. Jeremiah the prophet used the same metaphor in describing the ancient kingdom of Babylon, saying, "The nations have drunken her wine; therefore the nations are **mad**" (Jer. 51:7).

What an awful stink! What a horrible stench! That which is corrupt, rotting, having no life working in it. Her golden cup is full of *abominations* — *putridness*, beautiful on the outside, golden, appearing as something divine, but inwardly abhorrent. Ah, yes, this whore is alluring on the outside, she is indeed drop-dead gorgeous, a head-turning, sensuous knock-out, but inwardly full of disease and loathsomeness, signifying the holy things of God profaned by her. Think of it!

BABYLON — MIXTURE AND CONFUSION

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:5).

Let us not pass from this thought of Babylon's "cup of abominations" without also noting another of the characteristics of the Babylon system. I do not believe there is any way to fully explain, imagine, or understand all the ways this MYSTERY BABYLON works. The word "Babylon" means **confusion**. When we consider the vast array of church denominations with their varied organizational systems, creeds, liturgies, disciplines, and methods there is one title that can be written across the whole — MYSTERY CONFUSION. It is the **mixture** of good and evil, of truth and error, of flesh and spirit that brings such confusion. So interwoven is truth with error, endeavoring to uplift and bless mankind while building a kingdom for self, good works that are a blessing to many, while promoting one's own name, reputation, and power, that it becomes difficult to discern which is right and which is wrong.

Ray Prinzing has wisely written: "Yet, even while we acknowledge all this confusion, be it remembered, Babylon is still in the sovereign hand of God who controls all. Therefore even Babylon, in spite of all of its corruption, has been used by God for a purpose. '*Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken*' (Jer. 51:7). And it is when her purpose is finished, that God has decreed her end. It is a prophetic word guaranteed of fulfillment! Genesis 11 gives the record of how the people found a plain in the land of Shinar, and proceeded to build a city and a tower, but God intervened, confounded their language, and scattered them. '*Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth*' (Gen. 11:9). The Hebrew word for 'confound' used here is 'babal' meaning: to mix, to mingle, and thus literally to mix self in. The more self-centered each man became, with his own expression, the less they could communicate with others, so frustration took over, and they left off building, and went every one his own way. Though self had been in evidence beforehand, now it was turned inward, and thus caused greater confusion."

Another word from my friend Connie Asbill is so very pertinent and vital right here. She writes, "Fortunately for righteousness, there is a division in the camp of Babylon, for regardless of how many organizations she binds her people together with, regardless of how many council tables she gathers around, regardless of her clubs, and parties, and treaties, and pacts, and covenants, each man is out for himself in her ranks and thereby is our hope and her sure destruction. '*A house divided against itself cannot stand.*' SOUL can unite with soul in every conceivable manner — but it is a false peace — a false unity — for true unity is *in the spirit* and where there is not that unity, through the cross, *every man stands alone*, regardless of surface appearances. God, knowing that in unity of spirit, nothing would be 'restrained from them to do,' confused the tongues, confounded the speech (mixing it with SELF) — and thereby brought division in the psychic realm so that although there is a cosmic mind, it is loosely thrown together, lacking the cohesiveness of *love*. Every man has self as his center, and because of that, even when he taps into his own psychic resources, his power will be over-ridden and swallowed up by any man who is moving after the power of '*an united life*', for that UNITED LIFE is God's ELOHIM and is the very person of God Himself."

Can we not see by all this that Babylon is the spirit of harlotry — mixture. Mixing the truth of God with the carnal philosophies of the world; mixing the revelation of Jesus Christ with pagan eastern religions or other strange voices; mixing the move of the Spirit of God with the promotions of man; mixing the work of God with the efforts of the flesh; mixing the light of Christ with the darkness of the carnal mind. It is the soul joined to anything — except the spirit! It is harlotry. It is the place

of corrupt self-proclaimed ministry. They can't wait on God to develop something in them. They must be *saying* something and *doing* something *for* God! They will prostitute the life of God in them with anything which will be to their benefit. They care nothing about purity and will accept any mixture so long as they can profit by it. They receive their "life-force" from more than one source. They seek out many lovers — join themselves to many causes, trying to receive life from each. Bigger crowds, bigger buildings, bigger television ministries, bigger, bigger, bigger — not *better!* Not more *godly!* Not more *mature!* Not after God's own heart! All the works of man are soulish; man's works exist in this world for the sensual, for the sole purpose of gratifying the desires of the carnal souls of all mankind. Religious soulishness is for the same purpose!

As we consider this truth we should especially notice the words of the apostle Paul to the saints at Corinth. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:14-18).

To live for God's approval, to walk before Him as sons and daughters of the most high, is not possible unless we too come out of all wicked, worldly, and religious mixture. Mixture first leads to confusion, then to corruption. Under the Old Covenant the children of Israel were taught and instructed by the object lessons of the external law to distinguish between the clean and the unclean in God's sight. In one of these object lessons they were warned, "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers (two kinds of) seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers (mingled) sorts, as of wool and linen together" (Deut. 22:9-11).

Let us recall that it was the *mixed multitude* who accompanied the Israelites out of Egypt that later caused them to sin in the wilderness by craving for the food of Egypt to satisfy the flesh (Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4-6). Centuries later, Daniel and his companions, taken to Babylon as exiles, resolved not to defile themselves with Nebuchadnezzar's rich food and drink. Though young in age and exposed to many corruptive influences of a worldly and pagan environment, they understood that they could not eat from two tables — man's and God's — without defiling their soul and spirit (Dan. 1:5-8). What is of the flesh will eventually defile the spirit! That explains powerfully why God *hates* mixture! The early church was also assailed by mixture not only from within but also from without. While Gnosticism tried to corrupt the gospel with its admixture of Jewish, Greek, and Oriental mysticism, Judaizers within the church sought to corrupt the gospel of free grace by their insistence on preserving the legalistic rites of the Mosaic Law — such as circumcision, the feast days, the seventh-day sabbath, and abstaining from certain foods.

Alas! how few of the Lord's precious people at this significant hour in the revelation of Jesus Christ can distinguish between soul and spirit, between the life of the flesh and the life of the spirit, between man's righteousness and God's righteousness, between darkness and light, between truth and error, between religious zeal and the unction of the spirit, between the temple of idols and the temple of God, between man-made doctrine and divine revelation, between religion and spirituality, between those who serve God for self and those who live for God's approval!

In contrast to this, in one of his articles Bob Torango wrote of God's called and chosen elect in these descriptive words: "We must, like Abraham, look for a city, dear hearts. A city with foundations, a rich heritage in God, a place where our children and our children's children can learn of the ways of the Lord without fear and confusion. No more mixture, no more flesh, no more wanton money grabbing and fleecing, but righteous priests and honorable kings of the most high God that dispense the riches of His kingdom to all that are hungry and thirsty. A city with walls upon which the watchmen of the Lord cry out, 'The King is in Jerusalem and all is well!' In Babylon all is ruined and inwardly corrupt. In Babylon the priests are there for profit and fame. In Babylon it is business operated by cutthroats and crooks. But I see another city, the mother of all that are born from above, whose children are free. We are that city, and God sits upon the throne of our hearts. Reign O mighty King in Righteousness and Peace!"

There is no Old Testament type or shadow that more graphically illustrates God's demand for purity — that which is *unmixed* — than the Lord's commandment to Aaron the high priest concerning the making of the *holy anointing oil* and the subsequent *anointing of the priesthood*. The Lord's word was very concise and to the point. "*Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy (separated, unmixed) unto you*" (Ex. 30:32). This holy anointing oil was not to be poured upon man's flesh. It was poured on Aaron's HEAD after the miter and holy crown had been placed on him. Although the Aaronic priesthood was in reality a priesthood in the flesh (a natural order), for Aaron was "taken from among men," yet there is a mysterious intimation of another priesthood given in this precept, which was not to be in the flesh, but in the reality of the spirit and after the power of an endless life. Flesh, human flesh, is sinful and corrupt beyond explanation! There can be no congeniality between it and the graces of the Holy Spirit. The flesh must ever war against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, for they are contrary the one to the other and they cannot agree together. As the scripture declares, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwells in you" (Rom. 8:9). In the flesh dwelleth no good thing, the apostle declares. No one therefore can have the Holy Spirit, unless he reaches beyond the outer realm of the flesh to that inmost sphere where he is born of God.

The commandment to Aaron that the holy anointing oil was not to be poured upon man's flesh was given to reveal to us the great truth that God *does not anoint flesh* — *His anointing is upon the inner man of the spirit!* Deep within every man there is a secret sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of being. This inmost reality is that part of man which separates him from every other living creature and makes him uniquely mankind. This deep hidden power is what it is of itself independent of any other part of man's complex nature. It is the man's "I Am," a gift from the I AM who created him. The deep-in human entity of which we speak is called in the scriptures *the spirit of man*. "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the *spirit of man* which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the *Spirit of God*" ((I Cor. 2:11). As God's self-knowledge lies in the eternal Spirit, so man's self-knowledge is by his own spirit, and his knowledge of God is by the direct union of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man. "He that is joined unto the Lord *is one spirit*" (I Cor. 6:17). I cannot over emphasize the importance of this in our forward walk into our destiny as sons of God! This truth denies that man is an earthly, physical being having a spirit and declares, rather, that he is a *spirit having a physical body*.

Most people on earth have forgotten their beginning. Wonderful words were spoken at the very dawn of civilization, recorded in the oldest book of the Bible, which state simply and powerfully the reality of man. "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding" (Job 32:8). It is something great in man, Elihu conceives, that he is *spirit*, and

because he is, is capable of being *inspired*. He is not here speaking of Adam as he was in the primordial glory of Eden, nor yet of regenerated man in this wonderful age of the Holy Spirit; but, speaking thousands of years ago in the present tense, he magnifies man as being able to be inspired, just because he *is spirit*. And it is God, who likewise is spirit, that inspires him!

The word “spirit” means literally, breath, and denotes a quality of life because, in the case of the spirit of man, God is able to breathe Himself into it and through it. The word “inspiration,” as used here, denotes the act of *inbreathing*. Anyone who is inspired is “breathed into,” visited internally by the power of life, and so quickened in mind, raised in intelligence, ennobled in nature, and empowered in ability. In this way Bezaleel was inspired when he “was filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving timber” (Ex. 31:3-5). Anyone is inspired just as far as he is raised internally, in thought, feeling, perception, or action, by a divine movement within! It is *God’s Spirit* quickening — anointing — *our spirit*, and thus bringing a change, a release, a raising so that our spirit may function as it was designed to function.

This is what Jesus described as being “born again,” the spirit that already existed as the offspring of God being brought forth into the world, into a new realm, a new level of identity, a new consciousness, a new expression, a new ability, a new standing, new rights and privileges and inheritance! We all understand that a baby’s life does not *begin* at the moment of birth — it is simply *released* into a new dimension where it can attain to its full potential in that realm. That is what the new birth is! Our spirit did not originate at the moment of our new birth — it had to already exist in our experience or it could not have been *born*! That which is thus “born” of the Spirit is *spirit*! It is this capacity of *being spirit* that qualifies man as an *inspirable creature*. And in the Old Testament type, God’s holy anointing oil — the anointing of His Spirit — is not upon *man’s flesh*, the outer man, but upon *the inward man of spirit*!

Thus, “*the (God’s) Spirit* beareth witness with *our spirit* that we are the children (offspring) of God!” (Rom. 8:16). Oh, the mystery of it! From these statements of holy scripture we are pointed to the deep mystery of our sonship to God. And “*because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son *into your hearts (spirit)*, crying, Abba, Father!” (Gal. 4:6). The message is both clear and startling — we are not given the Holy Spirit to *make* us sons of God. Oh, no! Rather, “*because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son *into your hearts*.” Because YE ARE SONS! It is the pre-existing fact of our sonship to God that prompts the Spirit of the Son to be sent into our hearts! The Spirit of God does not come into us to give us sonship, but to quicken our spirit, anoint our spirit, bringing that release or “birth” by which the inner man is raised up within us to be, express, and manifest all that he is! Only because you already *are* a son, the offspring of God, does God pour His holy anointing oil upon that “hidden man of the heart (spirit)” dwelling deep within the inner sanctum of your being! By that anointing the HOLY PRIESTHOOD WITHIN YOU IS DESIGNATED, APPOINTED, ORDAINED, CONSECRATED, AND EMPOWERED TO EXPRESS GOD IN THE EARTH! That is the mystery.

The only “mixture” acceptable to God is the mingling of His Spirit with our spirit! The holy anointing cannot be connected with man or man’s works. In Babylon men plan, devise, and scheme ways to accomplish a work for God and then ask God to bless and anoint their plans and efforts. But this holy oil of God’s anointing cannot be poured upon man’s flesh! It is a *holy* oil and can only be poured upon that which *is holy*. It is not given to add something to man after the flesh to improve or empower him, but on the ground that that man is entirely set aside and His work is God’s work in the spirit and by the spirit. It is not given to bless or to quicken or to increase or to

glorify or to sanctify or to make holy the actions or works of men after the flesh — out of the natural mind. God will not, cannot, and does not ANOINT FLESH! It is so easy to miss this point! Millions of people are zealous toward God, as was Saul of Tarsus in the Jew's religion before he encountered the Christ, serving God outwardly in their own soulish excitement and fleshly strength in a very zealous manner. Most of the Lord's people fail to understand that zealously serving God after the traditions and commandments of religious systems is *wholly unrelated to the anointing*. Feverish religious activity does not indicate one iota the call of God or the condition of a person's spiritual life. All that is not of the Spirit IS OF THE FLESH!

I can tell you of a truth that the vast majority of the "power" in the modern "revival meeting" or "crusade" is nothing at all but soul power — flesh! Have you not noticed yourself that in many revival meetings and church services a kind of "atmosphere" is first created to make the people feel warm and excited? A chorus is repeated again and again to warm up the audience. "Peppy" music is most often employed to accomplish this. The people are urged to "get into the spirit" of the meeting. Some stirring testimonies are given. Special music is sung. When the atmosphere is thoroughly heated up, the preacher will then stand up and preach. He has various strategies ready to stimulate and maneuver the people. If he does his job skillfully he can anticipate a large "altar call." These are methods and tactics, but they are not the power of the Holy Spirit! Many preachers today think they have power; but they are merely employing psychological *soul power* to influence people.

Spiritual development comes from the spiritual man's partaking of spiritual life and truth and thereby growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The outer man, the flesh man may well enjoy a peppy chorus, a rousing choir piece, or a humorous sermon. The flesh man may well enjoy the church socials, the outings, the programs, and the froth that so often accompany the activities in Babylon. The flesh man may well enjoy sentimentalism and sensationalism, the excitement of great numbers of people, and great appeals that bring tears to the eyes. The flesh man may go so far as to enjoy an interesting message from the Bible, as long as there is no attack on him. BUT NONE OF THOSE THINGS CONTRIBUTE ONE BIT TO THE SPIRITUAL MAN! There may be nothing wrong with any of those things in their place, but God will not pour His holy anointing oil upon them because He righteously *hates mixture!*

How we praise God today for that holy priesthood which HE is preparing in the earth, whom HE is teaching His precepts and His ways; purging, processing, refining, perfecting, strengthening, enabling, and anointing to exhibit the precious effects of His grace and glory. May all who read these lines experience the full working and power of this anointing! Amen!

Chapter 194

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:5).

"And *the woman which thou sawest* IS THAT GREAT CITY (BABYLON) which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:18).

I do not believe there is any way to fully explain, imagine, or understand all the ways this **Mystery Babylon** works. The word "Babylon" means **confusion**. When we consider the vast array of church denominations with their varied names, organizational systems, creeds, liturgies, disciplines, and methods, there is one title that can be written across the whole — MYSTERY CONFUSION. It is the **mixture** of good and evil, of truth and error, of flesh and spirit that brings such confusion. So interwoven is truth with error, endeavoring to uplift and bless mankind while building a kingdom for self; good works that are a blessing to many, while promoting one's own name, reputation, interests, and power, until it becomes difficult to discern which is right and which is wrong.

In our previous studies on this subject we have seen that in John's visions in the book of Revelation two women are clearly presented. One is that impure woman, the great harlot, who is arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls. This whore is gilded with all the wonderful materials of the holy city, New Jerusalem; yet she is filled with abominations. In outward appearance she looks like the glorious city of God coming down from God out of heaven — this is her façade, her pretension. But in inward reality she is full of names of blasphemy, filthiness of fornication, and horrible abominations. She is outwardly bedecked with three things — gold, precious stones, and pearls; but she is inwardly full of three other things — blasphemies, abominations, and impurities.

In the church systems of man today two groups of things are put together by the adversary. On the one hand, there is the gold, the precious stones, and the pearls — these are the things which God is after! But on the other hand, there are the blasphemies, the abominations, and the filthiness — these are the things the flesh delights in! The church systems combine these two groups in a horrible mixture. The subtle and deceiving thing is just this: the church system has gilded itself with the materials of the New Jerusalem! We must be able to see past the gilding to discern the inward reality. We cannot judge by outward appearances, we need a discerning and transparent revelation to penetrate to the very core. Apparently in the church systems there are gold, precious stones, and pearls, whereas in reality there are in a greater measure blasphemies, abominations, and filthiness. These conflicting sets of realities are somehow combined in one person — in one evil woman!

We must all see that not only within the pages of the book of Revelation, but also today in the culture of our world, there is such an evil woman gilded with all the precious materials of God's holy city, yet filled with all the corruption of the flesh and all the filthiness of her whoredoms. If it were not for the gilding, if it were not for a measure of love for the Lord, and a little of His divine truth, and some of His graces and gifts that adorn the church systems, the whole world would

immediately see them for what they are and recognize the abominations. I have no hesitation in saying again — such a one, such an evil woman exists upon this earth today! Not only is this great whore alive and well on planet earth today, but also her evil daughters. She has many daughters, some of international fame and acclaim, others less known. The more powerful and richer they are, the easier they are to discern; the smaller they are the more easily you are fooled. You may be quite clear and resolute never to be involved with one of the historic, formal, and powerful church systems of man. You may also be clear never to join yourself to *any* of the man-made denominations. But watch out! You may easily become involved with one of the beautiful little daughters of one of the whore's daughters! You may flirt with and eventually marry not the eldest daughter of the harlot, but one of the youngest granddaughters! That little girl that you marry may be born pure, for harlots are not *born* — they are *made*! Pure little girls grow up to become harlots. Have you ever seen it fail? God will move sovereignly and in a pure way upon a people, pouring out a mighty visitation and work of grace, power, and glory, and those who receive this move of God either *come out* or are *cast out* of the religious system they were a part of. They come out to follow the Lord in the paths of His leading! And yet — the very moment they come out the harlot influence of their mother from whom they are now estranged commences to exert itself in their new walk with God. The very spirit that was to have been forsaken raises its unholy head right in the midst and soon they start to build another **tower of Babylon**, another **system of mixture** to add to the universal confusion and carnality and filthiness manifest everywhere in the church.

Later on in the book of Revelation, in chapter nineteen, we come to the presentation of the other woman, the pure, spotless bride of the Lamb. She is clothed in fine linen, clean, white, and bright. There is nothing *mixed* or *impure* about this woman! Then in chapter twenty-one this same lovely woman is presented to us under another figure, that of the holy city, New Jerusalem. That city is not gilded with gold nor adorned with precious stones and pearls, as is the harlot; that city is *constituted* of pure gold, precious stones, and pearls! The city proper *is* pure gold, clear as crystal. There is no mixture, there is nothing concealed anywhere within that is impure or an abomination. Apparently and actually, inwardly and outwardly, in any way and in every way, it is gold! The wall of the city is constructed of jasper, and every gate is of one great, precious, beautiful pearl. What a marvelous thing! This is not a cheap gilded piece of jewelry — but an article that has been raised up out of the very life, nature, and glory of God Himself from center to circumference. This is precisely WHAT IT IS — IT IS GOLD, IT IS PRECIOUS STONE, AND IT IS PEARL.

These are the two women who stand for the church in the earth today. Never entertain the notion that in Babylon there is no gold, no precious stones, and no pearls. Not only are there many of the Lord's people there, truly born of His Spirit, but there are also many precious stones there. But consider the message communicated to us through John's visions: if you have heard the message, if you have seen the vision, could you justify great Babylon? Could you say that since there is so much gold and so many precious stones and pearls in Babylon you should remain there? Not at all! The man who justifies remaining in Babylon, or justifies the keeping of the Babylonian garment along with the wedge of gold has never truly "gotten" the message of the book of Revelation! May the Lord open His word and open the understanding of all who read these lines. May the Lord grant clear and transparent discernment that you may say, "Regardless of how much gold is there, regardless of how many precious stones and pearls are there, that is still MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH!"

Many of the Lord's people are childish in their understanding and think that as long as people who love and worship the Lord are in Babylon it is all right. You may say it is all right, but the Lord says, "***COME OUT OF HER my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues***" (Rev. 18:4). Do not be fooled, do not be deceived, do not be cheated out of your true inheritance in the kingdom of God! Few of those who read these lines could be deceived by the gaudy harlot upon her beast, for you have already received the love of the truth and received the call to come out of great Babylon. But you still must watch for those lovely young daughters and granddaughters of the harlot; oh, how beautiful they can be and how pure they can appear! Unless, however, they have been mightily dealt with by God, unless they have been thoroughly purged, refined, and processed by the Lord, the genes they have inherited from their mother and the childhood influences of their mother will in due time lead them down into the dark paths of harlotry. You can count on it!

How God hates mixtures! I would be remiss if I did not point out to my readers the further and self-evident truth that ALL churches, fellowships, prayer groups, Bible study groups, and meetings of every kind are *mixtures!* Yours, too, precious friend of mine, who is offended by that statement. Let me be perfectly understood. We praise God for the churches, fellowships, and meetings where the saints come together to worship, share the word, and encourage, instruct, and edify one another. I would not speak a word against that. But I also have no hesitation whatever in assuring you that your particular church or fellowship will never, ***as a group, as one man numerically,*** enter into the fullness of God! There is not one single church or fellowship on earth today in which every single person warming its pews will in this hour attain unto the full stature of sonship. There is no gathering of saints of which I am aware that shall with every attendant be manifest as the sons of God. Not one! Why? BECAUSE THERE IS SO MUCH MIXTURE!

Every group has its babes, its spiritual adolescents, those who are puffed up with head knowledge but devoid of experience with God, and those who thrill to a new revelation but have never been brought under the harness of the Lord to be broken to His ways. Most groups carry an undercurrent of fleshly manifestations, bickering, disagreements, strife, criticism, carnality, immaturity, spiritual pride, shallowness, weakness, untrustworthiness, faithlessness, false prophecies, erroneous doctrines, and more. Let the preacher write me who doesn't have any of this in his congregation! And I'm not talking about the Methodists, the Baptists, or the Pentecostals — I speak of those who consider themselves the elect of the Lord who are pressing forward unto sonship and the kingdom of God! Oh, how we like to pride ourselves that WE have come out of Babylon, WE are now the true church, WE are God's called and chosen elect, WE are the manifest sons of God, WE are the Royal Priesthood, WE are the corporate man that is going to reign in the kingdom and even now WE are beginning to reign! WE are the most spiritual people in the world! It is possible that some of us are these things, but it is also probable that some of us are *not* — for who can deny that we are still a *mixed multitude!*

The natural mind is ever seeking something visible and tangible. It loves to claim prerogatives, position, privileges, rights, station, accomplishment, and attainment. It loves to be able to count noses and number people. It loves to circumscribe a certain group and say with evident pride, "This is the body of Christ. These are the elect. All who stand on this foundation are the sons of God. All who believe as we believe, worship as we worship, and submit to the divine order in this place will be the sons of God and will reign with Christ in the kingdom." And then we add, "All who do not will not be sons." We forget that only God knows who are *really His!* "The Lord knoweth them that are His." In our eagerness to build a church, a fellowship, or a movement, to visibly produce the "corporate man" who will as "one body" and "one man" inherit the promises,

we forget that before ever Solomon's glorious temple was compacted together and filled with the majestic manifestation of God's glory, there was a long and tedious INDIVIDUAL dealing of God upon each and every member to be placed in that temple!

Long before there was a "coming together" of all the parts and the subsequent eruption of celestial glory, there was a private, singular, and personal work wonderfully wrought upon each and every part. The cedars of Lebanon were chopped down one by one, dragged to the sea, transported by ship to Israel, and there each was skillfully cut and hewn into a number of boards and beams. Each board was sawed, planed, and sanded. The gold was both mined and refined. The stones were quarried and individually cut precisely to specifications. Great tapestries were cut according to pattern and professionally sewn together, each intricately embroidered and exquisitely fashioned with its own special beauty and glory. Each vessel was molded with infinite care and polished to perfection.. Each piece of furniture was masterfully constructed and meticulously finished. Only *after* all this INDIVIDUAL WORK was fully completed were all the various parts of the building *compacted together* — and that WITHOUT THE SOUND OF A HAMMER! No tool of any kind was needed, for the work had already been accomplished upon each part. But in this significant hour, methinks I can ***still hear*** the sound of the hammer, the noise of the saw, the clink of the chisel, and the blast of the furnace refining gold for the altar and vessels of the temple of God! It should be evident to all who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand that the INDIVIDUAL WORK upon the members of God's glorious spiritual temple of sons is still in progress!

Seems to me many brethren have got the cart before the horse. They are trying to bring the body of Christ together as "one corporate man" so that *together* we can "go on unto perfection." But you don't build the temple in order to perfect it — you perfect EACH MEMBER, and *then* put it all together! Ah, yes, there is some "togetherness" in the process. The boards are in one place being dealt with, while the stones are in a different place being wrought upon, and the gold in another place, and so on. There are "groupings" as each part in their respective places are brought to perfection. And there is ministry in the process, too! The masons, the carpenters, the miners, the sculptors, the workers with gold and silver and brass, the seamstresses — each faithfully ministering to their portion and parts. Isn't it wonderful!

It is not, however, the framing together of the building that perfects each member, but the *prior individual working* fulfilled upon each member makes possible the ultimate placement together, raising up the glorious corporate structure. Many men have tried to put this house of sons together prematurely — before the preliminary work of preparation had been accomplished upon each "living stone." All such efforts are doomed to failure and can only produce a grotesque monstrosity — MYSTERY BABYLON! All such efforts can only bring forth a misshapen, ill-proportioned, crooked, unsightly edifice of CONFUSION destined to perpetual desolation. Let all men know that in the fullness of God's time His great MANIFESTED SON COMPANY W-I-L-L come together and stand tall, powerful, glorious, and victorious in the earth — by the sudden, powerful, sovereign move of the Lord!

In closing this thought I would leave with you the poignant and penetrating words of another. "The hour has come for us to realize that only *the Lord* knoweth them that are His. Only *the Lord* can gather the tares out of the wheat. Only *the Lord* can separate the sheep from the goats. Only *the Lord* can call His sheep by name and lead them out. Only *the Lord* can look into the four corners of the earth and call forth His elect. Who, then, am I to circumscribe anything? I must learn to know men not by what they say, what they believe, where they are, or least of all because

they are members of a certain group, but by that strange witness that made Jesus say to Peter, ‘Thou art Peter,’ and by that same spiritual revelation that made Peter say to Jesus, ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ How often we have been shockingly disappointed in men! It was because we knew them only after the flesh and we did not know them after the spirit. We accepted them because they were inside a certain circle and said they belonged to ‘the move’. Yes, indeed, they may have been inside the circle and they may have been in the move, but where were they in God’s eyes? That is the important question!” — George Hawtin.

Also this statement from brother Scott Paris beautifully expresses my own heart. “I have no interest whatsoever in establishing and setting up any person or group of persons to be obeyed, whose dictates and opinions are in any way considered binding, final, or infallible. I have no desire to leave behind me any kind of religious organization — or anything that anyone can join, promote, publicize, or use for personal profit, or even anything anyone can feel he can rely upon for his salvation. If there is anything that I would like most of all to do in my life on earth, it is to remove from man all those crutches and props upon which he has relied. The only real strength there is, is in the realization of our union with the Lord the Spirit. That is a true realization of spiritual power! When we have that realization, one with the Lord becomes a majority. One person having a spiritual understanding of the nature of God becomes a law of harmony, health, and supply to multitudes of people everywhere. That is where strength, health, and supply is — in union with God!”

MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT

A little writing by Al Watson which came into my hands many years ago gives the following history of ancient Babylon:

“The origins of Babylon date back to the eleventh chapter of Genesis and the tower of Babel. ‘Babel’ means confusion, or division. *‘The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people are one and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained (or withheld) from them, which they have imagined to do. Let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth’* (Gen. 11:1-9).

“All the people of the earth had one language and one speech. They gathered together in the land of Shinar. God Himself said, ‘The people are one!’ And they began to build a tower ‘unto heaven’. There was a unity there more profound and complete than any unity mankind since has ever known. Everybody had one language with one pronunciation. All linguistic research tends to bear out this fact that once only one language existed on earth, enabling mankind in the flesh to be almost perfectly united. Man desired to build a tower whose primary purpose was to preserve this unity. What that tower was is debatable. Some infer from the Hebrew text translated ‘whose top...unto heaven’ that it was the culmination of astrological knowledge of the ancients. The

similarity of the signs of the Zodiac the world over adds support to this theory. Whatever the tower was, it surely demonstrates the advanced degree of civilization at that time, for it contained bricks baked in ovens cemented together with asphalt ('slime'). It clearly dealt with some kind of knowledge, for in order to destroy it God destroyed communication; He confused languages so men could no longer communicate. The tower must have been a thing of titanic importance, for God Himself said, 'This they begin to do' (or 'This is only the beginning'): and now nothing will be withheld from them, which they have imagined to do.'

"If man had built the tower, everything he could imagine would have been his! Nothing would be withheld! ***Without God, in the power of the flesh, operating solely by the knowledge of good and evil, mankind would have unlocked all the secrets of nature, conquered the earth and achieved the perfect society! Utopia would have arrived.*** This tower was to be the consummation of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the highest accomplishment of carnal man. If men reached this stage, they would have become almost unredeemable. To sum up then: the city of Babel is a symbol of fleshly unity, man's attempts to be *one* apart from the Spirit of God. SUCH ATTEMPTS AT UNITY GOD DESTROYS! — end quote.

The confusion that followed was Babel; it was the result of God's destruction of Babel. "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. ***THEREFORE is the name of it called Babel; BECAUSE the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth***" (Gen. 11:8-9). Babel is the result of man's rejection of God's government for a government (city) of his own making. Her rejection of, and rebellion against, the Lord was not by open violence or blasphemy against Him, but by acting independently of Him, as though He did not exist. United by a common language and speech, the people left the territory of God's choosing and traveled from the east until they found a plain in the land of Shinar. Here, they settled and made their homes. Their making brick tells us that they planned to make themselves as secure as possible on this earth. They were in a "kingdom-building" spirit!

Three times in Genesis 11:3-4 the expression *let us* is used. "Let us make brick...let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens...let us make a name for ourselves." Not once did anyone say, "*Let us pray and seek God's will!*" They were all in complete accord and agreement with and among themselves. But what they failed to realize is that while man proposes, God disposes! The last word on anything is always with the Lord! The rich fool in the parable of Jesus thought he knew exactly what he would do with his own little kingdom that he was building up. He said within himself, "*I will* do this: *I will* pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there *I will* store all my grain and my goods. And *I will* say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But then it was God's turn to speak, and He replied by saying to him, "*Fool!* This night your soul is required of you" (Lk. 12:16-20). This insidious spirit of "*I will*," which is the spirit of Babylon, is not dead. It continues to influence and corrupt all who do not listen to the voice of the Spirit and who do not earnestly seek the revealed will of the Lord.

Let everyone know of a certainty that the shocking vision John beheld of the swaggering power and incredible filth of the harlot upon her beast is even now a terrifying reality throughout all the nations of the earth. No brazen hussy was ever more shameless, bold, or impudent. John's vision could be especially appreciated in his day because, according to history, it was an old and well-known custom among high-priced Roman prostitutes to let her name be publicly known, *wearing it on her forehead*. John intimated that it would not be difficult to discover this great

spiritual harlot, because her name is *in her forehead*; that is, she is so prominently marked in her nature and characteristics that we cannot fail to see her unless we shut our eyes and refuse to look. Anyone who is quickened and blessed with spiritual discernment will immediately recognize upon her countenance the marks of her harlotry! Only the spiritually blind meet her and recognize not what she is.

As we have already shown there are two cities and two women presented in the book of Revelation. One of the cities is the holy city, New Jerusalem. The other is called Mystery Babylon. They are symbols and symbols are *not* what they are called, therefore neither of the two cities is a literal city somewhere on earth. If they are not cities, what are they? They are symbols of something else. If they were real cities, as many commentators suppose, they would not be among all the beautiful symbols of the book of Revelation, which is entirely a book of symbols. Most of the preachers today have the first city confused with other things. The vast majority think that New Jerusalem is a description of heaven; therefore they talk about the city as heaven, having golden streets and mansions over the hill-top. But New Jerusalem *cannot be heaven* because John sees it coming down from God *out of heaven!* Church theology today has the Holy City, Heaven, and the Kingdom of God all mixed up and confused. Confused — oh, yes, that is the mark of Babylon! It is obvious they do not know what the New Jerusalem is, nor what Heaven is, nor what the Kingdom of God is!

Concerning the other city, Mystery Babylon, one brother wrote: "Most church people and most of the prophecy teachers think this is a natural city, or it will be a natural city because natural Babylon lies in ruins. One 'wise and prudent' prophecy preacher said the city of ancient Babylon would be rebuilt so God could tear it down again like it tells in Revelation chapter eighteen. That preaching is about as far from the spiritual truth as one can get, but it sounds exciting and it sells books. These 'book salesmen' point us to Revelation 18:17-19 and unravel their natural minds with how the people on board ships at sea will see the smoke of Babylon burning. Teaching like that is inexcusable. I wonder how many of these prophecy preachers have consulted a map to see how far the site of ancient Babylon is located from a body of water large enough to accommodate ocean going vessels and close enough to Babylon for the ones on board to see the smoke. Anyone who will look at a map will see the distance is far too great to see the smoke. Wake up! These so-called 'authorities' on prophecy are very wrong! In no way is the Babylon of the Revelation going to be a literal city on the site of ancient Babylon. The wise and prudent have missed it again! Read your Bible and stop being misled. If we do not we and these 'book salesmen' will all fall in the ditch together! I am tired of their fairy tales — aren't you?" — end quote.

The great and eternal truths of the book of Revelation are communicated in the form of signs and symbols. Yes, it has in it literal meaning — ***in the spirit!*** When we say something is not *literal* we do not mean that it is *not real*; we mean simply that it is not *natural* and it is not the same as what the symbol literally pictures. SPIRITUAL THINGS are ***real, they do exist,*** but they are ***not natural, carnal, or earthly.*** If you don't understand the spiritual language, the symbol has no meaning. It is like hearing someone speak in Chinese and trying to understand what they are saying. It is the knowledge of the *inner language of the spirit* that is required to understand these mysteries.

This point is illustrated by the following little story. Jackie Gleason told a story of a man who would ride his little blue bicycle through a customs checkpoint. Every day at the same time he rode up. Every time his bicycle basket held three jars: one filled with sand, one filled with water,

and one filled with nuts and bolts. The customs agents were suspicious that this man was smuggling, so they would often open up the jars — but the sand was just sand, the water was just water, the nuts and bolts were just nuts and bolts. Sometimes they would frisk the man himself, and on a few occasions they even took the bicycle itself apart. No contraband was ever found. Yet since this man came through their checkpoint every single day, and no one ever saw him riding back, they just knew he had to be smuggling something. Several years later one of the customs agents stopped the man on the little blue bicycle and said: "Today is my last day. I'm going to retire. I have no desire to catch you but for the sake of my peace of mind, could you tell me what you've been smuggling all these years? The man replied, "I've been smuggling little blue bicycles." Ah — Revelation is a *spiritual book*, the *Revelation of Jesus Christ!* People miss it because they are focusing on something other than that. Like the customs agent who focused on the three jars of sand, water, and nuts and bolts, they focus on world events, history, outward nations, political rulers, national armies, world wars, government conspiracies, etc. — and MISS THE OBVIOUS! They miss that which is *obviously spiritual!* There was no literal, geographical city of Babylon on earth in John's day, and there is not one now, nor will there be again, despite the curious interpretations and prophetists who foretell Babylon must be rebuilt over in Iraq for the purpose of being destroyed again. Babylon is ever with us, it was already a reality in John's day and it has been present through all the decades, centuries, and millenniums since John's day. The blessed truth is that the two women and the two cities in the Revelation picture two church systems which have existed side by side throughout the church age. Believers have had a choice to make between the two all of this time. The sad truth is that the vast majority of the Lord's people have chosen to dwell in great Babylon! Just as it was when God called His people Israel out of the literal Babylon in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, so is it now — *only a remnant has come out to enter into their own inheritance and build up the kingdom and house of the Lord!*

The word "mystery" in the scriptures does not have the same meaning as in our everyday English. It does not refer to unsolved crimes, nor stories about clever sleuths, nor riddles with elusive meanings. There are several "mysteries" spoken of in the Bible, and in every case there is the revelation of something which previously had been hidden. The English word "mystery" is a transliteration of the Greek word *musterion*. It would be possible, in every instance, to translate the Greek word *musterion* by our English word "secret." "Behold I show you a mystery..." will be best understood this way, "Behold I reveal unto you a secret..." A revealed secret is no longer a mystery in the modern sense. Jesus often spoke of the "mystery" and the "mysteries" of the kingdom of heaven. "And He said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the *mystery* of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables" (Mk. 4:11). "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mat. 13:11). Oh, how many "secrets" there are in relation to the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven that have ever been veiled to the carnal mind and understood only by the revelation of the spirit! And very few of the Lord's people have ever understood the dark "secrets" of Mystery Babylon! Mystery Babylon is the exact opposite of the Mystery Kingdom — and it takes a revelation of the spirit to unravel and comprehend the secrets of either!

Many years ago the Grand Trunk Railway became concerned over the number of accidents at railroad crossings. Automobiles were colliding with the onrushing trains. The railroad company offered a prize of twenty-five hundred dollars to the person who suggested the best slogan for use at railway crossings. The person who won the contest submitted the phrase which we have seen many times — "Stop, Look, and Listen." This is sound advice for every motorist at every railway crossing! In like manner the book of Revelation bears an inspired message for all who read and

consider — “Stop, Look, and Listen!” That is the thrust of this vision which John beholds, and while John was both astonished and perplexed by what he saw, he stood transfixed, pondering — contemplating what the deep spiritual significance of the scene could be. Oh, ye people of earthly wisdom, be not deceived! As you read and consider the vision as did John, STOP! LOOK! LISTEN!

I do not think I'm wise, my friends;
I do not think "I know."
But I am ever searching
That in knowledge I might grow.
It is the glory of our God
To keep a thing concealed;
But 'tis the honor of kings and priests;
To search 'till it's revealed!

— Lora Huston

What dreadful thoughts and feelings are awakened in the soul by the very sound of the words *Mystery Babylon!* They are terrible words. As we have mentioned again and again in this Study, they bring before us at once, that vast mass of professed Christians who call themselves “the church,” but are not. Mystery Babylon is a dark and dreadful anomaly. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is not “Israel, nor the Gentiles, nor the church of God.” The “great city” spoken of is neither geographical Jerusalem nor is it the heavenly Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all. It is a corrupt mysterious mixture, a spiritual malformation, a hideous mutation, the masterpiece of Satan, the corrupter of the truth of God, the distorter of the character of God, the perverter of the ways of God, the enslaver of the souls of men, a trap, a snare, a stumbling block by which men are made two-fold more the children of hell than before. It is the corruption of the very best thing — the body of Christ — and therefore the most vile of corruptions. It is that thing which Satan has made of professing Christianity.

In the symbolism of prophecy a “city” signifies a religious government backed by power and influence. Thus, the “holy city, New Jerusalem,” is the symbol used to represent the established rule and government of God composed of the overcoming bride of Christ and the sons of God. “And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers” (Rev. 2:26-27). So the “holy city, New Jerusalem” is the capital city of God’s kingdom, the ruling company of kings and priests, exalted and reigning, backed by all the power and authority of their omnipotent Father. The true church is also, and in the same connection, represented as a woman, “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” in beauty, power, and glory, and backed by the power and authority of Christ, her Husband. A “city” is thus a religious or spiritual *government* and a “woman” is a *church*. In this case the woman is the true, overcoming church and that church IS the government of the kingdom of God over the whole earth! We can only understand this mystery as we understand the great truth that the bride, the Lamb’s wife, IS “that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (Rev. 21:9). Many people confuse the bride of Christ and the manifest sons of God. But there need be no confusion! The truth is very simple. The city is the bride, and the throne within the city is the manifest sons of God! All compacted together, the Lamb, His “bride,” and His “many brethren” **constitute the government of God!** THAT is the capital city of His great, eternal, and universal kingdom — the New Jerusalem!

Using, as the Spirit bids us, the same method of interpretation as applies to the *woman*, the bride of Christ, who is also *that great city* which proceeds forth from God and the heavenlies, then the

Mystical Babylon can be nothing else but a *church* which is also a religious *government* backed by power and influence. But this “church” is a “harlot” church; fallen, corrupt, with a Head other than Christ, taking to herself many “lovers,” thus an apostate church, which is also a great ecclesiastical kingdom, exalted to power and dominion in the earth, and backed, to a considerable degree by the kings of the earth, the civil powers, which are all more or less intoxicated with her spirit and doctrines. This apostate church lost her virgin purity, for, instead of waiting, as an espoused and chaste virgin, for exaltation with the heavenly Bridegroom, she associated herself with worldly powers, and prostituted her virgin purity of doctrine, character, and anointing, to suit the world’s ideas; and in return she has received, and now to some extent exercises, a present dominion, in large measure by the support of the kings of the earth, from the kings and presidents and prime ministers, all the way down to the congresses, mayors, city counsels, government social institutions, civic organizations, charities, etc., etc. So we see, that since the kingdoms of the civilized world have submitted themselves to be largely dominated by the influence of these great ecclesiastical systems, accepting from them the name “Christian nations” and “Christendom,” they also link themselves in with great Babylon, and become a part of it, so that, as in the ancient type, the name Babylon applied, not only to the city, but also to the whole Babylonian empire, here too the symbolic term “Babylon” applies, not only to the great ecclesiastical organizations, the harlot churches, Papal and Protestant, but also, in a wider sense, to all acknowledged “Christian nations.” That is the mystery!

It is worse by far than Judaism; worse by far than the darkest of pagan religions; because it has higher light and richer privileges, makes the very highest profession, and occupies the very loftiest seat. It is without doubt that awful apostasy for which is reserved the very heaviest judgments of God — the most bitter dregs of the cup of His righteous wrath. You can read it all in chapter eighteen of the Revelation! If the words penned by John on Patmos do not say this, then I have no understanding or comprehension of language — natural or spiritual. I doubt if one Christian in one hundred thousand has anything like an adequate sense of the true character and inevitable doom of that system together with all the teachings, rituals, traditions, holy days, programs, organizations, promotions, and religious exercises which surround them. If they had it would solemnize their minds and hearts, and cause them to sense the urgent need to flee at once, with greater speed than any of the residents of ancient Pompeii, out of Babylon’s clutches, and stand apart in holy separation from Babylon’s ways, that they might escape such awful judgment as is about to be executed, for “strong is the Lord that judgeth her.”

In regard to her name — MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH — let us observe, in the first place, that the *name* in scripture is always expressive of one’s true nature and state of being. And therefore, we learn that the true nature and the real being of this woman is that of a city, and the city is Babylon. The mystery is that the name of that city is Babylon. We would not expect the name of this Babylon, no more than we would expect her to be seated on this scarlet colored beast. She appears as the church. If we were bidden to guess the name of this woman as she appears, we would say her name is Church, Christianity, Christendom, The People of God, The Body of Christ, or New Jerusalem. But such is not the case! The woman appears as the church, but she is the false church. She bears the appearance of Jerusalem, the holy city, the bride of Christ; but in essence she is nothing but Babylon. That is the mystery!

The question follows — how does a “false church” come to be? There is not a hint in the Bible that a single apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, or preacher ever started a “false church” from scratch. The apostles were not concerned about new, pagan churches rising up

claiming to be Christian. Simon Magus seems a prime candidate to start his own church, but he is never heard from again after Acts, chapter eight. Apparently, the apostles did not consider him worthy of further mention. He was obviously a phony and posed no threat to anyone but himself. They were more concerned about real ministers, and even whole churches, going bad. John himself wrote of just such a situation: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not...and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (III John 9,10).

Here was a situation where the true brethren were put out of the church, and only a corrupt minister and his followers were left. Where is the true church in any generation or age? Expelled and scattered! Where is the false church? It is the remaining "establishment." Here is a plain scriptural illustration of how a false church comes to be! It happens when the true church *goes bad!* I mentioned earlier that harlots are not *born* — they are *made!* Women grow up and begin to prostitute themselves, *becoming harlots*. This same great truth is revealed in the Spirit's command, "COME OUT OF HER, my people..." Ah, it is "His people" who are brought "out" of the systems of religion. Those who come out are the bride of Christ; the system left behind is Babylon. Sometimes those who come out are led forth by the sovereign illumination and dealings of the Lord; at other times they are vomited out of the system as Jonah was vomited out of the belly of the whale. Sometimes those who "come out" truly come out *unto the Lord*, and they become the bride of Christ. Others come out only to repeat the same sins as the false system they came out of, thus becoming just another of the "harlot daughters" of the mother. Oh, yes! We see both of these realities in John's visions of Mystery Babylon. There are the daughters who are born of their mother, and there are the Lord's people who are called out unto Him! It is an ever-present, continuous process. God is always calling a people out unto Himself! Some of us have been called out again and again as we have continued to follow the Lamb from experience to experience, and from glory to glory. Great is the mystery!

When the true church goes bad, it nearly always becomes authoritarian. Since it is beginning to adopt doctrines and practices that are contrary to truth and the walk in the Spirit, it must increasingly appeal to "church government" and the "authority" of the leaders in order to maintain control. The Head of the true church is Christ. Christ Himself is in control and is running the church! He does this by His Spirit within each member of the body — not by any man-made headship. Charges of heresy, threat of excommunication, and threat of hell and damnation become weapons to be used against those who dissent. "Church government," which should denote God's government over the church by the power of the Holy Spirit, slowly but surely becomes *man's government* over the individual believer. One thing is sure — the Lord Jesus has said that ***He would build His church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He loved the church and gave Himself for it, and He SHALL present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing!*** And in the closing chapters of the Revelation we see that church, that sun-clad woman, that pure virgin clothed in white linen, clean and pure and bright, that golden, shining, glorious city descending, appearing out of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord — oh, yes, my beloved, I have read the end of the book! Through all the electrifying, hair-raising, soul-stirring, thrilling, compelling, and suspenseful events of the drama as related by John, we come finally to the exciting climax. The end of the story declares of great Babylon, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, ***Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, AND SHALL BE FOUND NO MORE AT ALL***" (Rev. 18:20-21). The end of the story declares of the true

church, the body of Christ, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor unto Him: ***for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready***...and there came unto me one of the seven angels...saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and ***he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God...and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. AND THE GATES OF IT SHALL NOT BE SHUT AT ALL BY DAY: FOR THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE***" (Rev. 19:7; 21:9-11,24,25).

THE CHURCH OF MAKE BELIEVE

I have met so many people, I have met them by the score,
And if I keep on living, I'll meet a million more.

Their souls are tired and weary of what they thought would make them strong,
It's left them broken hearted, though they try to sing along.

They all are true believers and not easy to deceive,
And they've heard the Spirit saying, "*Leave the church of make-believe!*"

This church it speaks of Jesus and they freely use His name
While they crucify each other and put the Lord to open shame.

But the church they think they're part of is one they can't perceive;
It's built on the blood of Jesus, and not a place of make-believe!

This church of make-believe is rooted firmly in the sand;
Its character is of the world, its ideas, all from man.

It boasts of size and numbers and programs for everyone,
Its leaders touch the glory for what they think they've done.

The Spirit of the Living God would free them if He could,
But those who think they serve Him are bound by human good.

This church it runs on formulas of so-called faith and power,
It's got itself believing it will triumph in this hour.

It hopes to rule the nations before the Lord it sees,
But those who know the truth of God don't buy this make-Believe

This church has plans and busy-ness which keeps men on the run,
Days and hours all consumed with getting so much done.

Seminars and conferences and endless meetings do abound,
But years of this can drain your soul and put you in the ground.

The longings of the Saviour's heart toward those for whom He grieves,
Are drowned by all the clamor in the church of make-believe.

This church can be like Martha who lived so ill at ease
Trying like the raging tide to make her Master pleased;
But there are those like Mary who in stillness did receive
The best that Jesus offered men who shunned such make-believe.

This church it loves position and like the Pharisees of old,
It lives by much tradition which leaves men dead and cold.

It has a hierarchy spawned of men and not from God,
A system of religion that to Jesus must seem odd.

He told them you're all brethren and this is what you'll be
And if men teach you otherwise it's simply make-believe!

Now there *is* a church of Jesus and it's like a planted seed,
It's not another system, a doctrine, or a creed.

It's a living organism in which all who do believe
 Live with one another in this shared reality.
There is a church of Jesus throughout earth's history
 That's recognized in every age by pure simplicity.
Its trademark is devotion to the Master who is Lord,
 Who is held in honor, is worshipped and adored.
And if we love and serve Him, you know He will be Pleased
 To keep us free forever from the church of make-believe!

— author unknown

Chapter 195

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:5).

"*And the woman which thou sawest is that great city (Babylon)*, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:18).

In our previous studies on this subject we have seen that in John's visions in the book of Revelation two women and two cities are clearly presented. One of the women is a pure virgin, clothed with the resplendent glory of Christ. The other woman is a harlot, gaudily attired with scarlet and purple, and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls. One of the cities is the holy city, New Jerusalem. The other is called Mystery Babylon the Great. In the symbolism of prophecy a "woman" signifies a *church* and a "city" signifies a religious or spiritual *government*. Thus, the virgin woman represents the true church, the bride of Christ, and the harlot woman represents the false church, the fallen, corrupt, apostate church systems of man. The "holy city, New Jerusalem" is the symbol used to represent the established rule and government of God composed of the holy and perfected bride of Christ and the overcoming sons of God. "Mystery Babylon" can be nothing else but a church which is also a religious government, a great ecclesiastical kingdom, backed by the power and influence of the world — the carnal church systems of man exalted to power and dominion in the earth.

Let us look at that young virgin church which Jesus brought forth in the earth when He came in the power of the Spirit. What a flood of light fell upon the world in the ministry of Jesus and His apostles! The gift of the Holy Ghost, with its attending gifts of power, knowledge, and utterance, followed on the ascension of the risen Saviour. The church, the body of Christ, was birthed, and gathered from Jew, Israelite, and Gentile alike, a vast multitude into its bosom. The shadows of the Law were replaced by the glorious and eternal realities of a living, indwelling Christ. In those first holy years Christ was the only Head of the church and unity and harmony flowed like a river and the body of Christ was one. There was no government but the government of the Spirit! Love and wisdom shone like the sun from the mind of God! When the human body knows no government but the government of its head, all is order and unity, and there is health and power. So also it was with the body of Christ!

And what glorious days those were! One only has to read the book of Acts to see how much God blessed His people in those days. Mighty signs and wonders were performed as God confirmed His word with signs following. The word of God, anointed by the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early Christians that they turned the world upside down! — so powerful was their message and spirit. In spite of persecution it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Paganism fell. That corrupt and inhuman state of things was swept away by the power of the gospel that broke forth upon the empire of the Caesars. The mighty Roman Empire yielded up its idol temples, sheathed its persecuting sword, and sat down as a disciple at the feet of Christ and His apostles.

In the midst of such a precious walk in the Spirit the apostle John, banished to the desolation of Patmos, was caught up in spirit and in the visions of God and foresaw that the church would spread over the world, and that, becoming popular, many would arise within its ranks who would appreciate its *form* without having been transformed by its *spirit*. Grace had wrought a wondrous work, but alas! with many the *inner nature* remained unchanged. The natural man with his carnal mind was still at enmity with God, and the cloak of Christianity could not long conceal his corruption. The beautiful infant virgin church was not very old before the seeds of *rebellion* against the Headship and the living presence and power of Christ began to appear. We read of false teachers, false prophets, false brethren, and false apostles exerting their influence and control over the people. We read of hard-bitten old *Judaizers* who insisted on adding the bondage of their law to the liberating grace of Christ and the unfettered walk in the Spirit, perceiving not that those who freely partake of the grace of God and walk and live in the Spirit and by the Spirit already have the very ***spirit of the law*** written in their minds and engraven in their hearts!

The very moment that the love of God, the truth of God, and the power of His indwelling Spirit begin to wane from our spirits and fly out the windows of our soul, then *external forms, rituals, and outward observances* of all kinds with all their emptiness and foolishness stalk boldly through the door of that temple which we are. Then men begin to cry for SOMETHING OTHER THAN CHRIST, or for something IN ADDITION TO CHRIST, and the dark mystery of Babylon begins its mysterious formation within their hearts and its subtle rule in their midst. It is impossible to either fully understand or adequately explain the many ways that the mystery of Babylon works. Even before the first apostles had passed from this life, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and many people were embracing the confusion that comes with Babylon's mixture of flesh and spirit, truth and error, and light and darkness. They were instituting rules and regulations, laying down laws and commandments, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and ordinances, performing rituals and ceremonies, elevating human government, and becoming disciples of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, and of many others. The Babble had begun and the harlot had mounted her beast and begun her swift ride through the desert of carnality!

Before too many years had passed men began to set themselves up as "lords" over God's people in place of the Holy Spirit. Instead of conquering by the power of the Spirit and by Truth — as in the early days — men began to substitute *their ideas and their methods*. Soon the glory and power, and the presence of God in the morning-time church began to be eclipsed, and the power of carnal-minded men gradually took the place of the awesome presence of God and the leadership of His Spirit. Consequently, man's carnal understanding was put upon the scriptures, and as the spirit of Christ fled from their midst, men established a vast and elaborate system of *substitutes* to take the place of spiritual reality. When one does not possess *reality* then something else will be used to fill the void — to cite only one example —instead of expressing the power and glory of the indwelling Spirit he will burn incense and sprinkle holy water!

The powerful, mighty, glorious presence of the indwelling Christ was supplanted by endless rituals, ceremonial cleansings, outward observances of feast days, holy days, communions, robes, miters, shrines, cathedrals, holy orders, seminaries, catechisms, candles, incense, prayer books, and a hundred more things which have no life of God in them. The ministry could only teach and practice these things because the holy dove of the Spirit had flown away and they had lost the presence of HIM. As the blind led the blind the visions of the people were in error and darkness, and the pure vision and experience of ***Christ living and reigning in His people*** was

lost to them. An apostasy of a dark and dreadful nature arose, and in the progress of centuries assumed enormous proportions, and a character so diabolic, as to exceed in guilt ALL the idolatries of the people of Israel in the Old Testament times. The greater light granted was abused and perverted, until it became a darkness exceeding any previous darkness — and the central period of its duration is, by common consent, called “THE DARK AGES”! The religion of Christ became, gradually, the religion of antichrist. Carnal observances replaced spiritual experience, the ceremonial took the place of indwelling life, human tradition obscured the word of God, human authority asserted itself in opposition to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and idolatry replaced true and spiritual worship!

As the flesh asserted itself the well of spiritual life ran dry, and all sources of free-flowing truth and life and light ceased from what was known as “the church,” and as the drought increased the land of Christendom became parched and made as hard as stone from the calloused dust that was supposed to be pliable, moldable clay formed into vessels of honor and respect and glory unto the King. This arid desert where no green tree of spiritual life grows is just where John in vision first beheld the harlot! *“And he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast...”* Ah, I do not hesitate to tell you that lurid woman in the desert claims to be the church, and there is indeed religion there, but it is a hollow mocking form; worship is there, but it consists in lip service and genuflections, not that worship in spirit and in truth that the Father seeks; the word of God is there, but it is locked in the prison-house of blinding tradition; adoration is there, but it is the adoration of a Christ unknown to those who know Him in the Spirit and by the Spirit — and often it is the adoration of saints and angels, of Pope and Virgin Mary, of picture and crucifixes, of statues, shrines, altars, wafers, buildings, programs, personalities, pageantry, and of a bearded God in the sky. Before all these they bow! How low the blind leaders of the blind bend, before the idol-God they create!

We, as some of you, have been through all of this, and we became sick of it all, and now, praise God, we can sing with the sweet Singer of Israel, “My soul is escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers, the net is broken and I am escaped” (Ps. 124:7). It was so wonderful to be free from it all and simply worship and walk with the Lord as the Spirit led us to do! Once we begin to KNOW GOD BY THE SPIRIT, once we begin to turn loose of all the “props” of religion, and His Spirit commences to stir and reign within our hearts, giving us a taste of the powers of the age to come — why would men turn back to the beggarly elements of the world, to those things wherein is no life or reality?

God’s true church is not contaminated with the defiling pollutions of Mystery Babylon. There is a little flock, there is a body of Christ, its members are scattered abroad and almost invisible to the great religious Babylon. They are seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and they are the called and chosen and faithful who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They are those who have turned to God in the spirit from all the religious idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for the glory that shall yet be revealed when God’s sons come into their own. They are those who have not the *form*, but the *power* of godliness, those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, and overcome all things by faith. Its ministers are not robed in material robes of scarlet and gold; they are robed in the righteousness of Christ. They are not trained in the seminaries and teachings of men, but by the spirit of grace and wisdom and revelation from God on High. They are not busy interpreting the creeds of the church councils of man; their very lives are the interpretation of the Christ enthroned in their hearts. They have no interest in persuading people to believe *what* they believe; their whole ministry is to bring people into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with God and His Christ.

In other words, GOD IS SUFFICIENT for this church He has birthed in the world of men! This church stands in need of nothing outside of God Himself! Because God is sufficient, because the Christ within is ALL, this church is left entirely free from all encumbrances to pursue the work God has given it of developing unto maturity the chosen ones so that the church may *be* the revelation of God's manifold wisdom to all the principalities and powers in the celestial realms, and the hope of all creation for deliverance and restoration to the great and eternal kingdom of God! Let all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to God know that *Christ within IS SUFFICIENT!* All else is — Mystery Babylon!

The truth that is set like a diamond in the pages of God's word is the absolute and total **sufficiency** of the Christ within. To say that Christ Himself is not sufficient for our whole life as sons of the most High, that the indwelling Spirit is not enough, that there is something we must do to add to, supplement, or somehow improve on what **He is within us** is an insult to God and an affront to our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet we see men doing this on every hand! The carnal mind is never able to take God at His word! It continually seeks to initiate some additional actions or services on the natural plane to take the place of pure spiritual reality. Men do not need religion. They need CHRIST. They do not need to know creeds or catechisms. They need to KNOW HIM. They do not need to perform ritual, ceremony, or ordinances. They need to EXPERIENCE CHRIST. Tradition can do nothing for them but cause them to walk in blindness, but Christ is the light of men and the light of the world, and all who follow Him will not walk in darkness but have the light of life. This is why God will judge, throw down, burn, and utterly destroy great Babylon; and this is why God is building up His holy city, the pure bride of Christ and the holy sons of God, New Jerusalem, to shine with His scintillating light of life to lighten all peoples and all nations, filling the whole earth with His glory!

New Jerusalem is the capital city of God's kingdom, and will reign over that kingdom for ever and ever: Babylon is the capital city of the great kingdom of religious Babylon, which kingdom shall pass away. The mount Zion, where the "many brethren" of Jesus reign, is the chief eminence, the highest pinnacle attainable in grace in Jerusalem: Babylon is founded upon seven mountains of shame. The true church is a woman crowned with twelve stars of divine and heavenly government: the false church is also a woman, with her own name and shame written upon her forehead. The head or husband of the true woman, God's church, is the Christ: the head or husband of the false church is her paramours, the kings of the earth. The true woman brings forth children unto God — the manifest sons of God: the false woman brings forth her harlot brood. The city of God, New Jerusalem, is to be the habitation of God for evermore: the city of Babylon shall become heaps, the habitation of bitterns and owls, "...and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 14:23; 34:11-17).

In relation to a man's involvement with, and departure from, Mystery Babylon, I have not read a testimony more sobering and yet enthralling than that of the late George Hawtin. In his little booklet *Mystery Babylon* he relates his heart-gripping experience in these words:

"Forgive me if I boast a little, for this boasting is not the kind that savors of pride, but rather brings great sadness to my heart. There may be many men in the world qualified to speak of these things, but few have been more qualified by experience than I both to see and discern the many ramifications of the Babylonish system. I was born into the system many years ago. I walked its streets and wore its garments before I ever knew Christ as my personal Saviour. The denomination was everything. It mattered little how men lived or whether they had any personal experience with God. The thing that mattered was whether or not you were a church-goer. You

did not hide the Babylonish garment in your tent; you wore it with pride. Neither did you hide the talents of silver or the wedge of gold. The more you contributed to the organization the better Christian you were. Then one day I found Christ and my heart was filled with joy because of a love I had for Him. I wanted to be near Him and point other men to Him. He was to me the center of all things and the most important person in all the universe. It was not long, however, before I saw that I was falling into another sect. They wanted me to speak their language and help to build their tower. Was I going to join them? Was I going to preach for them? Was I going to wear their garment? Was I going to be distinctly theirs? But God was leading me on, delivering me from the prisons of Babylon, opening the rusty gates, and leading me out into the broad ways of His grace divine.

"Perhaps it was a miracle. I do not think it was chance. I learned that men could be baptized with the Holy Spirit. So I sought and found this blessed new experience in God, and joys flowed like a river as the Comforter came in. But here again the arms of another daughter of Babylon began to enfold me. Was I going to join their church? Was I going to preach for them? Was I going to take out papers and credentials? This time I was persuaded, and I did, and for seventeen years thereafter I was a faithful slave of the organization, speaking its language and building its visible tower. But I was never fully satisfied, though I loved the work, I loved the people, and I loved the students of my old Bible School. Many dozens of them went out to minister far and wide and many found their way to distant and foreign lands. I am sure their rewards will be many, indeed.

"All the while there was a longing for a freedom which I did not know, a relationship with God that I did not have. Many times I taught the people that some day God would send a revelation of truth, but the very denomination we had so faithfully built would not be able to receive it. When finally that revelation did come, they were not able to receive it, and those of us who did receive were vomited like Jonah from the belly of the denominational whale, thrown up upon dry land, for we had sickened his stomach. God does not leave you in a dry land for long if you are bound to be one with Him. Should my life be very long on earth, I shall never be able to forget the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power that came to our class room as we waited on God that glorious 13th of February, 1948, when God began to do a new thing that was destined for a time to shake the church systems all over America. How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs of earth went sweeping up the sky steeps while angels stood at heaven's gates and swept their harps of gold. Day after day, month after month the celestial wonder continued. Heaven came down our souls to greet and glory crowned the mercy seat. People came for thousands of miles to drink at the ever flowing fountain of life and it looked for a time like the walls of Babylon were to be broken down and the whole church would come marching to Zion.

"But the Babylonian captivity was not yet over. As I look sadly in retrospect now, I can see with clearness that the great and blessed move of God was not two years old before the sectarian spirit began to show its ugly head and men began to hide the Babylonish garment in their tents together with the *silver* and the *wedge of gold*. Much as we may despise the Babylonish garment, let me use this pun: The moment the gold gets its wedge in, we are on the way back to Babylon. It is true that we vociferously denied that we had become a sect. Oh, no! Not we! We had no name; we were not registered with the government as a sect and never would be. We had done away with many of the institutions that had characterized other sects. Gone were the Bible Schools. Gone were the church buildings. Gone were the hireling pastors. Gone were so many things that would have identified us with either the Mother of harlots or any of her daughters. The

old Babylonish garment was well hidden deep beneath the earth of the tent, but it was there none the less, and the whole move was becoming more and more enfolded by another tentacle of the great octopus. Stricter and more rigid became the teaching and the discipline. There was to be no fellowship with anybody who was not within the confines of our ever narrowing circle. We were the true church. We were the elect. We stood on the foundation and all other men stood on sinking sand. No man must cast out a devil unless he followed us. No teaching was worth the time it took to tell it unless it originated with us. We were the most spiritual people in the world! We were going to reign in the Kingdom and even now we were beginning to reign! We had the gifts of the Spirit, and we were going to 'call the shots' in the tribulation.

"We did not know that through the years false apostles had crept in among us, men who were apostles in name only, who had never founded anything in their lives but were building on the foundation of others. We did not know that the doctrines and deeds of the Nicolaitanes (*which God hates* — Rev. 2:6) were prevalent among us. The word Nicolaitanes is formed by two Greek words: 'nikao' which means *to conquer* and 'laos' which means *the people* or the laity. This doctrine had reared its ugly head to the extent that the people had no voice in anything. The elders were no longer fathers, but men who were to carry out the will of those who were lords over the heritage of God. Everything was cut and dried and firmly enfolded in the arms of another of the harlot daughters of the Babylonian system. We boasted of the gifts of the Spirit, but what had become of them? Where were the healings? Where were the miracles? Where was the faith, the gift of languages, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge? The only thing that was left was prophecy and it became a weariness to the flesh, flowing continually from the mind of man and scarcely ever having any fulfillment. Prophecy that has no fulfillment comes from one of two sources: from the mind of Satan or from the mind of man, but never from the mind of God. How often I have listened to people fumble for words as they prophesied thus giving the lie to their words having been inspired of God. How is the faithful city become a harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers (Isa. 1:21).

"I shall never cease to thank God that I was vomited out of the belly of this whale also, for we never know the depths to which we have sunk until we are able to view Babel at a distance. Then and then alone our heart gives thanks to God for deliverance from another of the harlot daughters of Babylon. '*My soul is escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler, the net is broken and I am escaped.*' Nevertheless one is scarcely delivered from his bondage until another arm of the Babylonian octopus lies waiting to enfold him again. But the spirit of Babylon goes much deeper than sects and denominations. It is a mystery the spirit of which seems to be deep-rooted in the heart of man. It is like an octopus with many arms reaching in all directions. If it cannot catch you with one of its arms, it will enfold you with another. It is like a demon which, being cast out, will return with seven other demons more powerful and cunning than itself. You do not have to look for the spirit of Babylon in some great and powerful denomination; you will find it in your heart if you look close enough. Mystery, Babylon, is in the forehead!" — end quote.

Oh, yes, Mystery Babylon has found outward expression everywhere throughout the society around us, but we must heed the words that we just read alerting us to an expression of this wanton harlot which is more dangerous by far, and more subtle and seductive than any of her manifestations in the world of appearances. Three and a half centuries ago a brother by the name of Joseph Salmon penned these anointed and penetrating words of deep spiritual insight:

"Know therefore, O man, whosoever you are that judges the whore by these carnal conceptions of her, that you are far deceived by her in her fleshly appearances to you. Thus while sons of men

seek to behold this strumpet in her proper sphere and center, they deceive themselves by looking too fleshly and carnal upon her. Know first then O man! that THIS GREAT WHORE IS IN YOU. While you seek to behold her without you, while you behold her in other men, SHE IS IN THE MEANTIME ACTING IN A MYSTERY IN YOU. While you despised the appearance of her in other men, she has by guile caught you, and has stolen your heart from God...while you think you have nothing to do with her, SHE IS IN YOUR BOSOM; while you think she is far distant from you, this is done in a Mystery and you see it not. Truly, until such time as the Lord takes a soul up into Spirit, though the wisdom of flesh appear openly to him, though she shows her very forehead, yet he cannot discern her in her appearances. But now when God has caught the soul into Spirit, and carried him away in Spirit, then he sees the whore in her apparitions. He beholds Mystery in the forehead, or palpable workings of the whore; Mystery in all her specious pretenses: and notwithstanding all her shows of glory, yet he sees that she is in deed and in truth ‘Babylon the Great’: the great confused whore, which breeds all the confusion of spirit in a Christian; and all the commotion, disturbance and out-cries that are in the heart of man...all the disorder that many a time is in the soul; every hard thought of God; every despairing imagination; all the gnawing of conscience of the creature. So that (I say) he now sees her to be the great Babel, or confused whore, who is the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth” — end quote.

DRUNK ON THE BLOOD OF SAINTS

“And I saw the woman *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration” (Rev. 17:6).

The woman is said to be **drunk** from the blood of the saints and from the blood of the witnesses (martyrs) of Jesus. To be drunk means to be intoxicated, inebriated, besotted, overcome by something induced, giving a false sense of reality. At first impression one might get the idea that the woman is drinking this blood. This, however, is not the case! The “woman” is a figurative description. She is also called a “city.” Thus the terms “drunk” and “blood” are also used metaphorically of the effect upon men who partake of the abominations of Babylon, being brought to a state of *mental, emotional, and spiritual* intoxication. Blood is used in the scriptures to signify LIFE, for “the *life* of the flesh is **in the blood**” (Lev. 17:11). To shed a man’s blood means to pour out his life. This is why the Lord Jesus said so emphatically, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and *drink His blood, ye have no life in you*. Whoso eateth my flesh, and *drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*” (Jn. 6:53-54). Jesus did not die in my place, as the church systems teach; rather, He shed His blood, that is, He **poured out His life** in order to **give it to us!** That is the great mystery of the sacrifice of Jesus! So we are exhorted to “drink” the blood of Christ, which is a physical impossibility, since His blood was spilled at the foot of the cross. We drink His blood by PARTAKING OF HIS LIFE which He has made available to us because of Calvary. Great is the mystery!

Knowing therefore that we are confronting *symbols* in all the scenes of John’s vision, we can see that the “blood of saints” and of “martyrs” are also symbols pointing to a reality. The “blood of martyrs” certainly indicates something beyond drinking the literal blood from physical martyrdom! Anyone can understand that. Can we not see that Babylon, its spirit together with the whole church system of man, is **hungry for power**. She thrives on the domination of human lives. She will absorb you into her system and will suck out of you every ounce of your life — your time, your money, your talent, your ability to think and act on your own, and to know God for yourself. She is drunk on the blood — the souls — the very *lives* of the saints! She exploits the blood of the

saints. She takes God's precious little children and enslaves them, causing them to labor and toil for her — for her grandiose plans, schemes, and programs to save the world.

Later on John revealed that "in her was found the blood of the saints." In today's terminology the statement could be framed thus, "In her was found the **very life-blood** of the saints." What Babylon requires is every ounce of life-force that you have! She will demand your time, she will pilfer your money, she will exploit your talent, she will harness your anointing, she will capitalize on your giftings, she will control your ministry, she will dominate every step of your walk in God. She will use the life-flow of the saints and the witnesses of Jesus to enrich, enhance, and embellish her stature before men.

I mentioned that God has given us His life through Jesus and that life is the life of God and the life of the kingdom of God. As this life is raised up in us in the power and maturity of Christ within, the kingdom of God is established within us by life and as life. There are very special dealings of God within each of us in relation to the development of that life. The Lord Jesus put it this way: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn. 15:1-2). Every branch that **beareth fruit** — He **purges** it! The purpose of purging, or pruning, is to effect a concentration of the life. When all the branches of the vine are permitted to grow unrestricted there is a resulting debilitating or weakening of the life. It is like diluting a chemical — the more water you add, the weaker it becomes.

The nourishment and vitality of the vine are sapped by all the multitudinous branches, shoots, and tendrils, and utilized to keep them alive and bearing abundance of foliage rather than being channeled into producing fruit. Thus, with the excess branches and shoots cut away, the life becomes more concentrated and stronger in those remaining, and the clusters of grapes become more rich and full. In like manner it is necessary that our natural tendencies, actions, and desires, with all carnal religious activities and exercises, must be cut away, so that the virtues and powers of our Lord be concentrated, wrought, and manifested in our lives. It has been my experience that God not only prunes away the sins of the flesh and the emotions and tendencies of the soul, but a great deal of religiousness — religious activities and *those involved in them* — as well. When Jesus speaks of "bearing fruit" He is not talking about "winning souls," rather, He is speaking of the formation within our lives of **the fruit of the spirit** which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. All these are the underlying nature of the sons of God who reign in the kingdom of God!

There was a time many years ago when we made the circuit, speaking for the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship and various organizations and movements within the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms. Our desire was pure — to share the present truth of sonship and the kingdom of God — to inspire and bless and challenge any and all possible to the deeper life of the Christ within. Here and there we found an elect few who had ears to hear, and hearts to understand, but for the most part it became evident that we were merely "spinning our wheels." Then, one day it dawned on me! Our word was not producing **fruit** in those places! Oh, they were delighted to have brother Eby come by and share his testimony, even minister a revelatory word, and perhaps prophesy over some people with the laying on of hands, momentarily satiating the intense craving in a few hearts for a richer diet of spiritual fare. But after I left, nothing changed! There was no fruit. There was no heightened vision, no maturing of life, no going on in God, no raising up of the kingdom of God within. These merely took the word we ministered, diluted it with their own shallow church program, and used it to further their own kingdom on a

lower plane. Ah, they enjoyed drawing life from us so long as it didn't require them to bear **kingdom fruit!**

As long as our ministry could be *used* to increase their branches and put on many beautiful leaves — the manifestation of life without fruit — we were welcome in their midst. But what they were doing was “sapping” the life out of us to enhance and embellish and strengthen their own Babylonish system! Suddenly the voice of the Spirit thundered authoritatively in my ear, “Enough!” And the Celestial Husbandman did a pruning work. He pruned away from my life a RELIGIOUS REALM that will draw life but will not bear fruit of that life. God does, indeed, prune *people* from us! “Every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit He TAKETH AWAY; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” The doom of the unfruitful is: They are TAKEN AWAY. I am not talking about them being eternally lost or going to everlasting hell. Oh, no! But they are pruned away and dealt with by God’s fire until they are changed and transferred into another dimension in God. There are multitudes today who loudly profess to be in Christ who yet do not bear fruit of the Christ life. Though they are branches of Christ, and His life in them produces abundance of foliage, God will cut off their life-supply that they may be seen as dry ones reserved unto a future day of His fiery dealings.

Those called to this high calling, who shall rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom, are being separated from all that binds them to a lower order, that they may enter into the fullness of His life. Many people find it a lot easier to be *one* with the Babylonish religious systems, where the crowds are, where the excitement is, than to become separated to go out **beyond**, leading the way for others to follow. How I rejoice that God is now calling a people — sons of the Kingdom — separated ones — to a realm beyond the clapping, beyond the revivals and conventions and seminars, into the new and seemingly strange paths of HIS LEADING. The prunings are not easy, friends and loved ones and precious brethren do not readily understand, especially the preachers and organizations set upon holding you within their pews and coffers. I do not doubt for one moment that many of these church programs are being used of God on some level, in spite of the worldly methods and fleshly techniques, to touch many lives with salvation, healings, and blessings. We are thankful to our heavenly Father for His blessing on every plane where He chooses to work, but when the call comes to leave behind the outer court of salvation and the holy place of the baptism in the Spirit in order to ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, those called to be of the manchild company, to be kings and priests unto God, *come aside* to submit to His dealings and prepare for the glory soon to be revealed, to make ready for the next great move of God in the earth!

George Hawtin expressed this same significant truth when he wrote, “For over twenty years I have earnestly sought to show God’s people that the modern church system, whether Protestant or Catholic, which daily becomes more closely allied with the world, the flesh and the devil, is MYSTERY BABYLON. She is drunken with the blood of the saints. She saps and sucks their life away. While she grows richer in silver and gold, plush seats and lavish buildings, she robs the saints of their progress with God. She denies and contradicts all true revelation and so shuts out the transforming light of God’s glory. Her preachers preach and prophesy, but tell their people nothing they have not heard a thousand times as they rehash the philosophies of bygone years. They have taken away the *key of knowledge*. They enter not in and those who would enter they hinder. It is the bright shining of the face of Christ that brings the knowledge of the glory of God. I write these things because I know it is not possible for any Christian to proceed to the realm of the more excellent glory while he remains associated with the harlots of Babylon. ‘Give not your strength to women,’ was the exhortation of the wise man of Israel. It should not be difficult in the

least to grasp the spiritual application of that statement, because the women here referred to are the ecclesiastical harlots of our generation, the entire church system, mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

The harlot thrives on power. The more people she gets under her power, the more people she hypnotizes with her enchantments, the stronger she gets. Her sole motive is to survive. Like the mythological blob that eats buildings, cars, and everything else, she must continue to devour the blood of the saints to survive. She must continue to exert her authority over people, over precious saints, exploiting their gifts so that people can flow in, yield up their time, talents, money, yea, their very *lives*. Thus she gets people all involved, wrapped up, and enslaved in her program.

Some years ago Tony Salmon shared a word on how a technique called "Love Bombing" is used by various cults to draw new followers into their circle. He pointed out how, when you first encounter these groups, they treat you like you're the greatest person on the face of the earth. They shower attention on you and flatter you, express deep concern for your needs, and pour out love upon you, all the love that your aching, hurting soul has longed for and craved so many years. A sense of "belonging" overwhelms you and you feel that you have finally found that for which you have long been seeking. That's called "Love Bombing," but the truth is that it is not practiced just by the "cults," it is found also in the local church! It is used, perhaps in a milder form, but it's still the same technique, by the church systems to captivate the lives and souls of men. From the moment you walk into the church building the "meeters and greeters" start pouring all this love upon you. The next thing you know you are mesmerized by the "friendly church." These folks have been trained to cast the net over you, they put out the bait, and as soon as you swallow the hook they expertly commence to "reel you in." The next thing you know they have stolen your soul — you now *belong* to them, hook, line, and sinker!

In the case of the cults, and some times even churches too, the first time you do something displeasing to them, you are given a harsh reprimand. The boom is lowered on you and suddenly you feel, "Oh my God, I'm going to lose their love — they won't love me any more!" At that moment they put their arms around you and assure you, "We love you anyway, we love you just as you are." You think, "Oh, they still love me!" The moment you receive that embrace, that spirit, they *own your soul*. They are guzzling down the blood of the saints. They own you, they have stolen your soul, you now belong to them. Why is it so easy for people to fall into this hypnotic trance — for that's exactly what it is — men are mesmerized by a technique that has nothing whatever to do with the work of the Holy Spirit! Ah, it is the allure of the woman, the enticement of artificial beauty, the wanton seduction of feigned love, and for a price promises of favors (blessings)! That is what the angel showed John in the wilderness! And even John the beloved, when he saw her, "**wondered with great admiration!**"

JOHN "WONDERED GREATLY"

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints...and when I saw her, *I wondered with great admiration*. And the angel said unto me, *Wherefore didst thou marvel?* I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns" (Rev. 17:6-7).

John "wondered greatly" at the scene of such a beautiful, attractive, and alluring woman riding on her beast in the wilderness. John, the beloved disciple whom Jesus loved, the one who rested his head upon the bosom of our Lord with intense spiritual love, *wondered* at this woman. John had beheld great and terrible scenes for many days in the visions of God in the spirit, yet, when

confronted with this sight of Babylon, he “wondered with great admiration.” The word describing John’s wonderment should not be “admiration” — it was not admiration at all, it was a wonder of perplexed horror. John looked upon a picture that astounded him. He gazed upon something that appeared so beautiful and at the same time so hideously evil, that even he was astonished. With blank understanding he stared at the form of Babylon the Great. Thus, he questioned with bewilderment upon his countenance, his chin dropped, his mouth gaped open, his eyes widened — the scene was incredible! Most people are equally shocked today when they receive the revelation of who the harlot represents! Therefore the messenger said, “Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman...” Wanting John to understand rather than wonder, the messenger began to unfold the mystery. So also does God want *us* to understand! If I did not believe that deeply and powerfully I would not devote so many articles to chapters seventeen and eighteen of the Revelation!

John was unable to comprehend the scene with his natural understanding, nor can any man understand the mystery with his carnal mind or natural reasoning. The spiritual mind must be activated — and this is what happened to John when the messenger informed him, “I will *tell* you the mystery of the woman.” Isn’t it wonderful! When the Holy Spirit gives understanding all that was dark and mysterious becomes crystal clear and divinely recognizable. But the mind of the natural man remains exceedingly dark and void of understanding. Therefore do we read, “The beast that thou sawest was and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that *dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world*, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is” (Rev. 17:8).

“They that dwell on the earth” are the *earth-dwellers*, the carnal Christians who dwell in the lowlands of spiritual experience. As I have pointed out many times before in these messages, nearly all things in the book of Revelation take place in one of three symbolical realms — heaven, earth, and sea. The earth is the symbol of a realm higher than the sea, but lower than heaven, an in-between realm which at its highest peak kisses heaven, and at its lowest level embraces the sea, yet is, of itself, neither heavenly (spiritual) nor of the sea (degenerate humanity). The sea, as we have seen, comprises the masses of restless, surging, sinning, clamoring men and women who live only and completely after the unrestrained lusts of their flesh, while heaven comprises those seated together in the ascended Christ who walk only and completely after the spirit. Those that “dwell upon the earth” are a moral class, religious folk, with many upright citizens of the community and church-going Christian people in their ranks; but these, while not overtly wicked, are not spiritual either, but in most aspects of their thinking and daily living “mind earthly things.” They do not wallow in the lusts of the flesh of the body-realm, neither do they walk in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus in the spirit-realm. Their lives are lived out of the “earthly realm” of the *soul*.

The messenger tells John that it is these “earth dwellers” who shall *wonder* when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, just as John himself *wondered* when he saw the beautiful but evil woman riding her beast! These have poor discernment of spiritual realities and have never experienced the abundant life of Christ in the heavenly places of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Those who are earth-dwellers are perplexed and void of understanding when they see the beast-nature ascend up out of the abyss. They are filled with consternation when the evil lurking right within their hearts rises up and defeats them again and again. Their hearts are smitten with confusion and disappointment when they see envy, strife, debate, betrayal, divisions, separations, and a thousand other eruptions of carnality among those who name the name of Christ.

It is because their names — that is, their **nature** — has not been written in the book of life — their nature does not correspond to the nature of the life of the Lamb — there is no heavenly or spiritual record of the Lamb's life being raised up within them as their very own life or of them walking out and living out the divine and heavenly life on earth. It is just because the heavenly life is not their daily reality that the beastly nature within their breasts rises up again and again to disturb, torment, vex, overthrow, and defeat them. Just when they think they have won the victory and the beast within them *is no more*, they discover that the beast that was, and now *is not*, in fact *still is!* So these who believe the old man died at Calvary, or when they were baptized into the church, or in some other way, are the very ones who wonder, marvel, are astonished and stand aghast when they behold that beast of their own carnal nature appearing right within them and in their midst — again!

Those whose names **are** written in the book of life — who live in the heavenly and divine life of sonship — discern and understand the true nature of all things. These are they that John beheld — *"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of saints"* (Rev. 15:2-3).

Here I would share some blessed insights from the nineteenth century sermons of R. J. Campbell. "Now what do we think about the Lamb's Book of Life today? Well, I will tell you what it is not. It is not a list of those whom God has agreed to admit to heaven because they firmly believe that someone else has done all that was necessary to get them there. It is God's roll of honor. It is the glorious company of those who have suffered with Christ. It includes all whose lives have been willingly and cheerfully offered on the altar of love. The very phrase 'the Lamb's Book of Life' is a declaration of this, and distinguishes it from every other list of names that was ever written. Those whose names are in the Book of Life are *life-givers!* They are the servants of Jesus, working in the spirit of Jesus to minister more abundant life to the world. They are believers, it is true; for no work worth doing has ever yet been done apart from the dynamic of faith. But they are not merely believers in the conventional sense; they are living sacrifices, filling up the measure that is behind of the sufferings of Christ in the service of creation. When we speak of the Lamb's Book of Life we must never forget this! It is not merely the roll of those who have escaped something; it is the designation of those who have achieved something. No mere pious acceptance of the redeeming work of Christ; no comfortable acquiescence in the belief that He has given everything, and you have only to take, will qualify you for a place in the Book of Life. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is still being slain on the altar of human hearts, and wherever that divine sacrifice is offered new power and hope stream into this dark and sorrowful world.

"You must be feeling that this explanation of the Lamb's Book of Life is not so sweet and beautiful as the one to which you have been accustomed, and which you greatly value. You may be feeling that this explanation of the Lamb's Book of Life is not so sweet and beautiful as the one upon which you have been taught to dwell, and which has been such a blessing to you in your spiritual life. You may be saying to yourself, 'I do not like this. I want to owe everything. I do not want to think anything else, nor can I readily believe that my place in that Book of Life has anything to do with my self-sacrifice, or anything else but the love of Jesus.' We have got to see that the sacrifice of Jesus is no use unless it makes us *like Jesus!* It has to be repeated in us! As Paul has it, we have to become willing to be delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that *the Life also*

of Jesus may become manifest in us. There is no salvation that is not this, and the gratitude and reverence that we really owe to Jesus are gratitude and reverence for having made this possible. THE LIFE HAS GOT TO BE MANIFESTED IN US! I put it to you again: Which is worthier of Jesus, to believe that He has got us into heaven — a heaven from which all others are shut out — or to rejoice that He has shown us wherein true life consists? I do not care three straws whether I go to heaven or not — using the word for the moment in its conventional sense. But I do rejoice and thank God for that great Master and Redeemer of mankind who has shown me at an unspeakable cost what it is to *live out* His life among men. I wish I could fully live it, but I am frail and earthly, whereas He was divinely strong, and the light of God shown in all He said and did. And yet, no sooner have I realized this than my heart rises in loving thanks to Him once more for the assurance that human weakness and imperfection can and shall be transformed into divine strength and holiness by the power of the indwelling spirit" — end quote.

According to the words of the heavenly messenger those whose names are not written in the Book of Life, that is, those who are not living and walking out the Christ-life are amazed — they *wonder* — when they see the beast of the carnal nature asserting itself in their lives and in their religion. They encounter this beast which was, and is not, and yet is and it is exceedingly troublesome to them! But those whose names are written in the Book of Life, who are the very *personification* of HIS LIFE do not wonder — for they understand perfectly how the mystery of that nature, the mystery of iniquity, works both in men and in religious systems. And the Life in them GIVES THEM THE VICTORY OVER THE BEAST! These blessed ones stand upon the sea of glass, having the harps of God! They sing the song of Moses and the Lamb! They are the overcomers — the Book of His Life opened for all creation to read!

Chapter 196

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? *I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition:* and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (Rev. 17:7-8).

The vision was no mystery to the messenger showing John these things. The "angel" or "messenger" signifies the *living word of God* unto John! The messenger assured John that he would explain and make known to him the meaning of the woman and the beast that was carrying her. This was one mystery, not two. It is designated as "the mystery" of the woman and the beast — one mystery. The beast and the woman are inseparably related. One cannot be understood apart from the other. One does not even exist apart from the other! The messenger also said he would explain the meaning of the seven heads and ten horns. Special attention is drawn to them because of their importance to the understanding of the sentence of judgment on the great harlot.

The implication of the Greek word used is of a *wild beast* — untamed, unruly, and violent-natured. Now we know that we are *not* speaking of a literal animal — for what does a wild animal have to do with the great mysteries of God? Internally, this wild beast is the bestial nature of the natural man, the carnal mind and the fleshly nature of the unregenerate self. Externally, this wild beast is the world — the institutions, systems, and authorities created in human society by the fleshly wisdom and soulical power of natural-minded men. Thus, this woman, the false church, is carried — underwritten, supported, maintained, and sustained internally by the flesh, and externally by the world! It reminds me of something I once read. In a newspaper survey asking what is wrong with the world, G. K. Chesterton sent back the shortest letter of response the editor had ever received:

Dear Sir:

Regarding your article "What's wrong with the world?" — **I AM.**

Yours truly, G. K. Chesterton

As we consider these things we come to a strange and astonishing statement regarding this beast. The messenger showing these things to John clearly says to him, "*The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.*" How can we understand the beast that *was*, and *is not*; and yet shall *ascend out of the pit, and go into perdition*, that is, into *destruction* — for destruction is the meaning of the word *perdition*.

To those who can receive it the following word penned by John earlier in the Revelation will give help and light as they *contrast* the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ with the nature of the Adamic man and the nature of the world systems of man. "*Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come*" (Rev. 1:4). In the realm of the spirit the past, present, and future co-exist. It is high and lifted up in the throne realm that we are given the ability

to see the past, the present, and the future all at once. Again and again in the book of Revelation, where our Lord is mentioned, He is spoken of as He who is, He who was, and He who is to come — meaning that when we leave the earth realm we transcend time as we know it.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which *is*, and which *was*, and which *is to come*, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8). That is awesome! You see, every time Jesus is mentioned in this book He is never mentioned in the past, or just the present, or in the future. Every time we meet Jesus in the book of Revelation it is the Jesus who *is*, and who *was*, and who *is to come*. The reason is that the book of Revelation gives us a view of the kingdom of God from the divine perspective — as God views it — and the past, the present, and the future encompass the outworking of God's purpose in the earth through His wonderful **plan of the ages**. That is what is so powerful — in the spirit you can see the whole plan of God from beginning to end! The purposes of God in the earth embrace *past history, present awareness, and future consummation*. Everything in the universe, and everything in your life, precious friend of mine, exists in the past, the present, and the future. Jesus was doing something before the foundation of the world, Jesus was doing something at the dawn of creation, Jesus was doing something two thousand years ago, Jesus was doing something five hundred years ago, Jesus was doing something fifty years ago, Jesus was doing something yesterday, Jesus is doing something right now, and He will be working His great work in all of our tomorrows!

Age after age, generation after generation, through the rise and fall of empires, and the shifting sands of history, God remains. He works all His purposes in all things, but HE changes not! Yet — God in Christ became a man! God as man has tenses to His being, the yesterday of the past, the today of the present, the tomorrow of the future. This is not the *eternal* God, but the God who has dispensed His eternity into time. "Jesus Christ the same — *yesterday, today, and for the ages*" (Heb. 13:8, Literal). He is eternal, that is, unchangeable or "the same," but His eternity is manifested in time, "yesterday, today, and for the ages." "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not *day and night*, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*" (Rev. 4:8). Day and night do not exist in eternity nor in the heavenly realm of God's Spirit! Is it not clear that this scene is not set in some far-off heaven somewhere. In the heaven the preachers preach about there *is no day and night!* There is no sun or moon or stars, and there is *no night* there! This scene is set *in time!* HE is praised and extolled both DAY AND NIGHT, this God who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME! HE is worshipped and adored both DAY AND NIGHT, this God of the ages, this Architect of history, this Lord of time, this King of the universe, this Most High who "liveth for the ages, whose dominion is an age-during dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Dan. 4:34-35, Literal & KJV).

Oh, take me not back through the long ages to a Christ that walked the shores of Galilee, to a Christ that *was*! He *is*! He lives! He is here! In my *today*! I can never be alone, never grope in the dark for a hand, never be forsaken, never lack in the hour of need, never fail in His on-going purposes in me, never need a Saviour, a Guide, a Brother, a Head, a Leader, a Captain, a Father. I have Him, He who was everything in the yesterday of the past, and who will be everything in the tomorrow of the future, is mine today; and in each conscious moment of my existence here, and throughout all the ages, He is my life, my all! He is not a far-off, untouchable God, "inhabiting eternity," as the King James Bible erroneously states, but a God made nigh, INHABITING THE

AGES, involved in His creation, working tirelessly and unceasingly and unfailingly until His wonderful plan is brought to a successful conclusion and HE becomes gloriously ALL IN ALL!

What Christians for centuries have called “eternal life” is in the Greek “life *aionios*”— the life of the ages! How I thank God that my present state of being is *not eternal!* There is *more!* The new man within me is changing, growing, increasing, maturing unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Some entertain the notion that once they have received Christ within them they have the whole Christ in all His fullness and that’s all there is. They only need to get to heaven to spend eternity. But in the scriptures there is the *growth* and the *formation* of Christ in us, and the *increase* of God! To those in whom the Christ life is but a *babe* within them, Peter writes, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (I Pet. 2:2). To those pressing on to maturity Paul wrote, “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ” (Eph. 4:15). Some would rather ignore this growing, changing, increasing *life of the ages*, somehow projecting themselves into that life which is eternal, claiming “by faith” the finished product, while by-passing the tedious processing that develops and matures that life. Ah, dear ones, it doesn’t work that way! Christ is being *formed in us* and it will take “the ages,” my friend, to unfold it all. As long as there is need for growth, change, and advancement, there is need for *time*. Until redemption is complete its work will proceed in time, but the finished work of redemption stands at time’s end. Thank God! There is an **end** — then eternity, God all-in-all! “I am the *beginning* and the *ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.”

The Lord which *was* is also the Lord which *is!* The present tense of God’s manifestation in Christ is expressed by the apostle Paul when he said, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ *liveth in me*” (Gal. 2:20). Jesus Himself prophesied of this manifestation of God in His people, saying, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with (in) him*” (Jn. 14:23). “God is in you.” “God dwelleth in you.” When we think of God manifest in the flesh we at once think of the Man walking by the shores of blue Galilee, walking among humanity, in His humanity, demonstrating what humanity was intended to be. But God has raised our vision beyond **He who was** and is causing us to see **He who is!** Two thousand years ago God walked this earth in Jesus of Nazareth — but “**NOW ye are** the body of Christ.” Christ is no longer walking in that body that tread the sands of Galilee! He is walking in another body today, in your body, in my body, in all those blessed sons whom He is bringing to glory! In the realm of **He who is** we find a glory beyond the **was** which enables us to press into and participate in the **is**. While many still look for the coming of the **was** in the clouds, we have now experienced the One who **IS COMING TO BE GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS!**

Beloved, if **He that was** is now **He that is** within you, what, under all God’s heavens, could be added to you *from without?* Let us bow in holy reverence to worship and adore, and to live and walk in the blessed reality of such an high and holy calling! Stop seeking anything at all from or through the myriad *substitutes* pawned by the countless modern day antichrists of the church systems of man. These external religious observances will not suffice for those destined for the throne! **CHRIST HIMSELF IS SUFFICIENT!** In the name of Jesus Christ, divorce yourself completely and forever from all the substitutes, the realm of the **instead of.** You will find absolutely nothing in any of it that will satisfy the deepest cravings of your heart after God. **CHRIST WITHIN IS ALL YOU NEED!** This is the Lord who **was** Jesus of Nazareth, but who now **is** the many sons of God in the earth, the many-membered Christ! God is bringing many sons to glory and we are being conformed to the image of God’s firstborn Son. The eternal God never changes, but this Lord who was, and is, and is to come does change from glory to glory!

What, then, does it mean when it says, "...and the Lord which *is to come*"? The expression "which is to come" is from the Greek *erchomai*, meaning "the coming one." Now, how is the Lord which was, and the Lord which is, also the coming One? What does it mean? It means that in our consciousness, in our experience, He is yet coming to be all that He is! That's what the processing is all about! "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven...when He *shall come* to be **glorified in His saints**, and to be **admired in all them** that believe in that Day" (II Thes. 1:7,10). There is no way that I could say it better!

God will not allow us to refuse to see Christ in each other and then look upon Him in some other form. Look not for the Christ who *was*, and do not cling to the Christ who *is*, yet know of a surety that the Christ in us is HIM all the way! We will have to recognize Him in our brethren. God will not satisfy our carnal nature by allowing us to see Jesus descending from heaven in clouds of glory, alone in that glory. We shall be *glorified together*, the scripture affirms. Why would I look for Jesus in clouds of glory in the sky while I pass by His body on earth and refuse to see *Him glorified in them!* It is this message that is coming to us today! If I want to see Christ I look at you, because that is where He is forming Himself, manifesting Himself, and glorifying Himself! The body of Christ is not something apart from Christ, not something that Christ has formed as a separate entity to *use*. Oh, no! The body of Christ IS CHRIST in the earth! "*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST*" (I Cor. 12:12). Until I see, *recognize, love, and honor* Christ in you, my brother, my sister, I would not see, recognize, love, or honor One I would see riding upon a cloud! When this precious knowledge becomes sweet to our soul, we begin to look at one another and BEHOLD HIM! I now see **Him who is** and I shall look, and look, and look until in His temple which we are I see **Him who is to come!**

Now, against this backdrop of how terms such as *was, is, is not, and is to come* are used in the Revelation, let us return to our text. "And the beast which thou sawest **was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition (destruction)**...and they shall wonder...when they behold the beast that **was, and is not, and yet is**" (Rev. 17:8). Once we clear away all the speculations, imaginations, and absurdities that men add to this scene the meaning becomes very simple and wonderfully clear. *Christ* is the One who *was, and is, and is to come!* The *beast* is the one who *was, is not, yet is, and shall go into destruction!* What an amazing contrast! Christ and the beast are opposites — the one is eternal, the other is passing away no matter how diligently he seeks to survive! Christ is our *spirit*, the beast is our *flesh!* Christ *was, is, and is ever coming — always shall be!* The flesh *was, is not, yet is, and shall finally be destroyed!* What a message that is!

It is very necessary that we be able to see this great truth that the beast bears a title which is in contrast to the title of Christ. Christ *was, and is, and is coming*, whereas the beast *was, is not, is yet to be, and goes to destruction*. The beast, on the other hand, *was, is not, yet is, ascends out of the abyss, and goes into destruction*. In chapter eleven John uses the same expression in connection with the beast, calling him "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit" (Rev. 11:7). "Ascendeth" denotes a continued action, giving the impression that ascending or arising from the abyss is a permanent attribute of the beast's character rather than a single episode in its career. This impression John confirms here by immediately employing the present tense, "...and it *goes into perdition (destruction)*." It is a second permanent attribute of the beast that no matter how many times it arises from the abyss **it is constantly heading for destruction.** It cannot escape destruction! Its end is determined, its doom is sealed! Wherever in our experience this beast of the carnal mind, of the human nature, of the flesh-life has appeared, has risen up within

us, and sought to overcome us, it has also been headed straight to destruction! The message is just this —You will not defeat this beast in your life by one great effort or by one wonderful victory. Oh, no! But every time he arises out of the abyss of your fleshly heart, and you face him in the power of the spirit, he will grow weaker and weaker with each encounter, and the determined counsel of the Lord is that HE IS GOING INTO PERDITION! What a word that is! Isn't it wonderful!

I cannot emphasize too strongly how the Holy Spirit draws this contrast between Christ and the beast — the bestial nature of man *and* the bestial kingdoms of the world. The beast appears and disappears, it is and then it isn't, and then emerges once more. It descends out of view, lurking in the deepest recesses of being, and then returns. Speaking of the external form of this beast, the worldly kingdoms of man, Ray Prinzing once put it this way: "If in some manner it seems to no longer exist, yet, in fact, it is still there under another name and form. The same old immorality under a new name." But no matter how many forms the beast takes, within or without, how many lives it seems to have, how terrible its appearance, how intimidating its power, or how indestructible it appears to be — its end is destruction! "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The world *passeth away* and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God *abideth forever.*" "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth *were passed away;* and there was *no more sea.*" "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are *passed away;* behold, all things are become *new.*" Hallelujah!

You will understand a great mystery when you see that the world is *always passing away.* The great truth is that from the dawn of history until now there have been many "worlds." The apostle Peter speaks of *three of these worlds* when he writes, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming (*parousia*, manifest presence)? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the *heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:* whereby *the world that then was*, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition (destruction) of ungodly men...nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for *new heavens and a new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:3-7,13).

There are important time divisions in the plan of God which scripture refers to as "worlds" or "ages." The word "world" does not generally refer to this physical planet with its mountains, oceans, plains, rivers, vegetation, etc. The word is often translated from the Greek word *kosmos* which means "an order, system, or arrangement of things." The present order, system, or arrangement of things upon this earth involves all the people, institutions, organizations, cultures, laws, traditions, etc. which have been developed to either control or give motivation to the lives and actions of men and nations. This includes all governmental systems, educational institutions, religious organizations, economic orders, the cultures and every other thing that gives form and substance to our present societies. All of these, together with the time period during which mankind functions within their framework, constitute a biblical "world."

In the scripture passage quoted above the apostle Peter tells us of *three* such "worlds." Let us take a closer look at a portion of the passage. "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby THE WORLD THAT THEN WAS, being overflowed with water, *perished.*" Now let us read this from the New English Bible: "In taking this view they lose sight of the fact that there were

heavens and earth long ago, created by God's word out of water and with water: *and by water THAT FIRST WORLD WAS DESTROYED*, the water of the deluge. And *THE PRESENT HEAVENS AND EARTH*, again by God's word, have been kept in store for burning." That first world, then, existed from the time of the creation unto the great flood. Thus, the entire period of time from Adam to the great deluge is called a "world" — ***the world that then was.***

What kind of world was that ancient world? The Bible says of it: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply upon the face of the earth...God saw the *wickedness of man* was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man upon the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will *destroy man* whom I have created *from the face of the earth*. And the *earth also* was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the *earth*, and behold *it was corrupt*, for ALL FLESH HAD CORRUPTED HIS WAY UPON THE EARTH. And God said unto Noah, the *end of all flesh* is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will *destroy them with the earth*" (Gen. 6:1-13).

"...the world that then was, being overflowed with water, *perished*." Does the fact that the world of that day "perished" and was "destroyed" mean that we are not living on the same earth that saw the flood in Noah's day? Does it mean that this planet was *abolished* so that it no longer existed? Does it mean that Noah was "raptured" off to some other planet or to some far-off heaven somewhere while God "created" a "new heaven and a new earth" for him to live upon? Of course not! Then what "world" or "earth" was destroyed by the flood? The scripture shows plainly that it was a ***world of people*** and a ***way of life*** — a *kosmos*, an order, a system and arrangement of things! So we see that the world that was destroyed in Noah's day was not this physical earth of mountains, oceans, plains, rivers, and vegetation, for of that earth the scripture states, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but ***the earth abideth forever***" (Eccle. 1:4). And again, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath ***established it***, He created it ***not in vain***, He FORMED IT TO BE INHABITED" (Isa. 45:18). It is clear that while God did not destroy this planet, He did bring an era of wickedness and depravity to an utter and total end, thus destroying, not only the fleshly mankind, but a WHOLE WAY OF LIFE including all the institutions, organizations, governments, religions, cultures, etc. that were characteristic of that civilization.

Yet — who can deny that the "world" that perished soon *reinvented itself right out of the carnal nature of man?* It was not so long before the wickedness of the antediluvians had become repeated in all its grotesque corruption in Sodom and Gomorrah and throughout the seven nations inhabiting the land of Canaan. God inspected the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and determined that the sin of the inhabitants was very heavy; He judged that the cities must be brought to ruin. Later Jude wrote that those cities underwent the "vengeance" (Greek: judgment) of "fire" which brought total destruction. So these cities experienced a day of judgment — and their "world" passed away! In like manner the Lord condemned the seven nations dwelling in the land of Canaan in the days of Joshua, declaring that their iniquity "was full." In other words, they were as wicked as it was possible to be, and at that time their wickedness was irreversible. Therefore God sent Joshua and the children of Israel to destroy those seven nations with orders to not spare anyone, but to completely obliterate them root and branch. Israel never did totally destroy them, but they slew hundreds of thousands and conquered and subjugated those few that remained. Thus those seven nations experienced their day of judgment — and their "world" passed away!

Likewise, when Judah and Jerusalem became unfaithful and merited the Lord's sore displeasure, He promised to "execute judgment in the midst of her." This destructive and corrective judgment befell them when Nebuchadnezzar came and plundered the land, destroyed the city and tore down the temple, carrying the people away slaves to Babylon — and their "world" passed away!

God conducted a legal case against ancient Babylon, the longtime enemy of God and His people. Because of being unnecessarily cruel to the house of Judah, not intending to release them after the seventy-year captivity and crediting the god Marduk with the victory over Yahweh's people, Babylon was in line for a destructive judgment. That came to Babylon in the year 539 B.C. when the kingdom was violently overthrown by the Medes and Persians — and their "world" passed away! Similarly, Jeremiah prophesied that God would "put Himself in judgment" with Edom, among others, hence that nation which had shown repeated hatred for Yahweh and His people experienced destructive judgment and was forever obliterated from the earth — thus their "world" passed away!

Because of their repeated sins of idolatry and self-righteousness, another and more severe day of judgment upon Jerusalem and the Jews was prophesied. Joel foretold an outpouring of the Spirit of God which would begin "*before that great and terrible day of the Lord.*" Under the anointing of the Spirit Peter, upon the day of Pentecost, explained that they were then experiencing the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Jesus also prophesied of that same judgment: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, *your house is left unto you desolate...there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*" That particular day of destructive judgment came in A.D. 70 when the Roman armies executed judgment upon the Jewish nation, destroying their city and temple, pillaging their land, murdering more than a million of its inhabitants, dispersing the survivors and catapulting them into a "judgment day" that lasted for nineteen long and tortuous centuries — their "world" passed away!

Peter identifies the second world and the second heaven for us. "But the heavens and the earth, **which are now**, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire..." Peter here refers to "the heavens and the earth which are **now**." And what kind of world is this **second world** — the one in which mankind has been living from the day of Peter until now — the one in which we live? Paul, in writing to the Galatians, says, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD" (Gal. 1:4). Paul calls this world "this present **evil** world," and who can deny it? Paul then declares that God's elect are being delivered or saved out of it through Jesus who gave Himself for us. To be delivered from this present evil world does not mean being "raptured" off to some golden shore in the heavens any more than Noah was raptured away to some other planet when he was "saved" from the world that then was. Of Noah's deliverance the record states: "For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited **in the days of Noah**, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were **saved by water**" (I Pet. 3:18-20). Ah, yes, Noah was **saved** by water — the very same water that **destroyed** the world! He was saved FROM A WORLD, but the wonderful truth is that he had been "saved" from that "world" a long time before the waters of the flood arrived! For just as the scripture declares of Jesus, that He was "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," so the scripture testifies of Noah that he was "a just man and perfect in his generations, and *Noah walked with God*" (Gen. 6:9). Noah was saved. He was

saved from the evil world of his day. He was no part of it, though it was all around him. Noah was different. He walked with God while all the rest of mankind wallowed in the filth of the lusts of their flesh. And now, in this day, God has sent forth His Son to raise up His life within us, His called and separated elect, and save us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD!

It is difficult for many of the Lord's people to understand the truth that "THE **WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS**" (I Jn. 5:19). The Amplified Bible correctly translates the latter part of this verse: "The whole world around us is under the power of THE WICKED ONE." This whole world system not only lies in wickedness, but it lies in, it is under the power and control of, THE WICKED ONE — a personality, a spirit, a mind. How few truly comprehend this! Many entertain the notion that there is at least **something of God** in the politics of this world, or in the educational programs of this world, or in the religions of this world, or in the fashions, philosophies, or economics of this present world system. Do not its leaders acknowledge God? Do they not have prayer in the congress? Does it not say "in God we trust" on our currency? Are not our laws and culture rooted in so-called "Judeo-Christian ethics"? Are not our state funerals conducted in the cathedral? Do not our leaders take their oath of office with their hand on the Bible? Was not our nation founded by godly men who sought justice and religious freedom?

Somehow it does not sink in that the whole world system is, in its totality, A PRODUCT OF THE CARNAL MINDS OF MEN. Our culture, our politics, our economy, our military, our educational system, our entertainment, our social programs are one and all under the power and control of carnal-minded men, sold under sin, dominated by the spirit that controls this age, influenced and governed by **the god of this world**. We have tried to believe that our present constitutional and political systems are somehow an expression of the kingdom of God simply because they were given to us by pious men. So we have been busy trying to preserve and perpetuate a flawed system, a passing carnal order which is even now steadily disintegrating before our very eyes, as our omnipotent Father demonstrates for all to see that even our government and institutions are truly **of this world**; and again He shall prove the truth of that word which unerringly proclaims, "**The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever**" (I Jn. 2:17). Many still hope that out of our present political system will come the integrity and wisdom to solve the immense problems facing our increasingly weak and depraved society and the explosive world situation. Surely, think we, God will raise up someone with the answer! If only we could elect enough Conservatives, or enough Liberals, or enough Christians! What a multitude of Christians have swarmed to the polls to vote for some candidate they were led to believe by propaganda and shrewdly managed image-building techniques was a Christian, or Conservative, or possessed of great intelligence and superior wisdom, only to awaken later to the stark and unvarnished reality that in fact he was just another carnal-minded man, just another *politician*, dominated by the god of this world system which spawned him, controlled by the spirit of the age of this present evil world which is "**under the power of THE WICKED ONE**." Let God be true, and every man a liar!

Now we can understand in fuller measure the import of the message delivered by John in his epistle: "**And we know that we are of God, and the whole world is under the power of the evil one**" (I Jn. 5:19). This world is not for us. Its ways are not for us. Its methods are not for us. Its fashions are not for us. Its standards are not for us. Its politics are not for us. Its spirit is not for us. We are different. We are of God! The called and separated elect of the Lord are sons of God, led by the Spirit of God. God is now in the process of SAVING US OUT OF THIS WORLD! Those apprehended to be the manifest sons of God are **overcoming this world** just as the firstborn Son of God testified, "**I have overcome the world**" (Jn. 16:33). Again the apostle John

wrote, “*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*” (I Jn. 5:4). Yes, the elect of God must overcome the flesh. Yes, the chosen of the Lord must overcome their own will. Yes, the sons of God must overcome the wicked one. But from many statements of holy scripture we may confidently affirm that the primary thrust of our overcoming is that we must OVERCOME THE WORLD!

The apostle James likewise warns against walking after the spirit of this world and being entangled therein: “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world IS THE ENEMY OF GOD!*” (James 4:4). The great whore is a fornicator, an adulteress. Haughtily she rides astraddle this beast of the world! But thank God! this world shall pass away! Not the planet earth that we live on, but the world — this whole present, carnal, corrupt, abominable system of things. And with it, all the chaos, sin, warfare, crime, uncleanness, poverty, pain, pride, haughtiness, deceit, sickness, death, yea, all the sorrows and ways of man shall be brought to an end. By the word of our omniscient Father and by the quickening eye of faith and hope we look for a NEW HEAVEN and a NEW EARTH ***wherein dwelleth righteousness!*** And the time for this change is at hand! Blessed be the name of the Lord, we have arrived at the hour, at a consummation of the ages, for the NEW WORLD to begin! Even now, as God’s overcoming company learns to rise up in the spirit, to hear God’s voice, to learn God’s ways, to be led by His Spirit, to be partakers of His divine nature, to be conformed to His image, the substance and glory and authority and power of that NEW WORLD is taking on form within us! Oh, yes! In this new world the carnal mind of man will not rule. In this new world the satanic powers of darkness will have no authority or dominion. In this new world the politics, the economic system, and the religious orders of this present dark age will hold no sway. Every enemy shall be put under foot, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death! Aren’t you glad!

The next point I wish to consider is the process by which the world shall pass away. Of that first world we read, “The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth *which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire*” (II Pet. 3:6-7). The fact that the water which destroyed that first world was literal leads some to believe that the fire which shall destroy this present world must also be literal — but this by no means follows. The temple of God once was of literal stones, but that does not set aside the fact that the body of Christ, which is now the true temple, is built up a spiritual building, a holy temple, not made with hands. Noah’s ark was literal too, but it typified Christ who is now our hiding place and the mighty resurrection power of Him who will save the sons of God from the loss of this perishing world and which, through them, shall replenish and renew humanity. Almost all things under the old covenant were outward, natural, and literal; almost all things under the new covenant are inward, spiritual, and supernatural! Think of it!

One important fact which we want to take note of here is that in Noah’s day not only was the world *destroyed* by water, but Noah was *saved* by water. The very SAME WATER! The water of the flood brought destruction to the world and salvation to Noah. And it is significant to note that the scripture reveals the very same process at the end of this present evil world! For the *fire* that shall bring total ruin to this present system of things shall bring *perfection and glory* to the Lord’s anointed people! The VERY SAME FIRE! Ah, without doubt this is the HOLY GHOST FIRE, for “HE shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with *fire*: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat (the inner life) into His garner; but the chaff (the outer flesh nature) He will burn with ***unquenchable fire***” (Lk. 3:16-17). “Our God IS a consuming fire!” HE HIMSELF is both the Holy Ghost and the fire! “Behold HE shall come, saith

the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand (the test) when HE appeareth? for HE is AS A REFINER'S FIRE...and HE shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and HE shall purify the sons of Levi (God's Royal Priesthood) and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness" (Mal. 3:1-3).

"Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the (same) fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; YET SO AS BY FIRE" (I Cor. 3:12-15). Surely even the most questioning person will concede that the fire which tries a spiritual work is not literal fire; fire is an appropriate symbol to represent the utter destruction of conditions represented here by hay, wood, and stubble. This fire will consume and sweep away all carnal works of flesh but will be powerless to destroy the faith-and-character structure built with gold, silver, and precious stones of divine nature and truth and spirit! Literally scores of scripture passages speak of this mighty work of God's SPIRITUAL FIRE.

When righteous Noah stepped out of the ark that bright morning he stepped onto the soil of the very same earth that existed before the flood, and at night he gazed into the star-spangled splendor of the same heavens above. Yet — *it was changed!* The old order of things was gone, and a new order, or a new heavens and earth, would now be manifested. Was it not a new heaven and a new earth by being purged through the overflowing waters of the flood from the wicked and corrupt order that previously polluted the earth? With what joy and satisfaction do we now entertain the precious promise: "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. 65:17). Hallelujah! What a wonderful thing that God shall so thoroughly cleanse our own little world and the whole vast cosmos that even our minds will be purged from the remembrance of it! God will make such a good job of His work, that the past will be completely obliterated and never thought of any more!

God shall not end this present evil world and call forth the new by destroying either His creatures or His creation. When the scriptures speak of our God as a consuming fire *burning up* the wicked, it bespeaks the great truth that what God is destroying in this day is **the old man, the old humanity, the Adamic nature, the outer man of flesh**. It is *that man* who is the "enemy" of God! "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are *in the flesh* cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). Oh, yes, the old flesh man will be dealt with by God's Holy Ghost fire — but not one precious person of God's creation will be lost! He shall bring this world to an end and establish new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness by **MAKING ALL THINGS NEW** — changed, purified, and transformed by His Word! "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, **I make all things new.** And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev. 21:5). Not *all new things*, but **all things — NEW!** That is the wonder.

You see, my beloved, there have been many "worlds" and each and every one of them has been destroyed. There was the exceeding wicked Antediluvian world. Then there was the Patriarchal world. There was the Babylonian world, the Medo-Persian world, the Grecian world, the Roman world, the Medieval world, and many other worlds of lesser duration and glory. They are all gone. They have each in turn "gone into perdition — destruction." Even their languages, for the most part, have perished from the earth. Their culture has disappeared. Their gods and goddesses have no thrones today. Their temples and their altars lie in ruins. Their religious ceremonies and

sacrifices and priestly ministrations have all been silenced. The scripture has come true which long ago was spoken by Jeremiah. “The gods which have not made the heavens and the earth, *even they shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens*” (Jer. 10:11). Where now are the gods worshipped by our European ancestors? Where are Wodin and Thor and other Nordic deities who even gave their names to the days of the week still observed by the Western world? Where is the worship of the host of heaven — sun, moon, and stars?

And yet, what the apostle John calls “the world” still exists! One world passes, another world emerges. That’s the way it is with the world! Our society today, in whatever land you dwell, is “the world.” With utmost solemnity the beloved John exhorts, **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever”** (I Jn. 2:15-17).

I shall now endeavor to show you a mystery even more dreadful than those of which we have spoken. Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world in an hour of incredible spiritual darkness, moral corruption, political oppression, and human violence. The iron rule of the mighty pagan Roman empire was at its zenith. We must try to imagine quite a different world from that in which you and I live now. For one thing it was not so large. All civilization — or nearly all — was comprised in the communities which lay around the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. I suppose you know why this body of water was called the Mediterranean; it was because it lay, as the name implies, in the *middle* of the civilized world. Just at the time when the gospel of Christ began its career all this vast territory had been brought under the dominion of the Roman Caesars; it was one enormous empire held together by military strength. Many different races, languages, and cultures lay within its mighty grip; Rome had no rival, and her reigning emperor, whoever he might be, was therefore fittingly called “LORD OF THE WORLD.” Political freedom had been crushed out, although in other respects the Roman policy was to be tolerant of local and national customs and religions.

But there was one religion of which Rome was **not** tolerant, and that was the new faith which was becoming known as Christianity. To be a follower of Christ was not respectable then; it was despised and dreaded in much the same way as Communism or Nazism have been in our day, and for very similar reasons. If the believers in Christ had not had such **power** — if only they were preaching a new doctrine, creed, or ritual of religion, you may be quite sure they would have had to suffer no persecution for their opinions; Rome would only have laughed at them as crazy visionaries. But when we find that, instead of laughing, even the strongest of the Roman emperors — such as Domitian and Marcus Aurelius — regarded them as a danger, and adopted the most rigorous methods in order to stamp out their teaching, we know at once that the power of the gospel drew vast multitudes of men like magnets to acknowledge JESUS CHRIST AS LORD OF THE WORLD, thus assailing the existing political, social, and religious orders and threatening their overthrow.

What mighty power, light, and glory flooded the world through the ministry of Jesus and His apostles! It was more than a teaching — there were mighty signs and wonders, all manner of sick healed, lame men walked, deaf ears were unstopped, blind men received sight, demons were cast out, and the power of sin and pagan religion was broken in men’s lives and they stood as new creation men transformed by the living presence of Jesus Christ the Lord. The word of HIS LORDSHIP, in the power of the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It climbed the

mountains and crossed the seas. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. Within the lifetime of those early apostles it was said that they had turned the world upside down — so transforming was their word in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. In spite of imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. The day came when that word of the Lord and that power of the risen, ascended, and glorified Christ conquered the mighty empire of Rome! The corrupt and inhuman state of things in that pagan world was swept away by the power of the gospel that broke forth upon the empire of the Caesars. The mighty Roman empire shut up its idol temples, sheathed its persecuting sword, and sat down as a disciple at the feet of CHRIST THE LORD.

It appeared for a season that the bestial empire of Rome with its political, social, and religious orders had been forever deposed into the abyss, never to rise again. But no sooner had Christianity prevailed in the world than a strange and unexpected thing began to take place. Even before the apostles had passed from the scene, a spirit and system had set in among the people of God and the *beast* of man's *flesh* began to rise up in the midst. Leaders began instituting rules and regulations, laying down laws, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing ordinances, sacraments, and rituals in place of the living presence of Christ. Men began to set themselves up as "lords" over God's heritage and the authority of bishops was elevated to a place equal to God Himself. Soon the glory and power of the anointing — the moving of God within His saints — began to be eclipsed, and the power of carnal-minded men took the place of the awesome presence and power of the Lord. Consequently, man's carnal understanding was put upon the scriptures and the truth, the living word of God, fled from their midst as they established a vast and elaborate system of theology, ritualistic religion, and human authority and rule.

As the blind led the blind the visions of the people were in error and darkness, and the pure vision and experience of CHRIST LIVING AND REIGNING IN HIS PEOPLE was lost to them. Instead of conquering by the power of the Spirit and by Truth — as in the early days — the religion that had once suffered under the sword of Rome began itself to propagate itself and maintain its control purely by the *power of the sword!* An apostasy of a dark and dreadful nature arose, and in the progress of the centuries assumed enormous proportions, and a character so diabolical as to challenge all the idolatries of paganism! The greater light granted was abused and perverted, until it became a darkness exceeding any previous darkness — and the central period of its duration and reign is, by common consent, called "THE DARK AGES." Thus the very gospel of Christ gradually *became the religion of antichrist!* As the church of Rome consolidated both its temporal and spiritual power over the nations the new Holy Roman Empire replaced the old Pagan Roman Empire — the ancient Pagan Roman "world" passed away, giving way to the new Christian Roman "world." The old Roman beast **was not** — yet **IT WAS!** The new form and face of the beast ascended out of the abyss and ashes of the old! That is the mystery.

It seems to me that if those holy apostles who set in motion the invincible power that toppled the pagan world could be brought back from the unseen realm and placed in the midst of our so-called Christian "world" today, they would immediately recognize the ancient beast which was, and is not, and yet is! I have no doubt that they would be greatly surprised to behold the gaudy harlot sitting upon her beast! They would realize that the Roman world they knew was gone, but the kingdom of God had not come. They would miss the Roman soldier, but would find the Christian nations an armed camp. They would be confounded to behold Christianity enthroned and endowed while the very pagan practices and moral evils against which the gospel was directed are flourishing before our very eyes. They would wonder what new brand of Christianity

this was; they would be able to recognize little in it except the name. They would see the amazing spectacle of earnest servants of the Lord everywhere preaching false ideas about God, proclaiming hell-fire, damnation, and eternal doom upon the masses of humanity, laying laws and commandments upon the people, worshipping in cathedrals beneath the glow of stained glass, observing ancient pagan customs and rituals renamed as Christmas and Easter, with myriad denominations, organizations, hierarchies, and strange church names, along with a thousand other things foreign to the primitive gospel. This would be a new gospel to them, and to call it Christianity would puzzle them UNTIL THEY RECOGNIZED THE BEAST!

I think this understanding will give greater meaning to the words the messenger spoke into the anointed ears of the Seer of Patmos on that long ago day. He spoke concerning the beast. And he imparted into the spiritual mind of the apostle a divine understanding of certain characteristics of the beast. The beast is not just one thing. The beast takes various forms. It was, and is not. It vanishes, but then reemerges. It sinks to the lowest depths of the unseen, the very abyss, the bottomless pit, only to clamber out once more. And it does this *again and again!* Whether it appears as a sinner or a saint, as a pagan beast or a Christian beast, as the flesh nature within an individual or the carnal life of a church system — it is still the same beast! It is an enigma. It is a seeming contradiction. But you can never understand the beast until you grasp this one great truth: Just as the world re-invents itself into new images, institutions, governments, and structures of all kinds, just so your old man, your human nature, your carnal mind re-asserts itself on new levels of expression and manifestation! It will tempt and try you in one way today and just when you think you have the victory (and perhaps you do, in that area) he will arise from the depths in another form and seek to ensnare you in a way you have not met him before. Can you not see the mystery?

Paul tells us plainly, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were *baptized into His death?* Knowing this, that our **old man is crucified** with Him, that the *body of sin* might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that **is dead** is freed from sin. Now if we **be dead** with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (Rom. 6:3,6-8). Sounds as though our "death" is an accomplished fact! Yet — in another place the same apostle instructs, "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead* indeed unto sin, but alive unto God...**let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body...**" (Rom. 8:11-12). The instruction is surprising. To "reckon" yourself to be dead means to "consider" yourself as dead or to "think" of yourself as *though* you were dead! The question follows: Why should that which "is dead" need to be "considered" or "thought of" *as if it were dead!* But that is not all. Again the same apostle Paul tells us, "For ye are **dead**, and your life is hid with Christ in God...**mortify** (kill, put to death) **therefore your members which are upon the earth:** fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:3,5). This is all very strange!. First we are told that we *are* dead. Then we are admonished to *think of ourselves* as though we were dead. And finally we are instructed to *kill our members*, that is, *kill, put to death our outer man* — KILL OURSELVES! **KILL A DEAD MAN!** How can it be that that which "is dead" can now reappear with a vengeance to molest, torment, and defeat me again? Why do I have to deal with and put to death that which is supposed to already be dead? Ah, we can indeed understand the mystery only when by the spirit we see "the beast that **was**, and **is not**, and which **shall ascend out of the bottomless pit,**" yea, "the beast that **was**, and **is not**, and **YET IS!**"

The beast appears to be forever gone — into the bottomless pit, which in the Greek text is the *abyss*. We have seen that nearly everything in the book of Revelation takes place in one of three realms: sea, earth, and heaven. The abyss, however, is a realm deeper than the earth, deeper

even than the sea! It is the *lowest realm*, unseen and unknown by the mind of man. Therefore the great mystery and the great truth that the Holy Spirit is seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that there is a dimension of man's being which is not a result or manifestation of anything else, but lies so deep within us that it is indeed the secret and hidden root and cause of all that pertains to the natural man. Individually, this signifies something deeper even than the *body realm*, the darkest, most inscrutable, unknown depths of the human heart, deep within the recesses of the inner nature. When we slay one of the heads of the beast he immediately retreats into this abyss and is there suppressed, restrained, confined, disguised, muted — one would be led to believe the victory over him is complete and final — those negative, fleshly things within us having once and for all been conquered, never to rise again!

The principle is given us again in chapter seventeen of the Revelation, verse eleven. "And the beast that *was*, and *is not*, even he *is* the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition (destruction)." The beast is truly "going into perdition" as God deals with this bestial nature within us again and again. Our deliverance is found through battle after battle as we gain one victory after another. That's what the whole series of events in the Revelation is all about! There is no one grand leap from old Adam into the full stature of Christ. There is no instantaneous death with the full victory over sin and death accomplished with one sweep of the executioner's sword. You cannot cut off all seven heads of this beast in one swift action. Would God it were that way! Yes, God is getting rid of the old Adamic mind-set and the old corrupt Adamic nature, but never forget, my beloved — this beast has *seven heads* and *ten horns*! And when, after a marvelous victory *another head (thought, idea, desire)* or *another horn (strength and power of the fleshly nature)*, that is, another form of the beast rises up out of our abyss, do we not cry out, "O my God, I thought that was gone!" Fear not, dear one, for God has *revealed* it to *destroy* it! "...he shall ascend out of the bottomless pit (of the heart of man), and **go into destruction.**" That is the mystery!

Chapter 197

Mystery Babylon (continued)

"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings...*" (Rev. 17:9-10).

As we approach this portion of our study of *Mystery Babylon* we will note in our text that there are two sources of sevens listed here — seven *heads* which are also seven *mountains*. The messenger showing John these things informs him that "here is the mind which hath wisdom," that is, the mind which is enlightened by the spirit of wisdom from God will be able to *understand* the mystery of the seven heads which are also seven mountains *upon which the woman sitteth!* Seven is the primary number signifying fullness and completeness. Heads denote authority as well as *wisdom* and *knowledge*. Mountains stand for kingdoms, thus signifying *dominion, strength, and power*. Verse ten further informs us that there are seven *kings*. The kings are *authorities*. The message is clear — The woman, the false church, sits astride the fullness and completeness of carnal, fleshly, earthly, and worldly knowledge, wisdom, authority, strength, dominion, and power!

"And there are seven kings: *five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space*" (Rev. 17:10).

The Revelation is a metaphoric drama. The organization of the book is that of a drama in three acts. At first sight it does not appear to be a practical or experiential book. Most commentaries on it seem to be explanations of prophetic world history since the cross or yet to come. There surely is much in it that will inform us about history and there is foretelling in it as well. But if all we see in it is history and foretelling of events in the outer world, we will altogether miss the great purpose in the fact that it proclaims *spiritual blessings* upon those who "**read, hear and keep what is written therein**" (Rev. 1:3).

As we consider this truth, we should notice that there are seven kings or authorities associated with the woman, and we are particularly informed that **five** of the seven are **fallen**. It is significant to note that in the Greek text there is the definite article — it reads, "**the five are fallen**," designating to "the five" a unique and specific identity and meaning. Therefore, these cannot represent five separate kings or authorities, each with his own character, manifestation, and significance. "THE five" reveals the great truth that the meaning of the mystery is not to be found in the individual kings, but in the grouping together, that is, the *number five*. Five in scripture is the number of *grace*, but it is an incomplete number. It is five out of the seven. Thus, in this realm of authority connected with the harlot, the false church, there is NO GRACE — grace has fallen, grace is perverted and limited, grace has departed, grace is no more. Look not for any mercy here! Can we not see that in the church systems of man where sin is constantly denounced, where even a salvation sermon cannot be preached without first reminding the hearer of what a despicable and hell-bent *sinner* he is, where law is laid upon the people, where a sense of condemnation is continually instilled into men's hearts, where for the least infraction of righteousness the flames of hell and the fear of eternal damnation are threateningly dangled before men's consciousness — right there, my beloved, GRACE HAS FALLEN!

Bear in mind that we are dealing here not with outward kings somewhere over in Europe or the Middle East or in some imagined “end-time” confederation of nations — ah, no, for this has to do with a *harlot* — a “Christian church,” and the beast she rides, indeed a “Christianized beast,” in whom *grace* has fallen! Does not church history and our own experience confirm this fact? Do not 99% of all Christian denominations in some way teach the ***limitation of God's grace?*** Most Christians believe that once a person dies, his or her fate is *sealed forever*. If anyone has been fortunate enough to have repeated the “sinner’s prayer” moments before death stole the spirit away, he is guaranteed that, according to the “orthodox” teaching, he will go straight to heaven. Matters not whether he was truly drawn to the Son by the Holy Spirit; as long as he by faith muttered the correct words before the final beat of his heart yielded to the stillness and silence of death, his salvation is eternally secured.

The question is, *does physical death* end the availability of God’s grace? The death that came to Adam was first and foremost a *spiritual* death, and all men enter this world already “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Does physical death render either our moral character or our ability to repent changeless? Does it irrevocably fix our eternal destiny? Are the grace and mercy of God truly TIED TO OUR HEARTBEAT? Here is a young man driving along the road on his way to an evangelistic meeting where he will hear an anointed message of salvation. Conditions are such that he may be saved this very night. His heart is tender. His mother is praying. The Holy Spirit will be mightily dealing. But — enroute to the meeting there is a terrible accident. The brakes are slammed on, the car skids and careens wildly, spins uncontrollably off the highway, rolls down the embankment, crashing violently into a tree. Death is instantaneous. Abruptly the young man is gone “out into eternity.” The question follows...was the mercy and redemption of Christ tied to his heartbeat? Was God’s great redemptive purpose thwarted by the state of the physical body or even by the condition of one single physical organ within that body? Was there mercy for this young man IF HE WOULD HAVE MADE IT TO THE MEETING, BUT ETERNAL DAMNATION INSTEAD BECAUSE A DRUNKEN FOOL PULLED OUT IN FRONT OF HIM IN THE DARKNESS?

I do not hesitate to say that there is not one passage of scripture in the whole Bible that indicates that the grace of God is limited to physical life, or that the mercy of God is tied to one’s heartbeat. I am sure that my reader recognizes that it is the *spirit* of man that is of the greatest importance to God! Why should there be salvation provided so long as the weak *material body* remains animate, but no salvation for the much more valuable spirit of the same man or woman as soon as the last *mortal* breath is drawn? Oh, I know that the writer to the Hebrews states, “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27), but that proves nothing relative to the question under consideration. It merely establishes the *fact* of judgment — not the process of judgment or the *result* of the judgment. The passage is conspicuous for what it does *not* say. It does not say, “It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this ***eternal damnation.***” The entire theory of eternal torment rests upon a faulty translation of a couple of Greek words, and actual distortions and perversions of what the scriptures actually say.

So the church system concludes that God has both the will and the power to save a breathing man, but no will and no power and no grace to save a non-breathing man. It teaches that God has both the will and the power to regenerate a spirit which has a body of dust, but no will and no power and no grace to regenerate the same spirit without a body of dust. God’s grace and God’s power are thus limited by the temporary function of certain animal organs! Good heartbeat, good mercy and grace! No heartbeat, no mercy and no grace! Ah, GRACE HAS FALLEN!

If, instead of bringing every sin into judgment — punishing that sin and correcting the sinner — we imagine the poor sinner suffering the eternal torments of hell with its unbearable anguish, the pangs of conscience, the taunts of fiendish demons, one hour of which is more than all his earthly sorrows rolled into one — lengthen this out to endlessness and season it with hopeless despair — and its horrors will be absolutely inconceivable. Though our lips may be afraid to frame the words, our hearts *will* whisper, “Can such be the final fruit of God’s glorious plan?” Is this the response for which He hungered when He *purposed* that sin should estrange His creatures from Himself? (Rom. 8:20-21). But this is far from all! Multiply this single case by *scores of billions* of human beings who, age after age, have been hurdled into this hopeless hell — all tortured and tormented forever while the ages roll, and roll, and roll into infinity...without mercy, without grace, and without remedy. Yes, GRACE HAS FALLEN!

If the above scenario be true then something horrid must have happened to both God and His saints in heaven. Before the death of these people God loved them all, and in many instances they loved each other, saved and unsaved alike, and would have performed a great number of kindnesses for one another. Many of these had Christian friends and loved ones who were very concerned about them and prayed earnestly for them. But now that both saint and sinner are out in “eternity,” God and all the saints in heaven have either lost their love and compassion for their lost loved ones, or else God has brainwashed all the saints so that they have erased from their memories the fact that their beloved mothers and fathers, their lovely sisters and brothers, their precious daughters and sons, and their dear friends and neighbors are constantly suffering the most terrible pain and hideous torture for all eternity. So we see this: there is MORE LOVE, COMPASSION, AND GRACE in the physical world in God and His saints, than there is in the spirit world. Furthermore, there is MORE LOVE for sinners while they have bodies than there is for sinners without bodies. In addition, there is more SAVING POWER in God for unbelievers possessing a mortal body than there is for unbelievers who have no mortal bodies. Think of it!

What has happened to cause God and the saints to turn from love and pity for the lost, to a feeling that the lost are now getting just what they deserve — unendingly! What, I ask, has happened to God and the saints to cause them to love and seek the lost as long as their frail, mortal bodies endure, but to turn from that love for the precious unclothed spirit of the very same man or woman? Can we believe that God, having created *all things for His pleasure*, having *so loved* His creation that He freely gave heaven’s most precious gift, after a few paltry years, the brief span of a man’s mortal existence, throws up His almighty hands in futility and disgust, saying that He has done all that He can and men would not respond, so He must cease all effort, seat Himself upon His golden throne, consign His creation to everlasting hell, and forever erase any feeling for them from His heart and from the hearts of the saints? Yet this is exactly what we are told today. But how foolish! God is not that fickle, God is not that weak, and God does not give up that easily. In fact, God *does not* give up! He started the whole program of creation and redemption and, blessed be His wonderful name! He will not cease His work until He is Victor — “All in All” throughout all the vastnesses of infinity for evermore! “For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put *all things* under His feet. But when He saith *all things* are put under Him, it is manifest that *He* (the Father) is excepted, which did put all things under Him. But when *all things* shall be subdued *unto Him*, then shall the Son also Himself be subject *unto Him* that put all things under Him, that God may be ALL-IN-ALL — **EVERYTHING TO EVERYONE!**” (I Cor. 15:25-28).

How often we have heard preachers warn people that “the day of grace will soon be over forever.” Now where, in God’s name, did they ever get such a ridiculous idea? Nothing could be farther

from the truth! For as long as God exists the **grace of God** will be with us. The end of the grace of God, were it possible, would mean the destruction of God Himself, for grace is one of His eternal, immutable attributes. Please notice that Paul shows that the grace of God is going to be displayed, revealed, and made known IN THE AGES TO COME *through those* who have received it here and now in this present dispensation. "And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ, THAT IN THE AGES TO COME HE MIGHT **SHOW** (Greek: exhibit, put on display for all to see) THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7-8).

Not only does the above passage tell us of the great revelation of God's grace *in the ages to come*, but it also shows us that it is for this very purpose that God is saving a **firstfruit company** now. The unveiling of the grace of God to the whole creation is the true reason for the **manifestation of the sons of God**. God has no intention of bringing all the world into the fold now. If that were His purpose He would surely bring it pass, for He is the omnipotent God who worketh *all things* after the counsel of *His own will*. The whole purpose of this present age is to GATHER OUT A PEOPLE THROUGH WHOM TO DISPLAY HIS GRACE IN THE COMING AGES. James also declared this great truth when at Jerusalem he said, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to TAKE OUT A PEOPLE FOR HIS NAME...that the **residue** (rest, remainder) **of men might seek after the Lord and ALL THE GENTILES upon whom my name is called**...known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:14,17,18). This so-called "age of grace" is coming to an end, but the good news is that grace will be more manifest and appropriated in the future than in previous times! This age which is presently coming to a close should more properly be called "the church age," for grace will not end, but the present formation and administration of the church *will end*. In the age and the ages to come God will move from "calling out" a body from among the nations, to the reconciling and saving of the nations themselves. That is why we read of the New Jerusalem, "And the **nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it...and they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it**" (Rev. 21:24-26). In ages beyond that God shall deal with the residue (rest) of men unto all the reaches of His vast creation — "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times (at the conclusion of all ages of time) He might *gather together in one all things in Christ*, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even *in Him*" (Eph. 1:10).

Ray Prinzing once wrote, "GOD'S PURPOSE ANTEDATES TIME, for He purposed it in Himself before time began, and then arranged for the times in which He will fulfill it. Therefore His purpose is not in bondage to any man's time, be it a day, or a thousand years, but all time has to serve that purpose. Furthermore, God's grace, whereby this purpose shall be accomplished, also antedates time, for we read, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **His own purpose and grace**, which was given us in Christ Jesus **before the world (ages) began**' (II Tim. 1:9). The sufficiency of grace was freely given before time began, hence God's grace is not bound to time either. Grace can take all the time it desires for its manifestation, for it is not subject to the confines and limitations of time. The religious traditions of some speak of an 'age of grace,' as if all other ages would be devoid of grace. This is utter nonsense. You cannot possibly limit the grace of God to any one age, for it is manifest in all ages, and is not bound to any certain age alone.

"Since man is saved by grace, and not of self-works, and grace is a gift of a sovereign God, then obviously He can administer that grace to man whenever He chooses. The length of time has no claims upon that grace, but is a servant to His grace, to reveal by degrees the wonder and glory of

God's bountiful grace and mercy. Should God so arrange this to be the hour when He gives grace in your life, then bow low before Him in worship and praise. Yet if you have loved ones who have not yet been given this inflow of grace, do not despair, for 'in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in His own order' (I Cor. 15:22-23), and God has fitted the ages so that there is an appointed time for grace to work in every life. We do not know HIS times and seasons, therefore we warn every man to turn to God now, knowing that we reap what we sow, and to continue sowing to the flesh means more harvests of suffering and sorrow. And we thank God for each heart that is opened to receive of God's grace now" — end quote.

"And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and *the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space*" (Rev. 17:10).

The description goes on to say, though the authority of grace has fallen within the bestial religious systems of men (because first it fell within each man's heart) — there still exists some of this carnal religious authority. John is told that one king is yet to come, exists for a short time — he being the seventh. However, note that the one who IS, is the SIXTH! Five are fallen, and one is — $5 + 1 = 6$. SIX IS THE NUMBER OF MAN! The message is just this — today, in the church world, MAN IS IN CONTROL! Can any deny it? Man is in control and grace is fallen! Is not the wisdom of God in this spiritual revelation absolutely striking and utterly remarkable!

"And there are seven kings: *five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition*" (Rev. 17:10-11).

At this point the scene becomes a bit perplexing and rather confusing to the natural mind. Observing the seer's wonder at the sight, the messenger proceeds to explain; and as he speaks the symbols undergo a change, like dissolving views in a movie or like the inexplicable changes in a dream. Truly, to get at the meaning of this complicated mystery, we need to have not merely intelligence but also divine wisdom, the *spirit of wisdom and revelation* from God. At the outset we are told that the beast which carries the woman, having seven heads and ten horns, was, and is not, and yet shall ascend out of the abyss, and go into perdition. Even that is strange! Most Christians view the pit (abyss) itself as a place of destruction. They look forward to the devil and all his demons being destroyed by being sent into the pit. They anticipate the antichrist, or the beast, and all other wicked powers meeting their end — their destruction — in the pit. But this beast has to *ascend out of the pit* in order to *go into destruction!* Isn't that remarkable!

Then the messenger explains that the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits. By a sort of verbal transubstantiation, now, instead of the woman sitting on the beast, she is sitting on the seven heads, but the heads are mountains! And even before this we see the woman sitting, not upon the beast, nor upon the heads of the beast, but upon *many waters!* (vs. 1). To further complicate the issue, verse eighteen informs us that the woman is a *city*. And now we find that the beast that was, and is not, AND YET IS, is the *eighth head* — the whole beast is now one of the heads! But this new eighth head is actually *out of the seven!* What is all this? Seven heads, five are fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, the beast which was and is not is an eighth and is of the seven — what is this? The messenger's explanation confuses us as much as the vision! Who can make sense of all this? Who can understand it? Where is the person who can intelligently and adequately explain the mystery? Ah, the Spirit of God Himself supplies the answer! "***And here is the mind that hath wisdom***" (vs. 9). That is the inspired preface to all the confused, mixed-up, jumbled, perplexing scenes that follow! All the convoluted scenes, all

the scrambled and contorted pictures can be understood **ONLY BY THE MIND THAT HATH WISDOM!**

Is it not phenomenal that the Holy Spirit uses precisely the same terminology in regard to understanding the *mark of the beast*. “Here is *wisdom*. Let him that *hath understanding count the number of the beast*: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six” (Rev. 13:18). Here is *wisdom*: Let him that *hath understanding count*. The wise king Solomon said, “*Wisdom* is the principal thing,” but, in the same verse he hastily adds, “and with all thy getting get *understanding*” (Prov. 4:7). Paul prayed for the saints in Ephesus, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ...may give unto you the *spirit of wisdom* and revelation...the eyes of your *understanding* being enlightened” (Eph. 1:17-18). This beautiful prayer of the apostle demonstrates vividly the truth that wisdom is a state of being. We could say it has a “passive” quality — this wisdom comes only from the inworkings of God!

“HERE IS WISDOM: let him that *hath understanding count* the number of the beast.” The key is this beautiful expression: “*Here is wisdom.*” And then in our current text: “*Here is the mind which hath wisdom.*” If it’s wisdom we’re talking about, then it’s not philosophy, it’s not intellect, it’s not training, it’s not mathematics, it’s not a study of history. Notice that our text does not say, “Here is a riddle; let him that is bright solve it,” but plainly states, “*Here is the mind that hath wisdom.*” Therefore we must have something different! Though one might study and search forever, plying endlessly through mountains of musty volumes, in an effort to decipher the enigma of the constantly changing scenes, he would never come close to the correct conclusion, for the carnal man sees through carnal eyes, and having eyes, he sees not, neither does he understand.

There is therefore only one word of advice that I can give. Do not try to figure out by much study the marvelous mysteries of God’s word, but CONCENTRATE ON CHRIST. Christ Himself *is the truth* and beside Him there is no truth. Christ is also the *wisdom of God* and the apostle tells us that HE is *made unto us wisdom*. Oh, yes! Wisdom is a Person, and wisdom is a state of being. It is the state of being of the Christ-man. Our knowledge of God and our understanding of the things of God depend entirely upon where we look. Paul penned these significant words to the saints in Colosse, “IN HIM are HID *all the treasures* of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE” (Col. 2:3). If you are looking anywhere else beside Christ Himself to understand the mysteries, you are surely looking in the wrong place. Christ Himself is the great treasure house where all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed and garnered up. In Him, and in Him alone, are to be *found* all the rich blessings which wisdom and knowledge bestow!

The more intimate and vital your relationship with *Him*, my beloved, the more the truth of the deep things of God will unfold within your heart. But like a choir of bewildered voices, ascending in pitiful petition to God, so those who try to understand the mysteries of God with human reasoning come to cry at last, “Lord, how can we know the truth? Which among this confusion of voices can we believe? Which among this conglomeration of interpretations is right?” There is, thank God! one answer and one only. It is the answer given by Jesus centuries ago. “**I AM...the truth!**” Seek not the truth from the learnings of men. Seek Christ, for He is the truth! I spent the early years of my life and ministry praying and seeking God for revelation. I did not then understand that the revelation would not come by a sudden, sovereign dispensation from God, but only as the result of my intimate communion with Him. You see, it is in the *fellowship* of Christ that He day by day whispers and breathes into our spirit of that truth which He is. If the Christ Himself does not bear witness within you of the things written even in this message, then lay it aside, put it on the shelf, or file it in file thirteen. As you live in blessed communion with HIM, there will come that

inward sense of knowing; the words of life and light that then cross your path from the pen or lips of God's anointed servants will strike a responsive chord in the deepest recesses of your spirit, bursting forth with the harmonious melody of **understanding!** This much is clear — the mystery has a spiritual meaning. If we have the *spirit* of wisdom and understanding we will be able to discern the meaning of the woman and the beast and the heads and the horns and the mountains and the kings!

We must ever keep in mind that we are viewing things which are intricately interconnected in the nature of the beast system. Whether it be the beast itself, the heads, the mountains, the horns, the kings, or the harlot riding the beast — all are parts of the whole and in various circumstances and at different times we confront the beast, the heads, the horns, the mountains, the kings, or the harlot riding the beast. In one experience we come face to face with the issue of worldly wisdom, at another time we are challenged by worldly knowledge, in another situation we confront worldly authority or again worldly power. Depending upon what aspect of this picture you meet in your experience, you will recognize a head of beastly authority, or the five heads that are fallen, or a horn of the beast's power, or a mountain of his dominion, or the spiritual harlotry of the brazen woman. There are those experiences in which we encounter the beast's wild, ferocious nature as he turns on us to rend us to pieces. Then there is a different kind of experience in which we are wooed, allured, and enticed by the cunning seductiveness of the whore. And sometimes various combinations of these! These manifestations of the harlot and the beast we may discover personally *within ourselves*, or we may confront them in the *church systems*. And just as it was while John looked upon it, the forms keep changing — though there are seven heads now the beast itself becomes the eighth, but we find that the beast who is the eighth is **of the seven**. Let us UNDERSTAND!

Eight is the number of *new beginnings*. Every time there is new light, a fresh moving of God, a mighty reformation, a great and glorious revival in the midst of the Lord's people who dwell in Babylon — there is a separation, a coming out, and a new thing is birthed. We see it in the Waldenses, the Huguenots, and various other groups throughout church history. We see it in the Reformation when the Protestant churches came out of the Roman Catholic Church with the great truth that the just shall live by faith. The Anabaptists, the Quakers, the Methodists, the Plymouth Brethren, the Puritans, the Pentecostals, and many, many other groups came forth out of the historic Protestant church systems as they received new truth and sought to follow the Lord into new realms in the spirit. Each of these is represented by the "eighth" — a **new beginning**. And yet, as church history unerringly confirms, *every new move of God has subsequently gone into apostasy!*

It is a great and terrible mystery — **the eighth is OF THE SEVEN.** There is the key to the mystery! It does not mean that the eighth is "one of the seven." Oh, no! The preposition "**of**" is from the Greek "**ek**" meaning "out of," and must be understood, as so frequently in John's writings, to denote *origin* and *identity of nature*; this eighth beast is not different in nature from the seven, but is the concentrated essence of them, and therefore destined to not maintain its cuddly innocence and childlike purity, but to go into *apostasy* — into *perdition*. It should be very evident to us all that this "eighth" beast, this *new beginning*, when a people are drawn out of a religious system into a new walk in the spirit, in most cases contains right within it the **seed** of the Babylonish system out from which they came. Thus they are the *eighth* — but the new thing is *of the seven* — same old business under a new regime — and the latter is of the same spirit as the former! Now tell me that isn't a *mystery!* The new move has the same potentiality and proclivity for carnality and sectarianism built right in from the very beginning because both the nature of the

harlot and the nature of the beast lurk within the heart of every man. So through the generations, rising up in many expressions, the harlot and her beast are within us! And that, my beloved, ***is the mystery!*** The various religious kingdoms of man have brought to the *full* (seven heads, seven mountains, ten horns) the workings of Mystery Babylon the Great!

George Hawtin elaborated on the truth of which I now write in his little booklet titled *Mystery Babylon*. I share a portion of his words here for our instruction and edification:

"Full forty years Israel had wandered in the wilderness, but at long last they had passed over Jordan and were now in the glorious land promised Abraham in the long ago. The manna of the wilderness ceased as soon as they passed over Jordan and they rejoiced in the fruit of that wonderful land of promise. From here on they were to have a new Captain, *even the captain* of the Lord of Hosts. The directions for capturing the city of Jericho were simple, indeed, and without the loss of a man the city fell into their hands. Greatly did they rejoice over their victory, and it was with joyful confidence that they sent a small army of men the day following to capture the little city of Ai (Joshua 7). But their joy was short-lived, for the men of Ai came out and fought against them and beat them back, and thirty-six men of Israel fell before them. There was a reason for this defeat, and with what breath-taking interest is the story told in Joshua, chapter seven. 'Israel hath sinned,' said God, 'and therefore cannot stand before their enemies.' So lots were cast to find the sinner and Achan of the tribe of Judah was taken. And Joshua said to Achan, 'My son, give I pray glory to the Lord God of Israel and make confession unto Him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.' And Achan answered Joshua and said, 'Indeed, I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus have I done: When among the spoils I saw a *goodly Babylonish garment* and two hundred shekels of silver and wedge of gold, I coveted them and took them, and behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent.'

"So here it is so very soon! *A goodly Babylonish garment together with the other two things that always go with it — silver and gold.* Here is the garment of Babylon throwing confusion and disorder into the ranks of the people of God and making them lose the victory and flee before their enemies. Five times in the seventh chapter of Joshua God spoke saying, 'Israel hath sinned *in the accursed thing.*' I must speak with utmost solemnity here. I must invite all men to sober thought. Did you ever see it fail? The moment God begins a mighty work of grace and power and unity, someone begins to covet the Babylonish garment. He secrets it away into his tent to hide it there. The very thing that was to have been destroyed he secretly saves, and with it he starts to build *another tower, another language, and another kingdom* to add to the universal confusion and disorder that is manifest everywhere in the church.

"The thing which fills my heart with consternation is this: no sooner has the revelation of God delivered us from the power of Babylon than we begin to cast our eyes about us, and count noses to find out who is with us and who is against us, and what material we can find to build another tower of Babel. This in itself is the Babylonish, sectarian spirit reaching out another of its octopus-like arms to enfold us and bring us back to itself. We wake up to find we have not come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, but have just wandered down another street in Babylon itself. We have changed one Babylonish garment for another and we are still part and parcel of the same devouring monster. To call ourselves undenominational is not enough. We must have the name of Babylon erased from our foreheads by the mind of Christ and a new name written there, even the name of the City of God.

"The call of the Lord today is, '*Come out of her my people*, and be not partakers of her sins.' But verily I say to you that you will need much more wisdom than the wisdom of man to be set free from this octopus that holds Christendom in its many entwining arms. The wisdom of man will praise God for its deliverance from one of the harlots of Babylon even while it is fondly embracing another. While men are praising God for deliverance from one arm of the octopus, they are being enfolded by another, and while they rejoice that they have found their way out of the darkness of one of the streets of Babylon, they awaken to find they are walking down another" — end quote. And may I hastily add — what a graphic picture this is also of the *eighth* beast which is OF THE SEVEN!

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful...and the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled" (Rev. 17:12-14,16-17).

When the judgment of darkness within man and man's systems has fulfilled its divine purpose, there comes at last the wonderful hour of man's full redemption — spirit, soul, *and body*. The time arrives for man's very nature to be regenerated and all carnality, darkness, and death to be swallowed up in victory in preparation for that race of men who throughout the centuries and millenniums of time would be made in the image of God. When a man's soul and body have been fully quickened, regenerated, and transformed, all the *inward kings* of his nature are brought out from under the dominion of the whore and her beast and are joined in willing surrender and happy union with the will of the spirit. Then it is, my beloved, that the *same ten kings* who *had one mind* and *gave their power and strength unto the beast*, now experience a wonderful change of mind, heart, and purpose and all the powers of man's life *turn on the harlot, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire*. O my God, how great are these things! Can we not see the mystery?

The ten kings in the mystery are but the governing powers of your natural life, the ten inward kings of man's flesh nature. It is these which gather together in this spiritual battle of Gog and Magog to **MAKE WAR WITH THE LAMB WITHIN YOUR SPIRIT, BUT THE LAMB OVERCOMES THEM: FOR HE IS LORD OF LORDS, AND KING OF KINGS!** All the power and policy of the flesh shall at last yield their power to Christ and shall join in the just judgment of the whore within and without. And they that are with HIM (once this victory is complete) are called, and chosen, and faithful! That is the kind of people God is able to make out of those who formerly were sold under sin, bound by carnality and flesh, and in captivity in Babylon! Hallelujah to the Lamb! **THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME!** The kings of man's life are conquered by the Lamb! This is the fruit of the mighty work of Christ within us. With what exhilaration we ponder it! With what excitement we anticipate it! God's Lamb will be the Victor within us — within *all* His precious people! Is not this the crux of the entire book of Revelation? After all the tears and heartache, all the suffering, all the warfare, all the dealings and processings — *the Lamb shall overcome*.

Special attention must be paid to this word "overcome." The Greek word is *nikao*, the word used in the peculiar statement of the elder in Revelation 5:5 wherein he says that the Lamb has "prevailed" to open the book with the seven seals. The word means to "prevail," to "overcome," or

to "conquer." It is the same word used when the Rider on the white horse goes forth "conquering and to conquer." It is the same word used repeatedly in chapters two and three of the **overcomer** where at the termination of each of the messages to the seven churches the Spirit proclaims, "To him that **overcometh...**" "To him that **conquers!**" "To him that **prevails!**" Ah, the Rider on the white horse is going forth overcoming and to overcome, prevailing and to prevail, conquering and to conquer! The term denotes grammatically AN UNENDING SERIES OF CONQUESTS, UNINTERRUPTED BY ANY DEFEATS, WHOSE VICTORIES SHOULD BE PERMANENT AND LAST FOREVER! That is the victory of the Lamb!

So throughout the Revelation our Lord Jesus Christ is in an activity where He is perpetually celebrating a victory. His march is a victorious march! His warfare is a winning warfare! His movements always meet with success! His plans are fulfilled, and His campaigns unfurl to the breezes the banners of triumph. The Lamb of God is going forth as a conqueror, and He does so with great determination and power! The action in which He is engaged requires the greatest power, even the power of the *spirit*. Ah, precious friend of mine, are there ruling kings in your life which seem unconquerable? Have you struggled with attitudes, fears, doubts, lusts, emotions, desires, circumstances, weaknesses, habits, shortcomings? Have you despaired of ever truly being conformed to the image of God's Son; have you questioned whether you can really share in the glory of manifest sonship? Hear the word of the Lord today! The kings within you have had one mind, and have given their power and strength unto the beast. That is no surprise to you, is it? Furthermore, they have made war with the Lamb, for the flesh continually wareth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh! Has that not been true within you? Now hearken to the word of the Lord! "THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME THEM!" "FOR HE IS LORD OF LORDS AND KING OF KINGS!" It is Christ Himself who is taking up the battle within you — it is Christ the Lord, THE KING of all *your kings*, who has stepped upon the battlefield of your heart, soul, and body. Here upon this field He is roused, every faculty focused, every source of strength summoned, and He is bearing forward for the purpose of conquering every foe within you! He that is within you is mighty! Expose yourself to His wonderful presence, yield yourself to His powerful word, cast yourself upon the pathway of His conquest — He is moving down upon the enemies, charging all the opposition, overcoming by the impetuous energy of His movements within your life! It is indeed wonderful!

The purpose of your quickening by Christ was to make you consciously a part of Himself, to give you a calling to glory, a place where God by His Spirit can express Himself through you, so that you can bring righteous judgment in the earth. That is what the battle with the ten kings is all about! Your life and everything that happens to you is given to train and equip you for a royal position in God. The only reason the heavenly Father sent you here from the realm of spirit, lowered into the bondage of corruption, was to process you, to groom you for a position in God, to be one in the Saviour and to become a saviour. Believe it or not, the outcome of this victory within you will qualify you as one who is described in these words following the conquest of the ten kings — "...and the Lamb shall overcome them...and *they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful!*" Isn't it wonderful! This is the day when everything we have hoped for and dreamed of in God will be realized in our experience! We have so limited God in the way we have thought about Him. I'm telling you that we stand on the threshold of an outworking of God that is so powerful that it will bring an absolute end to the downward spiral of sin and death. It will put an irremovable blockade in the road of the flesh.

The manifestation of God through His sons which is immediately before us will turn creation around! We shall manifest unto mankind a life and victory and power that will shake the very

foundations of the earth, an action that will alter the course of the world, bringing correction and righteousness. A people in this hour is being raised, not out of the cemetery, but out of the grave of their mind, out of the tomb of carnal, mortal consciousness, out of the crypt of religion and vain traditions, raised up to the place where they can be the manifestation of the totality of the personality of God. We are being raised to become the expression of the substance of His Person. This company is Christ the Head, The Lord of all the lords, the King of all the kings, together with all who are with Him, the called, the chosen, the faithful — all the holy sons of God by the strength of righteousness bringing the rule of the kingdom of God among men. Oh, the wonder of it!

Today, however, the battle is *within us*, and the Lamb is engaged on the battlefield of our lives, in warfare with the kings of our flesh and soul. One of several methods of interpretation of the book of Revelation is called the “symbolic and allegoric.” Now, I do believe that the Revelation is symbolical and allegorical. But according to this established view everything in the book is symbolic and allegoric only in the sense of depicting the *generic battle* of God against Satan — of good against evil, of the church against the world. I will tell you why this is wrong. This system contains some vital truth within it, but yet, as a foundation it misses the mark. The book is much more focused and specific than that! It is not about the *universal conflict between the forces of good and evil* — it’s about THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! It’s about what HE is doing to come forth Himself in triumph within His people, not about what God is doing out in the darkened world to cause good to triumph over evil. In connection with the revelation of Jesus Christ there is no battle between good and evil — there is only the arising of the Son of Righteousness with healing in His wings! The book of Revelation is indeed symbolic and allegoric, but the symbology is about HIS APPEARING and the effect and result of that appearing in the hearts and lives of men and women! Not “good” shall overcome “evil” — **THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME THEM!**

The arrows of Divine Truth are piercing our hearts, and every ruling king within us falls down before Him; all opposition is shattered to pieces; the strongholds and defenses are torn away as paper walls; the radiant brilliance of His glory flashes its dazzling light upon the eyes of the understanding, piercing effectively every cherished tradition, human interpretation, and carnal concept; swallowing up even every sin, all self-will, every fleshly desire, and the sorrow, pain, sickness, fear, and death. I see the Lamb conquering! Though all men are His by right of creation and redemption, yet He must do battle to make conquest of the human heart which has been occupied by the enemies of His mind, His heart, His will, and His life. He must fight His way inch by inch into the human soul until He possesses that which He has purchased, until the citadels of mind, will, emotion, and desire have been taken and led away under the dominion of Truth and Divine Nature.

The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God over all. The foundation of this kingdom is in the human heart. “The kingdom of God is within you.” The world has not yet witnessed anything like the total and absolute government of God, except in the life of Jesus. But there has been an increase of His kingdom from generation to generation and from age to age. A new order is now coming forth in the earth! The hour of the completion of the body of Christ that has been forming in the earth for the past two millenniums is now at hand. The age of the reigning of Christ through the perfected, matured, empowered manifest sons of God is now ready to be revealed.

This, then, is what it means when John the beloved is shown that the kings of the flesh-life have one mind, and give their power and strength unto the beast, and thereby *receive power as kings*

for one hour, that is, a limited time and degree — with the beast. Thank God, our beastly life, our servitude to the beast system, is as it were but *for a moment* — “**one hour with the beast.**” “**FOR GOD HATH PUT IT IN THEIR HEARTS** TO FULFILL HIS WILL, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, *until* THE WORDS (PLAN, PURPOSE) OF GOD SHALL BE FULFILLED!” (Rev. 17:17). In this is the judgment of the Lord within them, that they should altogether repudiate and hold accursed the harlot and the beast and destroy it root and branch out from among themselves. “And these (the ten horns, the ten kings within) shall (now that the Lamb has conquered them) **hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.**” Great is the mystery! Thus shall be fulfilled *all the things* that God hath spoken! Has this happened within you, my friend?

In closing this article I cannot do better than to quote again from the true and heart-searching admonition of brother George Hawtin wherein he exhorts:

“In these days of confusion (Babel means confusion), when multitudes are being sucked into the whirlpool of Babylon’s vain and worthless striving, how good it would be if God’s dear children would get off the system’s merry-go-round and get alone with Jesus Christ their Lord, shut out all the din and noisy commotion of Babel’s activity and the bondage it brings, and there in the light of His cross and with an open heart request that He would grant to their searching spirits the knowledge of what the *true church* really is, and what eternal hope He had in mind when He foreknew and chose them as a special *habitation* for Himself! If God’s dear people would do this, I think it would not be long before they would lose their love for this antichrist system, now rising to new heights in the earth.

“I suppose tens of millions of sermons have been preached to show people how they ought to live, what they ought and ought not to do, what they should wear, what they should eat, where they should go, and just about everything that can be imagined. But there is a simple remedy for all this that is utterly contrary to the multitudinous traditions and the idle philosophies and teachings of our day. It is found in Psalm 19:2-3. ‘Blessed are they...*that seek Him with the whole heart.* They also *do no iniquity; they walk in His ways.*’ That is a simple answer to all godliness, for men who seek Him with all their hearts will never need to be told how to live righteously. They will do no iniquity and they will walk in His ways.

“During the past years a desire has come into my heart that has filled me with longing to see a remnant of God’s people in this, the end of the ages, put the Babylonish harlot away and be joined to Christ in the spirit and joined to Him alone. Everywhere I have advocated that even *small groups of people should drop their usual church meetings and spend the time in coming to know Him, partaking of His mind, seeking His will, and growing in Him.* Perhaps some have been greatly afraid that this course will give opportunity for an occasion to live after the flesh. No doubt it will in the lives of some, if that is where their treasure lies, for if a man is a spiritual *goat*, his goat nature will show up sooner or later and in my opinion the sooner the better. But if a man is a spiritual *sheep*, then he will follow Christ, for ‘*my sheep know my voice and they follow me and a stranger they will not follow.*’ The traditions of the centuries have taught us to keep sheep and goats, wheat and tares together, BUT IN THE END OF THE AGE THEY WILL BE SEPARATED” — end quote.

Chapter 198

The Destruction Of Babylon

"And after these things I saw *another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.* And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen..." (Rev. 18:1-2).

We know that in the symbolism of the book of Revelation this "angel" coming down from heaven is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ because of the marks that are given. I do not mean by this that Jesus is literally an "angel," only that the angel in his symbolism *stands for* our Lord. The Lord Jesus is always pictured in the New Testament as "coming down from heaven," and certainly He is the One who has "great power" or "great authority," and who "lightens the earth with His glory." Of Him it is written, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honor, and *glory*, and blessing" Rev. 5:12). And again, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man *coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" (Mat. 24:30).

Without doubt this is the same "another angel" we met in Revelation 10:1-2. "And I saw *another mighty angel come down from heaven*, clothed in a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth." Some would make this the many-membered corporate Christ, but by the identifying characteristics it is clear that this is the glorious Head of the body, the *indwelling spirit of Christ*, the One who indeed fills the whole Christ body, yet remains uniquely the Head of all. He is clothed with a cloud and the rainbow is upon His head, just where it was when we saw Him before in this book. The only two places where we see it is here and in chapter four. Furthermore, He is clothed with a singular cloud, denoting the firstborn Son of God; for when Christ is seen coming *in all His saints* it is stated that "He cometh *with clouds* — plural — the many clouds of glory! Now, in the tenth chapter His face is *like the sun*, just as it was in the holy mount of Hermon, in His transfiguration. His feet are as *pillars of fire*, just as John saw them in chapter one in the midst of the seven churches. He has a scroll in His hand, opened. Who opened it? Why, He did, the Lamb did, over there in chapter five! And now in our text we find that this "another angel" likewise *comes down from heaven with great authority and the earth is lightened with His glory* — the glory of that same One whose face is **as the sun!** Who can deny that this is indeed THE LAMB, even Jesus.

I would point out that in Greek grammar, when the word "*another*" is used with a noun before it, it is very significant. It signifies literally, "another who is the same," and throughout the book of Revelation we find this word descriptive of our Lord. Remember, Jesus told His disciples that when He went away He would send them "*another Comforter*." There we have the same grammatical structure in the Greek, indicating "another who is the same." The Lord made it clear that this "*another Comforter*" was truly *Himself* in another form! "*And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you* (as Jesus Christ in the flesh), *and shall be in you* (as Christ in the Spirit)." And then He adds with unmistakable clarity, "***I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU***" (Jn. 14:16-18). Can we not see by this that the Comforter, or the Spirit of

truth, was not another or different person, but another manifestation or form of the very same Christ who said "*I am the Truth*," standing there before His disciples! He was "another Comforter," oh yes, ANOTHER WHO IS THE SAME!

This was not just another literal angel that came down from heaven, for here he is referred to as a "mighty" or "strong" messenger. An angel is a messenger, and the messenger stands for the message. The angels in the book of Revelation are wonderful *symbols* representing the *living word of God* communicated by the spirit of revelation! The spirit of Jesus Christ is the living word of God! In the beginning of the book an "angel" came and began to show these things unto John — that is, a powerful word of the Lord came to John out of the heavenly realm of the Spirit, speaking mysteries to his heart and passing before his spiritual eyes visions of wonders to come. The proof of this is found in John's own statement as to how the revelation was received. "*He (Jesus) sent and signified it unto His servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all that he saw*" (Rev. 1:1-2). Thus, this mighty angel or messenger who cries with a strong voice is a great and powerful WORD OF THE LORD whose glory lightens the earth! Truly, IT IS THE LORD! HE is the **mighty messenger!**

The "**spirit of might**" is one of the seven spirits of God resting upon the sons of God. Isaiah revealed this deep mystery when he penned these blessed words: "*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*" (Isa. 11:1-2). The seven spirits of God rested upon the Head of this many-membered body of Christ, and it is *from Him* that all the sons of God receive this anointing (I John 2:27). The Spirit of Might which belongs to the sons of God is the Spirit of Jesus, for He upon whom the seven-fold Spirit first rested is called THE **MIGHTY GOD** (Isa. 9:6). It is only "in Him" that one can become mighty! There is a glorious company of people, who along with Jesus the Mighty God, is termed "the Mighty." Asaph, the song and praise leader of Israel, prophesied of this company, saying, "*God standeth in the CONGREGATION OF THE MIGHTY; He judgeth among the gods (mighty ones). I have said, YE ARE GODS; and all of you are THE CHILDREN (SONS) OF THE MOST HIGH*" (Ps. 82:1,6). This company of "the Mighty" in whose midst God stands is none else but those who are "in Christ" who is "the Mighty God" and are thus "strong *in the Lord*" and "*in the power of HIS MIGHT.*" And the word of the Lord through Asaph declared plainly that "the Mighty" are, every one of them, the sons of the most High, truly, the manifest sons of God. Aren't you glad!

It signifies a strong influx of the Lord out of the heavens of divine illumination, by which His elect are bathed in heavenly light and understanding. Today we are finding our place in this *corporate body*, this *company of the mighty*. The day of individual ministry — *my ministry, your ministry, his ministry, her ministry* — is over! No more building of kingdoms around individual men, spiritual super-stars, who gather a following and make a name for themselves as though they single-handedly could save the world or bring in the kingdom. There's a story about a woodpecker who was persistently drilling through the bark of a tree one day, when, without warning, lightning struck and shattered the old tree into a thousand little pieces. The woodpecker flew to another tree, and said, still shivering and shaking, "Wow! To think I did that all by myself!" It's easy to start thinking that we've done it all by ourselves. God gives us gifts and abilities, and we take the credit for our performances. But in this significant hour it is the **mighty voice** and the **great authority** of THE SON WITHIN THE SONS that is speaking and performing!

BABYLON IS FALLEN!

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*" (Rev. 18:1-2).

We have devoted a number of months to the discussion of Babylon the Great, the Mystery, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth. We have noted that Babylon is both a woman-harlot and a city. As a *woman* she is a symbol of the church on earth as an instrument for the building up of the saints as the bride of Christ. As a *harlot*, however, she is the apostate church, who has perverted her true character, forsaken her rightful husband, Christ, and prostituted herself to be employed as an instrument of the powers of inward carnality and the outward bestial system of the world. Then as a *city* her essential character is revealed. For even as the true church of Christ shall ultimately reveal itself as the glorious heavenly city, New Jerusalem, the capital of God's kingdom on earth, so the counterfeit church reveals itself as the counterfeit Jerusalem, that is, Babylon, who rules over the lives of men and *calls itself* the kingdom of God. It is not difficult to discern the character of this great city Babylon as its suburbs spring up, proliferate, and spread their power and dominion across the spiritual terrain.

George Wylie once expressed it so very succinctly when he wrote: "While I was talking with a sister the other day about some of these things, she said something that impressed me. She said, 'People don't seem to be content to allow someone to be *free*. There is always someone who wants you to *join* them and whatever they belong to. It seems to disturb them to see someone free from the entanglements of a *system*. When one has separated oneself from all the things that are not of God there will always be those who will try to get one to join them. Come and join our group! Why don't you join our church! Come and be part of our great movement! Come and flow with our fellowship! They just can't seem to let a free man be free!' This is how denominations and sects *begin*. Here is an excerpt from one of Bill Britton's writings: 'We've had men come by here, and we've had some write us, and say, Brother Britton, now it would be a great advantage to you if you would join up with us and be in our fellowship. THIS, BELOVED, IS THE FIRST STAGE OF A DENOMINATION! The way men start out in sectarianism is, they *indoctrinate*. The second step is, they *isolate*. The third step is, they *denominate*. And the fourth step is, they *dominate*. The first thing men want to do is to get their particular and peculiar doctrine in you until you have to believe exactly what they believe that is different from anybody else. After they get you hooked, they isolate you. You are not supposed to hear any other preachers or teachers. You're not supposed to fellowship with any other people or groups. You're a peculiar people, you're separate from anyone else, so therefore you isolate yourself from the rest of the body of Christ. Then the next thing they do is put a name on that thing and they denominate it. After they denominate it (and it may be a lot of churches, a fellowship, movement, or whatever) you will find that they begin to DOMINATE YOU!" — end quote. And may I add — at that point you are fully *enslaved* within the system of Babylon!"

Furthermore, we discussed the *judgment* of the great whore, the harlot woman, the bride-impostor. We found that her harlotry consisted in an illicit relationship with the world. She is called to be the manifestation of the body of Christ in the world, but she gives herself to union with the beastly systems of man. She is called to build up the saints in intimacy of fellowship and vital union with her Lord, instead she makes the inhabitants of the earth-realm, the carnal religious kingdom of the flesh, drunk with the passion of her worldly lewdness. She is called to raise up the spiritual life, nature, and power of Christ in His called and separated people, but she abandons the spiritual reality and seeks refuge in outward means, forms, rituals, sacraments, programs,

organization, creeds, and external instruments to establish the promised kingdom. She is the harlot, the apostate woman. And we found also that her judgment as a harlot is certain: “*Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come*

Babylon will ultimately disappear as an institution, because she has been weighed in the balances and found wanting! Before this church age is over the whole corrupt, religious, denominationalistic, Babylonish church system of man will come to a crushing defeat. When Mystery Babylon is judged, it will not be reformation nor will it be reconstruction: her ruin will be complete; from henceforth nothing of a like character will have any existence! It will either be swallowed up by the *truth* of the Lord Jesus Christ or it will perish from the face of the earth forever. There will also be the glorious *manifestation of the sons of God in the power of HIS RESURRECTION!* Those who persist in clinging to the false systems of man shall drink of the corrective passion (wrath) of God. It is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation. Therefore the command, “*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*”

As we approach the dramatic scenes of the 18th chapter of the Revelation there are opened up before us in highly descriptive and symbolical language the intimate details of Babylon’s judgment, desolation, and destruction. The woman as harlot shall exist no more! The institutional church shall come to the end of her existence! Great is the mystery!

In this regard a dear sister in Christ has written these words of inspiration and admonition: “It’s a new ball game now, with new rules. God hasn’t changed the rules. His rules are eternal and sure. It’s only that men have been trying to play by their own rules, hoping God will play along with them. It even appears that up until now God has winked at our ignorance and shown us grace and extended mercy, much as loving parents might do to their children at play. Men have been historically deceived into thinking that their rules are somehow winning the game for them. ‘We can do it, gang! If we only pull together, put forth our best effort, get a good preacher, plan the right programs, get in there and work, work, work, we’ll see our church grow, grow, grow!’ That’s been the game plan until now.

“There are two basic errors in these rules. The first is in thinking that we can achieve anything for God in our own strength. The second is in supposing that ‘church growth’ is the goal. So we must ask, what are God’s rules? What is His game plan? What is He doing? After all, ‘*Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it*’ (Ps. 127:1). The divine rule that is in operation today is just this: ‘*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*’ (Zech. 4:6). Hear the word of the Lord! Whatever is done for God that builds up His kingdom from now on is either going to be done by His Spirit, or it won’t be done. There will be many starts, but absolutely no finishes!

“It may come as a shock to many, but ‘church growth’ is *not* God’s goal! The flesh tends to focus on the external things. Its interest is in numbers, membership, size, buildings, indoctrinations, programs, and visible things like that. These are all a part of the old order, the old game plan — which is quickly passing away. Churches that try to win by these rules will find themselves headed for the locker room in total defeat. God wants *kingdom seekers*, not *church members*.

God desires a spiritual house for His habitation, not massive buildings made of brick and mortar. He seeks a bride called by His name, not a harlot called by every other name in the book: Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Charismatic, etc., etc. He wants a people who are being conformed into His image, not denominational clones. He wants a people walking in humility and holiness, not in spiritual pride and hypocrisy. He wants a people who are led by His Spirit and living the laid-down life, one body all under one head who is Jesus Christ as Lord and God and King.

"This day I call to repentance all you who are still *playing church*. You are kidding yourselves if you, who are spiritual, imagine that you can change the 'church' where you go. That old church system is harlotry, it's Babylon, and God has **never** said anything but to 'come out of her, my people!' There are many well-meaning, born again, and even Spirit-baptized believers in the denominational churches, yet they are unable to see the abomination of that system. All man-made religious systems are **false religion**. Many church groups blaspheme the Holy Spirit by denying the baptism in the Holy Spirit and teaching against the manifestations of the Spirit. Others operate under the law and thereby have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4). The Pentecostals, for the most part, are under law, bound by their own traditions and commandments of men, and harbor religious spirits. They have a false sense of holiness.

"While I am bound by the Spirit to expose the harlot, I am sympathetic to the difficulty we all have in adapting to these new rules and this new game plan. Most of us were born into and raised up by the old rules. It's all we've ever known! I grew up with football, so I know the game and can keep up with it. But I have never been exposed to cricket. It's totally confusing and disinteresting to me. We may have the same tendency to shy away from the new thing God is doing today! Nevertheless, we had better guard our hearts very carefully. The flesh loves it in Babylon. We soulishly love our old traditions and doctrines and churches — so much so they are idolatrous. The hour has come and now is when we must turn to the Lord with a whole heart and abandon everything else in our hearts. What we do is going to be by the Spirit of God, or it will be cut down and cast into the fire. It's a new ball game, folks! You'd better wake up quickly and repent. Renounce your idolatries, your spiritual harlotries, your sins, your ungodly associations. Come to Jesus the author and perfecter of your faith. Where do you go when you come out of Babylon? To Jesus. It's Jesus, Jesus, Jesus all the way!" — Betty Newbold.

The fact that Babylon "is fallen" is pictured twice in the Revelation — in the first place it is announced by "*another angel*" in chapter fourteen, verse eight. "*And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the passion of her fornication.*" The second place is in our text. Here, the "*another angel*" descends out of the heavens of the spirit of the Lord, having great authority, that is, bearing an authoritative word with power. The earth is lighted with His glory. The time has come for the earth-realm, the carnal religious realm of man, to indeed be *lighted*, and with a glory that is not of the earth realm, not the glory of man's religiosity, but the brighter and more transcendent glory out of the heavens of God's Spirit! Oh, yes! This angel's only weapon was what he said — *he cried mightily with a strong voice* — and what he cried is a piece of news — *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!* Now I would draw your reverent attention to the fact that Babylon is denounced as **fallen** — not **destroyed!** This is plain by what follows, for she is seen as given up to a condition which is a spiritual desolation, worse than the physical one of the Babylon of old under which she has long lain, and from which the imagery seems derived. She is not destroyed, but is spiritually desolate, and has become the dwelling place of demons, false religious spirits, a hold of every unclean spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

It is significant to note that in both instances the fact of Babylon's fall is indicated in the *perfect tense*. It is not, "Babylon *shall* fall," nor "Babylon *will* fall," nor "Babylon is *about* to fall," nor "Babylon is *going* to fall," but rather, "Babylon IS FALLEN!" The angel speaks of the city as fallen already. The truth regarding the "fall" of Babylon is one of the most important and significant truths of this present hour in which we live. Throughout the entire history of the church, from time to time a remnant of the Lord's people have received the revelation of the Holy Spirit that "Babylon is fallen" just as the angel declares in our text. She is "fallen" not only because the word of scripture says so, but because the HOLY SPIRIT HAS REVEALED THAT FACT. Now, as already mentioned, for something to be "fallen" does not mean that it no longer exists, or that it has disappeared from the earth. A thing can be "fallen" and yet continue to exist in that fallen state. Actually, "fallen" describes the state or condition of something that *does* exist! People used to speak of a "fallen" woman as a woman who had left the purity of her life and become a prostitute. We all know that Adam and all mankind in him is in a "fallen" state according to the scriptures and the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Adam and mankind certainly still exist even though in their "fallen" condition!

So now we read about the "judgment," the "desolation," and the "destruction" of the fallen woman, the harlot, Babylon, and that she will be "utterly burned with fire" and symbolically "cast into the sea" to be found no more at all. Ah, this is different! These scenes speak of the *destruction* of Babylon, but not her "fall." Babylon remains to be judged and destroyed, but Babylon "fell" long centuries ago when the church apostatized from the spirit and the truth and became the fallen woman, the great harlot and the mother of harlots. Can you not see the difference? The harlot system of religious Babylon is in a fallen state as much as anything in the universe is fallen. She doesn't appear to men to be fallen, for she claims to be "the church" and her outward appearance is that of the representative of our Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved, make no mistake about it, BABYLON IS FALLEN, and the whole church system of man is religious Babylon! She is an unclean, perverted woman! Until we see clearly this difference between "fallen" Babylon and "destroyed" Babylon we will miss the message of the angel come down from heaven!

With keen spiritual perception Carl Schwing penned these words of exhortation: "Yesterday, we lived in the darkening shadows of Babylon's lifeless teachings. We were bound hand and foot by her 'faithful servants' ...because of her 'blind messengers' we lived in fear and ignorance; even the gift of grace hinged upon her abominable teaching of legalism. Not attending 'church' became the unpardonable sin. The truth we did have was only stifled by our loyalty to her cause. How freely her servants wasted the Lord's tithes and offerings, and how shameful was the abuse of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That which divided the children of the Lord we called 'outpourings,' and the ones who preached her distorted gospel we called 'men of God.' There were precious moments when the sorrowing sinners came forth and cried out to Jesus for salvation...but even those she took and robbed and bound. If you doubt what I am saying, look at the mess they call Christianity today. True, there are more steeplehouses, organizations, Bible schools, and outreaches than ever...but they are only factories of Babylon where she mass produces her religious robots. I know there are people within her system that are hungry...but to be fed they must *come out* unto the Father...we cannot go in to them" — end quote.

One of the most startling facts about the "fall" of Babylon is that it is the *result* of her fall that she *becomes* the abode of demons, a confine of every unclean religious spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hated bird, or manifestations of unrighteousness and spiritual impurity. It must be made clear to our hearts that this description of Babylon — this uncleanness, these spirits, these hated birds lodging within her bespeak the doctrines of devils, the perversion of truth, teaching for

doctrines the commandments of men, adopting the ways and methods of the world, intermingling pagan idolatry with the gospel of Jesus, impugning the nature and character of God and His Christ, and bringing the whole into confusion until every foul spirit hides under the skirt of religion. Because of this fallen condition the Lord's people are admonished to "come out of her" in order that they might not "be partakers of her sins" and thus be candidates to "receive of her plagues." If her fallen state signified her collapse or destruction, God's people would no longer be in her because she would no longer exist as an institution nor would they be leaving her to escape her plagues, for the plagues would already have been poured out. But "fallen" Babylon has *not* yet been rewarded for her iniquities, *nor* has she been utterly burned with fire, *nor* has she received double for all her sins, *nor* has she been cast into the depths of the sea never to be found again! Armed with this knowledge we can now understand the great truth the Holy Spirit would make real to our hearts, that this cry, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," refers not to the judgment and destruction of the system, but rather to the *spiritual condition* of that system in the present.

When the angel delivers his message, there is a mighty move of the Spirit of God and the scales begin to fall from the eyes of masses of the Lord's people who hunger and thirst after reality. Now the revelation breaks powerfully within their consciousness and for the first time they are empowered to see the system for what it really is — a corrupt, fallen *whore!* Now they see clearly just how carnal, corrupt, abominable, and devilish that whole religious system is! What a revelation that is! Most of those who read these lines have already heard and obeyed that cry of the angel, and beloved, it *takes* a revelation from God to see Babylon for what it is! That is the mystery. As soon as all who have ears to hear have departed from the precincts of Babylon, the destruction of the Babylon system finally takes place — *because it is fallen!*

The truth is just this — Babylon cannot and will not be *restored*. It can only be *destroyed*. The following words by Ray Prinzing bear eloquent testimony to this truth: "'We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies' (Jer. 51:9). We would have healed her — oh, how we tried to bolster her up and heal her! We poured our strength into her, ignoring the instruction to 'Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings' (Prov. 31:3). We fasted and prayed for God to revive her. Though she reeked with abominations, traditions of men, false doctrines, and platitudes for itching ears, still we tried to heal her. But in time the Holy Spirit speaks so loudly within, '*Flee out of the midst of her,*' that we have to obey. All her works, her kingdom building endeavors for self, are not sufficient — but are as filthy rags ready for burning" — end quote.

The called and separated elect of the Lord, who are the sons of God, are those who now have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying; and hearing, they have obeyed the Lord, forsaking Babylon. These are the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb! And as the elect of God forsakes Babylon, we then come to Zion, according to the word of the Lord. '*In those days, and in that time saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come...and weeping they shall go, and seek the Lord their God, THEY SHALL ASK THE WAY TO ZION with their faces thitherward* (or toward the presence of the Lord), saying, *Come, and let us join ourselves TO THE LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. My people hath been LOST SHEEP: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, and they have turned away on the mountains (the kingdoms of men): they have gone from mountain to hill, THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR RESTING PLACE. All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord...the hope of their fathers. REMOVE OUT OF THE MIDST OF BABYLON..."* (Jer. 50:5-8).

Why have the Lord's people gone astray as *lost sheep*, running from mountain to hill, from church to church, from revival to revival, from move to move? Because their shepherds have caused them to go astray, and they all have forgotten their resting place *in God* and *in His habitation of Zion!* Why have the enemies of the Lord's people "devoured them" and troubled them among the religious kingdoms of men? Because God's people have "sinned against the Lord" in finding a counterfeit habitation by the rivers of Babylon. And what is God's answer to this sad condition? "**FLEE YE OUT OF THE MIDST OF BABYLON!**" And inasmuch as the Lord has been calling His *firstfruits company* out of religious Babylon, we know from this that He is restoring His elect in a right and proper relationship with Him in preparation for the manifestation of the sons of God. And we know also by this that there is always a great HARVEST that follows the gathering of the firstfruits! This reveals to us the great truth that in coming days, not so far distant, **GOD WILL DELIVER ALL HIS PEOPLE OUT OF BABYLON!** As the system collapses around them, out from the smoke and the ruins of the great city Babylon He will now lead them *with tears of repentance and great brokenness and weeping* back to Zion! Aren't you glad!

Where do we go, when we come out of Babylon? The sister I quoted earlier said we go to Jesus, and that is true. Yet — where is HIS dwelling place? His dwelling place is in Zion, and in the Revelation the Lamb is seen standing upon the mount Zion! And standing with Him are the 144,000 elect sons of God! Ah, yes, we go to Zion, the holy and blessed hill of the Lord's habitation! Every generation has its seers. They have eyes that see, ears that hear, minds that perceive, and hearts that understand. They know their own times thoroughly well. They do not confuse the wisdom of this world with the wisdom of God, nor do they confuse the doctrines of men and traditions of the elders with the truth and purpose of God. By the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God they grasp the plan of the Omnipotent Father for their day, and discern the drifts, the tendencies, the currents and counter currents of the time. By the wisdom which comes from above and the understanding of the mind of Christ they understand the true nature of all things, they foresee the unfolding of God's purpose in all things, and prepare themselves through repentance, purging, obedience, and transformation to be the instrument in His mighty hand to bring God's kingdom to pass in the earth. There are such seers at this present time! They are seers because they know, discern and see *by the spirit*. The angel's cry has fallen upon their anointed ears and they have seen Babylon for just what it is, and they likewise have, by the "seeing eye," beheld the glory of the Lamb upon mount Zion. These are they who have stalked out of the confusion and bondage of Babylon, before its destruction has begun, and are now marching determinedly and triumphantly unto the heights of the holy mount Zion! Oh, the wonder of it!

It is my conviction that all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship will agree that the manifestation of the sons of God, the next great move of God in the earth, must be *one hundred percent the work of God*. But it cannot be one hundred percent God's work when there is still ninety percent of us, or eighty, forty, ten, or even one percent of us. If the expression of God that is coming will be "Jesus and me," then you will also give the glory to "Jesus and me." But if it is Christ alone, I may be the vessel, you may be the vessel, but the manifestation and the excellency of the power shall be of God and not of us. So much manifestation has been "God and us." Our drive, our holiness, our spirituality, our faith, our commitment, our dedication, our prayer, our fasting, our ability, our wisdom, our strength, has been mingled with SELF. But today the Spirit is saying, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power, the glory, the authority, and the majesty **may be of GOD**" — Christ in us become the totality of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, power, and glory — and not of us. How can it be of us, when we have become nothing? That is the mystery of Babylon — *mixture and confusion*. It is

always human wisdom and the strength of the flesh trying to work *for* God! But God shall now be glorified in us and through us, by Jesus Christ. Truly coming out of Babylon means asking the Holy Spirit to enable us to make the ultimate commitment to become totally nothing, that HIS FULLNESS be found in us!

The Spirit has been poured out in the denominational churches for a number of decades now, but that move of God has drawn to a close and will not produce more fruit. God did not move in the churches to bless or bolster or empower Babylon. Oh, no! He moved only to “*call out* a people for His name.” The purpose has not been to either condone or confirm Babylon, but to weaken it in preparation for judgment. Everything is coming to a climax, a culminating. The ending of the age is upon us. What more does God need to tell us? Not that there will not be a fresh opening up of the Word, not that the spirit of wisdom and revelation will not increase, but is it not time that that expression and manifestation of the fullness of God’s glory that we have so long looked forward to, should come? I feel it in my spirit and we are seeking God and praying, crying out mightily unto Him and waiting on God until that full manifestation of all that God has purposed will come. All over the world, in every nation under the heavens, there are people who are seeking God like this. Many have been drawn away and separated from all their former involvements and religious exercises, the church system, and the old ways of thinking and doing things, to wait for His NEW ORDERS. God is making choices among us and among all of His people, among the nations of the world, among the churches of the world, reaching down in this hour and sovereignly choosing those whom He has brought to weakness, predestined for this hour.

Ah, He does not have to use us. We have heard His call and now present ourselves before Him for His choosing. But let us leave the choosing to God! And if God is pleased to choose us, we will give Him all the glory. And if He is pleased to bypass us and choose others, there will be no recrimination in our spirit. We will say, “Lord, Thou art altogether righteous in all things.” In previous moves of the Spirit God picked me up and used me and He said, “I am not using you because of anything in yourself, but out of my sovereign choice.” And I knew that it was altogether His ordination! I saw other people that were more ready to be used than I was, not used, and my spirit wondered why, and He answered, “Out of my sovereign purposes I am not using them.” That is why I do not criticize anybody who was not in the previous visitations, or in the word God is giving us today. God knows what He is doing! We cannot second-guess God! I know it was God who kept many people out, who shut them up and hedged them in to a lesser thing in God, and God brought other people in. God’s thoughts are higher than our thoughts! God’s ways are higher than our ways! But He is going to use people. People just like you and me! This is not daydreaming or wishful thinking, neither are we deluded. God is ready to manifest Himself in all the glory and power of HIS RESURRECTION throughout all the earth until every knee bows and every tongue confesses His Lordship. So let us say, “Lord, let us be among those. We are available.” That heartfelt cry is the evidence of our call. Yet we must understand that *many are called, but few are chosen!*

Do we truly understand the *new order* that is about to be established in the earth and the *new ministry* that God shall raise up unto the nations? The present order is the *church*. The new order is the *kingdom*. Concerning the church age ministry we find that the ascended Christ “...gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till...” (Eph. 4:11-13). For two thousand years the order has been the *church* and the only God-ordained ministries have been those of *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers*. The carnal church systems of Babylon have added to these various other “ministries” that the

Christ never gave! But notice, my beloved, none of the above listed ministries are to last forever. None are permanent. All are to pass away. All are to be replaced by a new and greater ministry! Plainly the apostle tells us that the five-fold ministry has been given for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ... *until!* Until what? Until when? "...*till we all come...unto a PERFECT MAN (sonship), unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST*" (Eph. 4:13). O blessed mystery! The five-fold ministry is given to build up and perfect the saints. Perfected and matured saints become ***sons of God, a perfect man, in the full stature of Jesus Christ the firstborn Son of God!*** Nothing can be plainer than that.

When we move from the old order of the church into the new order of the kingdom, we move from the five-fold ministry of the church into the new and greater ministry of the kingdom of God. This ministry is revealed in the Revelation when the beloved John beheld in the midst of the throne a people who sang a new song, saying, "*Thou hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS: and we shall REIGN ON THE EARTH*" (Rev. 5:9-10). While I have referred to "kings and priests" as a *ministry*, that is not entirely correct. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers *minister* — kings and priests, however, *reign*. The manifest sons of God are neither apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers. They are *kings and priests!* They are not in the *church*. They are in *the midst of the throne!* The ministry of the body of Christ is the five-fold ministry. The ministry of manifest sonship is that of kings and priests. The five-fold ministry is given to build up and perfect the SAINTS. Kings and priests are given to REIGN OVER THE EARTH! That is the mystery.

Under the typical arrangement of the Old Testament the first divine essential for either kingship or priesthood was *divine appointment*. The honor of being King or priest was not open to man's ambition. No man could take it for himself. No man could volunteer for the office, or assume it out of his own fancy or self-will. The king and priest minister in such high and holy matters that only God can appoint him. Thus it was that Aaron was called of God to be the high priest of Israel. He did not take it to himself; nor did Moses or the elders of Israel make him high priest. God called him to this work, and no one else could have done so. And so we read, "*And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest; but He that said unto Him, THOU ART MY SON, TODAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN THEE...THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK*" (Heb. 5:4-6).

And what was true of Aaron was also true of his sons, they also were "taken" or called and appointed by God unto the priesthood. And what is true of Christ as our great high priest, is also true of His priestly house — they must first be *sons* and then they are appointed *priests* — in both cases they are called of God. "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified*" (Rom. 8:28-30). "*Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus*" (Heb. 3:1). "*THOU...HAS MADE US UNTO OUR GOD KINGS AND PRIESTS...*" (Rev. 5:9-10).

There are no counterfeits in this realm, when God manifests reality. When God's kings and priests arise to bless the nations either you will "have it" or you won't "have it." As long as we

remain in the preparatory stage, experiencing the deep *inward* processings of the Lord, while this condition remains, I say, there is opportunity for men to proclaim themselves, to jump on the bandwagon, to mouth all the right words, to use the same terminology the Spirit has inspired among the apprehended ones, and appear as those chosen to kingship and priesthood. These "clouds without water" (Jude 12) "profess themselves to be wise" (Rom. 1:22), and some even lay claim to already being manifested as sons of God. Carried about by every wind of doctrine, presumptuously claiming that which they do not possess, they make their boasts, and many are deceived by their "great swelling words of vanity" (II Pet. 2:18).

But the day of manifestation approaches! There is a kingly people, a priestly people, a remnant in whom the Spirit of God is working a transformation. In due time God shall manifest this kingship and this priesthood and their NEW STATE OF BEING shall utterly silence all the false claims of carnal men. Conformed to HIS IMAGE, filled with His Spirit, the embodiment and personification of His wisdom, nature, grace, and power — no man will be able to counterfeit the reality of this new state of being in the power of His resurrection, and these shall redound to the glory of God. Obviously, "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God." It is an inworked transformation that is *God wrought*, for God starts it, God works it out, and God brings it to its consummation, it is ALL OF HIM and that is why the flesh and all the craftsmen of Babylon cannot duplicate such glorious, divine handiwork!

I do not hesitate to add that only those who *receive the call*, who come to realize that *they are*, beyond any shadow of doubt, apprehended to the Melchizedekian Order, will be FULLY PROCESSED AND POSITIONED AND BIRTHED INTO THE NEW ORDER FOR THE NEW AGE. Many come to this realization through a personal and supernatural encounter with the Lord. Each son must receive the call and each must come to fully *know Him* for themselves. In order to be a king-priest after the order of Melchizedek our existence must spring from our heavenly origin and not from our earthly one. The New Creation Life we have in Him becomes a super-charged power that lifts us above the law of sin and death into the power of HIS ENDLESS LIFE! This is the glory of mount Zion, and only such as flee out of the midst of great Babylon are enabled to turn their faces thither and commence the journey to these lofty heights!

Chapter 199

The Destruction Of Babylon (continued)

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her fornication, and *the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her...*" (Rev. 18:3).

Natural-minded men read of the "kings of the earth" and can only conceive of the outward and the literal. To them it bespeaks the actual kings, prime ministers, and presidents of the visible nations of earth. Though there is on one level a fulfillment in that realm, the quickening of the spirit upon the truth so vital for God's elect bids me look beyond the *letter of the word*, and receiving of the *spirit of the word*, and considering that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book* addressed to a *spiritual people*, we find that all that pertains to the kingdoms of this world lies first and foremost right within the heart of man, and there have been so many kings which have **ruled within us**, and as His kingdom unfurls its banner over our lives, these kings are subdued and brought to nought.

In the symbolism of the book of Revelation "heaven" answers to the realm of the spirit, "earth" answers to the dimension of the soul, while the "sea" signifies the body realm of flesh. Thus "earth" denotes the soulical realm both within and without, which is also the religious realm of man and the world. We know, of course, that the harlot is first the soul of our individual life which abandons its union with the spirit and fornicates with the flesh, but she is also an outward and corporate expression in the earth as the carnal or soulish church systems of man. This realm has its "kings," too! And then there are the kings or rulers of the nations with which the wanton harlot also commits fornication. You see, my beloved, we are dealing here not merely with the specific kings of any particular one of these realms, but with the divine **principle** that includes and applies to them all! Hers is a long career or harlotry, spread out over long centuries of time, and experimented with in many different realms and on various levels of experience.

She has loved to mix in the politics of this world and to influence the course of politics for her own ends, in fact, to control and dominate politics in the belief that she is superior. To the political leaders and systems who will play with her, she gives religious satisfaction upon her bed, to make them feel comfortable and fulfilled in their worldly course. Sons of God, too, must watch this! It is easy to think that we are somehow establishing righteousness by voting at the ballot box for a particular politician or political party, or by calling our senators and representatives to influence certain legislation. I do not believe it is wrong to vote or speak up for a good law, ordinance, or proposition, but we must know that neither our government or any other government on earth today represents the kingdom of God! You cannot legislate righteousness or spirituality, for the kingdom of God is **righteousness in the Holy Ghost** — not righteousness by a man-made **law!**

I would mention the "kings" within the church systems themselves which is but another facet of the harlot's fornication. Oh, let us once for all grasp this one great fundamental truth. Christ's church is not an *organization* — it is an *organism*, a living body of many spiritual members! Christ, and CHRIST ALONE, is the Head! But when man builds an organization of which he himself is the head, when he establishes for that church a man-made **head-quarters**, and when he begins to establish a man-made system of church government with its hierarchy, legislate and pass church laws, formulate creeds and disciplines, and institute rituals and ceremonies, he is merely manifesting that both the system and he himself are spurious. Of course there are many of the

Lord's people in hundreds of these organizations: let us not lose sight of that fact. How could the Holy Spirit send forth the call, "*Come out of her, my people...*" except that they are indeed HIS PEOPLE! And let us not lose sight of the fact that many of the founders of these organizations were honest and sincere believers in Christ, trying to do God's work in the only way they knew how. Yet they were ignorantly sincere. Having themselves been tutored by the "kings of the earth-realm," they understood not how to live, walk, and reign from the heavenlies. The whole trend of organization is to lead away from Christ the Head of the organism, and it induces man to look to man, the head of the organization, thus making the system the harlot and they themselves *the kings of the earth-realm*, the two together lying in one bed of spiritual fornication!

Only such as obey Christ's command to become separate from all defilement can ever be entrusted with the true riches of His everlasting kingdom and glory. Only such as reject the flatterings, the seducings, the lies and the deceptions of the harlot system can ever come to honor and power and majesty in the heavenly administration of God's ruling sons. Rebels and turncoats and spineless compromisers who have not the courage to walk in the righteousness of the kingdom of our Father, can only come to demotion and humiliation. Only such as faithfully serve the King of kings now, can ever be exalted to honor in His kingdom. Heavenly politics demand that those who will reign in the glory of God's great and eternal kingdom must now prove themselves true to the principles of the kingdom over which they are to reign. And while at the present time ear-ticklers and men-pleasers are popular with the apostate masses, yet all these shall come to shame. God cannot honor those who are working against His cause, no matter how loudly or lustily they may proclaim their own professions of sanctity and authority and their accomplishments and attainments. Our God does not consort with harlots, but He is even now preparing a wonderful feast of glorious things for that beautiful little *virgin church* which He presents to His firstborn Son at the marriage supper of the Lamb! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

THE MERCHANTS OF BABYLON

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the **merchants of the earth** are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies" (Rev. 18:3).

We are on familiar territory here for we have met all these before in various parts of the Revelation — the harlot, the Great City Babylon, her wine, her fornications, the inhabitants of the earth who have been made drunk on her wine and passion, and the kings of the earth who fornicate with her. But now we are introduced to an entirely new reality not mentioned or seen anywhere before in John's visions — the "merchants of the earth" and the "merchandise" they traffic in.

These are not merchants of the heavenly or spiritual realm, nor are they even merchants of the lower realm of the sea, that is, of the gross sins of the flesh. They are the merchants of the EARTH, the soulical or religious realm of man. It is out of this *soulical realm* that the leaders of the carnal church systems have "made merchandise" of the gospel. In different ways throughout history it has taken the things of God and used them for gain or outright sold them for money. Babylon in scripture is prominently the symbol for merchandising — buying and selling. The symbol applies both literally and spiritually. In other words, Babylon represents the buying and selling of literal merchandise between men and also represents the buying and selling of spiritual favors between men and God.

Years ago Ralph Woodrow published a little booklet titled "*Religious Fraud*" in which he chronicled the following: "During the 16th century, in order to raise funds for construction work on St. Peter's

Cathedral at Rome, a special drive was instituted to sell *indulgences*. Now an indulgence, though a mere piece of paper, carried with it the promise of special blessings — a quicker release from purgatory and a pardon for certain sins of the past or future. John Tetzel, a man of poor character and morals, but with ability as a quack fund raiser, was hired to sell indulgences in Germany. He preached that these indulgences were the most precious gift of God. We are told that he even went so far as to say that these certificates would pardon all sins which the purchaser should afterward desire to commit and that 'not even repentance' was necessary! His fervent appeals caused the rich to give large offerings and the poor to give their hard earned money — to obtain a piece of paper 'blessed' by the Pope, with promises that are contrary to both reason and scripture. Though Tetzel claimed to have orders from the Pope to burn any heretic who might oppose these 'most holy indulgences,' Martin Luther recognized the selling of such as religious fraud and spoke out against it. These things are of special significance, for it was this very protest which ultimately led to the Reformation!

"Another form of religious fraud, especially successful during the Dark Ages, was the selling of relics. Many Catholic cathedrals throughout Europe and other parts of the world claimed to have a piece of the *original* cross of Jesus. Were all of these pieces put together, however, *many* crosses could be made! Yet, and let us note this, these little pieces of wood were bought and sold over the centuries and miracles were attributed to them! Many have been the relics associated with the Virgin Mary — her skirts, wedding ring, slippers — and various churches in different parts of the world claimed to have a specimen of her hair, the folly of such claims now being seen in the fact that some are red, some brown, some blond, and some black! There have been times in history when immense quantities of skulls and skeletons were dug up and sold — sometimes a bone being represented as that of Peter, Paul, or some special saint or martyr! In Spain, what was claimed to be a part of the wing of the angel Gabriel, was under scientific investigation found to be a magnificent ostrich feather!

"We turn now to the *present*. On different occasions, we have known of preachers sending out little bottles of water to those who would send an offering. Possibly this water was taken from a pool in which certain people were baptized, or from the Jordan River or the Sea of Galilee, or it may have been ordinary water that the preacher had 'blessed.' Nevertheless, those who would send an offering to get some of this water, were promised great blessings and special favor with the Almighty as a result! Is this really any different than the Romish belief that water 'blessed' by a bishop is 'holy' water? One man said that 'God' told him to go to the bank and get brand new one dollar bills, pray over them, and write 'Philippians 4:19' on them. Each person who would give him \$100 would get one of these 'blessed bills' to put in his wallet for special prosperity. Some years ago a preacher was sending out what was called a '*miracle light bulb*.' Those who sent an offering of a certain amount, could obtain this blessed light bulb which he had prayed over. Upon receiving the bulb in the mail, it was to be placed in the light socket. As the person flipped on the switch he was to shout 'hallelujah' real loud to obtain the miracle needed. When no miracle happens, many still do not see that fraud was involved. They just figure their own faith was 'weak.'

"One of the common methods of getting money by such men is for them to say 'God told them' to raise money for this or that. They know *this* will impress some people to give like nothing else! In a Revival Center type church, for example, before the service began, a couple preachers were discussing what they would raise money for that night. One said, 'We can't raise money for the radio programs, we got more than we needed for that last night.' 'What about missionary pledges?' 'No, we can't do that tonight, we did that night before last!' 'I know,' the other said,

'let's tell them we need a big offering for our building program.' Then going before the people, after he felt they were emotionally stirred to the point that a good offering could be received, he said, 'GOD has just spoken to me! He said, Son. tell my people to give largely tonight; tell them to give into the building fund; tell them I will reward them one hundred fold, so folks, I have to obey God — GOD has spoken!' Our Lord says: 'I have not sent these prophets...I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied...they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart...behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, *He saith...*' (Jer. 23:21-31)" — end quote.

I doubt any will deny that those described above are among the MERCHANTS OF BABYLON. Such are obviously religious con men, deceivers, liars, shysters, crooks. They are the lowest of the low — yet — there are many more *respectable* merchants of Babylon who are highly esteemed among the Lord's people! Religion today is BIG BUSINESS. We are reminded of what one man wrote concerning Christianity. He said, "It started with Jesus and the twelve. Jesus preached the message of God's love as a message to be preached to the hearts of people. Then this message went to Greece and became a philosophy (Origen, Augustine, etc.). Then it went to Rome and became an institution, the Roman Catholic Church. Then it went to Europe and became a culture, the British Christian Culture. And then it came to America and BECAME AN ENTERPRISE." How true! Numbers and finances are the essential ingredients of enterprise. The predominate feature of most religious programs is that they are based upon numbers and the need for dollars. Yet how *contradictory* this is to God's priority of bringing forth the firstfruits of His creation order, only a small remnant, through whom He shall fulfill HIS PURPOSES proposed upon the WHOLE EARTH!

Have today's ministers never read the wondrous invitation penned by the faithful seer of Patmos? "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life FREELY" (Rev. 22:16-17). **FREELY!** Jesus, the Water of Life, hath given freely, freely, freely, freely for every man. It falls like the rain upon the evil and the just. "The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works." "The eyes of all wait upon Him, and to good and bad alike He openeth His hand, and freely supplieth the need of every living thing." We speak the truth in saying that GOD NEVER SELLS! Any gift or ministry that wants to *sell* God's gifts or God's word must be apostate. "God so loved the world , that He **gave** His only begotten Son." "My Father **giveth** you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He that cometh down from heaven, and **giveth life** unto the world." "Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God who **giveth us** richly all things to enjoy." "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who **giveth to all men liberally**, and upbraideth not." "But the manifestation of the spirit is **given** to every man to profit withal. For to one is **given** by the Spirit..."

Many years ago, in the early days of our kingdom walk, the Lord dealt with us very powerfully concerning the WAYS OF HIS KINGDOM. One of those kingdom principles is just this: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8). That is always God's way! Give — not sell. This is in contradistinction to religious Babylon's ways and practices. Merchandizing religion is BIG BUSINESS these days. A man claims to have received a special revelation from God on how to prosper, or receive healing, or fix your marriage, or lose weight, or raise your children, or move in the gifts of the Spirit, or become an overcomer, or attain to sonship, or whatever, and then he writes a book, preaches a sermon on CD or DVD and SELLS IT TO YOU. He freely received it, but he does not freely give it! Rather, he says, "God has revealed to me the secret of the seven

steps to sonship, and I'll sell it to you for \$15.00." Wonder what he will do when GOD POURS OUT HIS SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH and they don't need this man to sell them any revelation any more, because the LORD HIMSELF HAS FREELY GIVEN TO THEM "without money and without price" (Isa. 55:1). Think of it!

There will be tremendous manifestations of God's power and glory in the days to come, but let it be through purified vessels, that all glory and praise be given to God and no man misuses it for his own ends or gain. Let it be as the Lord instructed the prophet, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it" (Hab. 2:2). How dare we take the vision and write it out in a book, and SELL IT, as though it were "our vision" and "to be sold." When it is God's truth imparted into your heart, don't place your stamp on it, as though it originated with you and is therefore your possession to be dispensed with as you please, for financial gain or to build your own kingdom. It is not yours! We are what we are by the grace of God and everything from His hand is His free gift to us. So Paul writes, "I am not a *peddler* of God's message, like the most of them, but like a man of sincerity, like a man that is sent from God and living in His presence, in union with Christ I speak His message" (II Cor. 2:17, Williams Translation).

Where will those stand in the day of judgment who put a price on God's glorious blood-bought gospel? I have in my hand the account of one healing preacher who wrote thus: "When God impelled me to set a price on my instruction in healing, I could think of no financial equivalent for an impartation of a knowledge of that divine power which heals; but I was led to name \$300.00 for the price of each pupil in one course of lessons." I will tell you, preacher, God had no hand in your mercenary fee, and you are a liar. It is a lie to tell me or anyone that the great God and Father in heaven told you to charge in money for what, if you were really His servant, is God's free gift — divine healing. When Jesus sent forth His disciples, He said, "Preach the gospel, heal the sick... FREELY you have received, FREELY GIVE," and He never took that back, never! Where did you get your revelation from, preacher, to charge \$300.00 for twenty lessons on healing? Considering the multitudes that followed Jesus and the apostles, think how wealthy they could have become had the Father given *them* such instructions!

I have heard all the excuses from even some in this kingdom message who seek to justify their putting a price on their CD's and books. They claim that people just don't appreciate something that is handed to them free, that they have not paid some price for. Hogwash! If that were generally true, then no saint under God's heaven would appreciate his salvation, his healing, his baptism in the Holy Ghost, his answered prayers, or any of his multiplied blessings — because each and every one of them has been received *without money and without price*. If it is wrong to give things out free because people won't appreciate them, then God Himself is the biggest fool of all! That very thing is THE LAW OF HIS KINGDOM! Don't feed me that foolishness. Some place their books in the Christian book stores where they are compelled to charge for them so the publishing house and the store owner can make a profit. Their excuse for this is that that is a good way to reach people — put the message out there where Christians are shopping for something good to read. Sounds logical. The only problem is, you are then *adopting the very method and way of Babylon* which you profess to be crying out against! *Sin* is no excuse, no justification, preacher! We don't deliver people out of Babylon by becoming like them!

Some of the best known "born again" Hollywood personalities, should you inquire about engaging them to give their testimony at a meeting, will send their business manager over with a contract guaranteeing them several thousands of dollars for their forty-five minute appearance. This is not ministry, beloved — it is BIG BUSINESS! Furthermore, it is an abomination. "*Come out of her...lest ye be a partaker of her sins.*" The local Christian bookstore has become quite a

showcase for what is called “Christian bric-a-brac.” They are crammed full of every imaginable trinket, plaque, statue and artifact that they can sell with a religious flavor. Christian music albums sell for \$10.00 to \$20.00 apiece. The country is swarming with those who call themselves Christian speakers, musicians, bands, and singers who *charge* an admission fee to their seminars and concerts. Verily, I say unto you, the ticket prices are set and collected by the MERCHANTS OF BABYLON and they are a stench in the nostrils of a holy God and a spike in the hand of our dear Saviour. There is no biblical or spiritual foundation whatsoever for SELLING THE WORD OF GOD OR MERCHANDISING ONE’S MINISTRY — be it a Bible, a recording of songs and praises to God, a sermon, book, seminar, concert, or any other thing.

When God moves His mighty hand of judgment against Babylon we will see with our own eyes the very scene John beheld in that long ago in vision by the Spirit of the Lord. *“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; FOR NO MAN BUYETH THEIR MERCHANDISE ANY MORE”* (Rev. 18:9,11).

Many years ago I was inspired, encouraged, and instructed by the testimony of that great man of prayer, George Muller. George Muller was the man of faith from the orphanages in Bristol, England who literally “prayed in” every dime and dollar for that vast work. He never solicited funds, He never revealed the needs to others, He never asked anyone for a dime. He simply *prayed!* At the end of his life he writes, “For nearly seventy years every need in connection with this work has been supplied. The orphans, from the first until now, have numbered 9,500; but they have never wanted a meal. Hundreds of times we have commenced the day without a penney; but our heavenly Father has sent supplies the moment they were actually required...seven million, five hundred thousand dollars has been sent to me in answer to prayer (this was in the 1800’s!)...tens of thousands of times have my prayers been answered.

“When I first began to allow God to deal with me, relying on Him, taking Him at His word, and set out fifty years ago simply relying on Him for myself, family, taxes, traveling expenses and every other need, I rested on the simple promises I found in the sixth chapter of Matthew. I believed the Word, I rested on it and practiced it. I took God at His word. A stranger, a foreigner in England, I knew seven languages and might have used them perhaps as a means of remunerative employment, but I had consecrated myself to labor for the Lord, I put my reliance in the Lord who had promised, and He has acted according to His word. I’ve lacked nothing — nothing. I have had my trials and difficulties, and my purse empty, but my receipts have aggregated. I have received thousands and thousands of dollars, while the work has gone on these fifty-one years.

“Now, this is not, as some have said, because I am a man of great mental power, or endowed with energy, and perseverance — these are not the reasons. It is because I have confided in God; because I have sought God, and He has cared for the Institution, which, under His direction, has one hundred schools, with masters and mistresses, and other departments of which I have told you before. I do not carry the burden. And now in my sixty-seventh year, I have physical strength and mental vigor for as much work as when I was a young man in the university, studying and preparing Latin orations. I am just as vigorous as at that time. How comes this? Because in the last half-century of labor I’ve been able with the simplicity of a child, to rely upon God. I have had my trials, but I have laid hold upon God, and so it has come to pass that I have been sustained” — end quote.

I can add to this my own testimony. I have never in my life made a bargain for any spiritual service I rendered. I never received a salary, excepting for one six month period when I was among brethren who did not understand the principles of the kingdom, and then I did not ask or bargain for anything, I accepted what they were accustomed to give until I could expound to them more perfectly the way of the Lord. Then I told the brethren to cut off the salary and let me receive only the free-will offerings that the saints would be led of the Lord to hand to us, and it was done. In years past we served as ministry to several churches, traveled as an evangelist, took our family to three foreign countries, living and laboring for a total of six years on the mission fields, and for the past forty years or more have devoted our full time to writing and publishing the message of the kingdom of God, sending out from this office free of charge untold hundreds of thousands of articles and booklets all around the world. Never have we sent out any letter or gone to any meeting mentioning any need or asking or begging for money for either ourselves or the work.

Never in all these years have we gone hungry, or naked, or defaulted on any payment, or been foreclosed upon, or been stranded in any city or place, and though the expenses each month are large and increase every year, yet no bill has gone unpaid. I have trusted God, but I have worked hard, harder many times than I would have worked out in the secular world. And we have never charged for a book, or article, or sermon, or tape, or CD, or DVD, or any other thing we have shared with the saints. And our Father has graciously supplied every need — day by day. This is God's way, the principle of the kingdom of God, "Freely you have received, FREELY GIVE!" Oh, how good it has been to publish the gospel of the kingdom freely! That way the poorest widow woman on a small fixed income or the most destitute saint can receive in the same measure as those who have thousands of dollars to contribute to the work. No matter what anyone says, the contrary is a sham and a lie, and no evidence in the world can be given to prove otherwise.

The mark of a harlot is that she **sells** her affections. To receive her love you must pay! With a harlot nothing is free. There is always a price. And let me say it kindly, brethren, but let me also make it clear — one of the first marks of a ministry slipping back into the precincts of Babylonian religion is when they begin to **sell** the word of God so freely given them. When a price is put on their books, CD's, seminars, etc. — if you look closely you will soon begin to see other marks of Babylon upon them. True men of God minister the word and place no price, make no demands, seek no control, nor do they use any gimmicks, for their trust is in the Lord who called them and sent them. Putting a price on God's word is *spiritual wickedness*. It is wicked to put a price on that for which God Himself charged you nothing! Sure, it costs money to print and send out the word, and yes, even a minister of the Lord has to live. But if a man is doing God's work the Father Himself will see that it is supported in whatever fashion *He* chooses to supply. The moment a price is set, the poor among God's people, the widows, the unemployed, the elderly on fixed incomes, the prisoner, the little family struggling just to get the bills paid and put food on the table for the children, are all at once *denied* the word of God due to their inability to *pay for it!* And *that is criminal!*

Let me ask all who charge for their ministries, books, magazines, or CD's: If Christ sent you to do the work, why did He not supply its needs without you charging or begging? Why would the sovereign Lord of the universe not lay the need of His work upon the hearts of the faithful if the work is of Him? Has His word not told us that the Lord will supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus? If the Lord sent you to preach, to pray, to heal, to write, would He not supply your need as He did for His first disciples? "*And Jesus said unto them, When I sent you out with no purse or provision bag or sandals, did you lack anything? They answered,*

Nothing!" (Lk. 22:35, Amplified). If He will not supply your need would you not be justified in closing your doors and folding up the ministry? I certainly believe so. Oh, ye of little faith! That is the root of the matter. If God is going to apprehend me to do a work and then leave me to my own resources, to sell the gospel, to put a price on the incorruptible word of the omnipotent God, or to beg and plead with men to accomplish it, then there is undoubtedly something very wrong somewhere. Woe unto them that make the house of the Lord a place of merchandise! "Oh," they excuse themselves, "you can never accomplish anything great for God that way. If you do not remind, coax, stimulate, inspire, entice, and prod the people to give, they simply will not give. If you do not impress upon them the urgency of the need and pass the offering plate before their noses, the supply will dry up. You cannot do any great work without asking for money; it is simply impossible." God's people should never be deceived by these self-appointed promoters of God's work. They are merely men without faith, with no comprehension of the power of the kingdom of God! They are the **merchants of Babylon**.

Why should it be thought a thing impossible that God who heals the sick and raises the dead, and sustains the vast universe of hundreds of billions of stars and suns and planets and moons should supply the means of His own work miraculously in response to His servant's faith? It is so great a thing that if we did not have the assurance that we have a faithful God who is able to do it, we should simply say the thing is impossible. We should say that with the Indian Chief, who said, in the early days of this country, when Brainerd, the missionary, took the gospel to him and told him its requirements, "The thing is impossible, it cannot be done." "Yes," said Brainerd, "it can be done. You can be delivered from all your sins, and you can be meek, and humble, and lowly, and yet brave. You can cease to do evil." "I cannot," said the Chief, "it is impossible. The thing cannot be done." Walking up and down and to and fro in exceeding trouble of mind, at last the Chief stopped, and, looking at Brainerd, said, "It can be done, Missionary, if the Great Spirit will give me a new heart." "That is just it" said Brainerd. "The Great Spirit will give you a new heart. If you will ask God for Jesus' sake, the Great Spirit, the Holy Spirit, will come and give you a new heart." "*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*" "Then," said the Chief, "let us ask Him." And that was how he first began to pray. He asked the Great Spirit for a new heart, and he got it that day.

Oh! if only God's ministers would get a new heart and learn this great principle of the kingdom of God — "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU*" (Mat. 6:33). "*But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret SHALL REWARD THEE OPENLY*" (Mat. 6:6). It works. ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE TO HIM THAT BELIEVETH! God is still true, so I am willing to let every man be a liar. Today the Lord is shining the searchlight of His glorious presence into every nook and cranny of the house of the Lord, exposing all that is not of Him. All of man's perverted religion must go! All of religion's man-made schemes must end! I declare to you by the word of the Lord that the house of the Lord is being cleansed, and God is calling upon His elect to repent and turn from man's perversions. The Lord has come to His temple and is judging His house, even as He did during His earthly ministry, casting out those who buy and sell, overturning the tables of the moneychangers, purging His temple (church) of all those who have turned it into "a house of merchandise" and "a den of thieves" and no longer "the house of prayer" (Mat. 21:13).

I feel to share a couple testimonies from other brethren which I believe will prove both edifying and instructive to those who read. The first is from brother Bob Torango. "I'll never forget the time that I preached in a big-time church in Downy, California. This was in the early 1970's and I

was preaching the *sons of God* and *restitution* message at a little store-front church. It turned out that the people from the big church down the road started to hear the message and packed the little place out. After about a week of this, the pastor of the big church paid me a call and asked me to come to his church since most of his people were attending my services anyway. I prayed about it and the Lord told me to go. I was scared to death! T. L. Osborn was supposed to be following me the next week, and I hadn't ever preached to so many people at one time in my life. Like John, I was viewing all of this with great admiration (Rev. 17:6). All the musicians were very professional, the people all dressed sharp, the pews were padded, the carpet was luxurious, the pastor and his wife looked like movie stars. I was in awe!

"I proceeded to preach for a couple nights and about the third night the pastor got me alone in his study. He started out by telling me that He knew I was preaching *sons of God* and *reconciliation* and that he believed in this message himself, but he couldn't risk preaching it from the pulpit because he would lose his church. He then told me that he would like to sponsor me to start preaching on the big-time circuit, but I had to get some gimmicks incorporated into my ministry. He asked me if I couldn't start some orphanage somewhere just so I could present it to the people as something to give to, the understanding being that the **money** would never reach the fake orphanage, but would be used for my own needs. He said that he admired my ministry and that I had great potential on the 'circuit' of large churches he was affiliated with, but I had to do a lot of work on my offering taking. He said he would be willing to train me in the art of getting money out of the people, and before long I would be driving a big fancy car just like him and all the other big-time evangelists. Needless to say, I shut my meeting down with him and told him he wouldn't have to worry about losing his church because he had lost it already, along with any decency he might have had!"

"When I left that office I was so sick I had to struggle to keep from throwing up. **MONEY!** More preachers have sold their souls for it than any other single thing. The reason is simple. **MONEY** in itself is not evil, such as an act of fornication, drunkenness, and other vices. Everyone needs **MONEY** and therein lies the subtleness of its seduction. Don't think I wasn't impressed with the splendor of that church, because I was! I actually thought God was going to allow my ministry to reach more people and that the message of *life* could be heard and believed upon by the masses. Along with this I got to thinking that maybe I deserved to live a better lifestyle, since my wife and I had struggled with our finances for so many years; and after all, the laborer was worthy of a greater hire. My eyes were fixed on the wonder of the Whore, and I was finding all kinds of justification for getting connected to the CIRCUIT! As a young evangelist, it was the invitation to the big dance, an offering of the big enchilada, and I could have arrived at the top of the world!

"The big wake-up call came when I realized what I would have to do in order to get that greater hire. Something happens to a person when confronted with riches. A change comes over us when put in a position of possible wealth. I know we all swear we would never change if we suddenly were made wealthy, but invariably we do. There is a root of evil in us all, and the Bible declares it to be 'the love of **money**'! The church today has sold out its heavenly inheritance for a little earthly lucre. God has offered us a 'far more exceeding weight of glory,' but our eyes are filled with the things being offered to us by a seducing spirit that has convinced many a prophet to become her paid servant. Woe to the prophets that prophesy for **money**, and do not speak the words that come from God!"

"Everything that Babylon concerns herself with is a *business venture cloaked in religion*. She is a harlot. What is the difference between a wife and a harlot? They both have physical relations with a man, but one is an act of love and the other is an act of business. The act is the same, but

the difference is in the exchange of MONEY. Babylon is in love with only one thing — MONEY. She uses everything else to get more wealth and thereby she spends money to make more money. Think about it!

"The biggest money-making machine in the modern church is the world-wide satellite TV networks. They run twenty-four hours every day and reach millions of people with the message, 'Tis more blessed to give than to receive.' I know they do good works and all of that. I know that they reach souls for the Lord, but with what hidden motives? They look like one big happy family on television, don't they? Smiling and joking and bragging on each other. Call me a cynic if you want, but I would dare to say that the conversation off camera isn't quite so congenial! I would venture to say that their time is spent on the following questions. Who's No 1? Who's getting more air time than the other? Who draws more money? Who gets more mail? Who's on the host's right hand this week and who is on the left, and who gets dropped because of poor ratings? Without question, these are the topics of discussion in the back rooms of the studios, and they involve positioning and posturing for the opportunity to make more MONEY!

"Cutthroat competition is on the religious shows just as much as on the worldly shows. That's Entertainment! And it is **money** that speaks the loudest. When the bills come due, and we are taking in millions of dollars here, men and women do strange things to keep from losing the almighty dollar. Beg, borrow, and steal are just a few of the things. God help us all to guard against the stench of this Harlot system. Yes, they preach the word, they sing beautiful songs, they pray for the sick and the sick recover, but notice that *nothing* is done without the mention of MONEY! If we all knew how much money was brought in by the Christian Networks we would all be amazed. Bob Tilton, Jimmy Swaggert, Jim Bakker and others were thrust into the spotlight by their escapades in schemes to make more MONEY. They opened up a Pandora's box in a system that produced mansions worth millions of dollars, bank accounts known and others never known filled with thousands upon thousands of dollars, and lifestyles worthy of the rich and famous. All of this is on public record. Why would we believe that anything is different with those that are in that same arena but haven't been exposed? I hate to say it, but the present church system has sold itself out for MONEY!

*"Hear this, I pray you, ye **heads** of the house of Jacob, and **princes** of the house o f Israel...the **heads** thereof judge for reward, and the **priests** thereof teach for hire, and the **prophets** thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest'* (Micah 3:9-12). Notice that the word of judgment is to the HEADS, PRINCES, PRIESTS, and PROPHETS. It is the **leadership** that is making merchandize of the house of God! Mystery Babylon has made a league with the '**merchants**' and the '**kings**' of the earth! They all love Babylon because Babylon has made them rich! She is the answer to their lust for MONEY! The apostle Paul ran into this same love for money when the makers and sellers of idols in Ephesus caused a riot among the people because Paul's preaching put fear in their hearts that their craft of making silver idols to the Goddess Diana would dry up. Their concern was the making of MONEY, not in truth or error. You can be sure that the same concerns are in the leaders of the modern Fundamental Church. When faced with truth that doesn't profit them financially they will suddenly grow very fervent in their fight against heresy. In truth they are seeing a financial risk in preaching things that demand the people to do more than sit in their pews and 'Amen' the preacher and pay their tithes and offerings. The concern is over MONEY, not heresy!

"There have been some ministers who are supposedly preaching a ***kingdom-lite*** message (of the low-fat, low-substance variety) that have been allowed on the Christian television networks with high hopes of reaching many more people with the message of the Kingdom. Sadly, they start out full of alarming statements of truth, then after a period of time, just enough time to get used to a more luxuriant lifestyle, their message becomes milky and barely discernible as ***Kingdom***. Oh, the power of MONEY! It must never be underestimated! If I could have the ear of every minister of Present Truth I would cry aloud to them of the danger of MONEY.

"I have seen the henchmen of the television networks that try their best to convince God's people that Jesus preached that we should all be millionaires. It would be downright hilarious if it wasn't so sad to see these business people flashing diamond rings and Rolex watches at the screen while telling us that Jesus loved money and we should too. If we would just sow a little 'seed' their way, in the form of cold cash, why we would have a harvest of Cadillacs and mansions in no time. A flash of white teeth, an honest Abe face, slick Hollywood settings, and who wouldn't believe them and send in your name and address to receive your free set of teaching CD's, absolutely ***free***, for a 'love offering' of \$50.00! Heaven help us. What will be these poor minister's state of mind if the money market collapses? People threw themselves out of high-rise windows during the Great Depression. MONEY is their god, and if it is taken away they will be without hope. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God!

"If you doubt that the church is in this bad of shape, let me remind you that religion has the history of spawning some of the greatest con-men and con-women known to mankind. Our greatest test will not be devils, or men, or dragons. Our greatest test is going to be how we handle the finances of the Kingdom. One cannot imagine the lure of filthy lucre! It will cause your message to change, your ministry to lose its edge, your vision to dull. If not handled with extreme care, it will impair your judgment of right and wrong. Over the years my wife and I have had many preachers of the present truth tell us that they are going to go to the harlot system and deliver it from its Babylonian ways. Unfailingly, each one has changed his message just enough to be accepted among the ***princes and merchants of Babylon***. How easy it is to become a star to the lesser orders! The people are so hungry in the pews, you could throw them *crumbs* of the Kingdom and they would think they are eating steak! Each preacher who has gone to the Whore has been wooed by her compliments and favors. They soon wind up driving better cars, living in nicer homes, getting larger offerings. What's wrong with that? you ask. Don't they deserve all those things? Yes, they do. My question is, from my own experiences, What did they have to do to get them? '*Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her (the harlot's) ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death*' (Prov. 7:24-27).

"Let us be perfectly honest and frank about what we preach. It is a message that is contrary to the nature of men. It grates against the religious spirit. It reveals the man of sin in the temple of God, puts the spirit of Antichrist on the judgment seat of God, shines a piercing light upon the hypocrisy of a corrupt leadership, says 'Woe, woe, woe' to the prophets who prophesy to please the flesh of men instead of God, demands the beheading of every priest who stands in the Holy Place and declares himself to be the mouth-piece of God, expounds on the futility of men who preach about God without ever having a personal experience of His all-saving love and grace. God is out to get a generation for Himself! Let the children play, but you priests of the Most High get yourselves up into the mountain and wait upon the Lord! In the stillness, in the quietness of the secret place of the Most High, there is a Word that will change our lives. If we will avail

ourselves of this word, Babylon will have no power over us. Our eyes will be for the Lord only. Our only purpose will be to bring honor and glory and majesty to His name! When we have been delivered from the love of **money**, then we will be ready to lead the people to the next summit. Otherwise we will only lead them to hell" — end quote.

The second testimony is that of brother Gary Sigler. He writes, "My wife and I have given much of our lives helping men build their kingdoms. We literally have worked 14, 15, 16 hours a day, working to build other ministries. And because out hearts were to serve God, then even though we didn't understand that we were helping men build their *own* kingdoms, we have been abundantly blessed in our life. Do we have a lot of money? No! But we have everything we need, and we are now sending thousands of Kingdom books and CDs all over the world every month. There is no lack in the Kingdom of God! We know that. If the money ever stops, then I will know that God wants me to do something else. And to be frank with you, what we are doing now is a lot of work. If God wants to take me in another direction, that's fine. But we are so happy. Our household is ecstatic every day.

"I had a minister call me here recently, and he said, 'How do you do what you do? How do you offer to give away all this stuff? We tried this a few years ago and we couldn't make it, giving the stuff away.' Well, this won't work for everyone, and the reason for that is, the principles are going to work, but if you are not doing what God wants you to do, then the finances are not going to come. That is your protection. If I think God is sending me to Africa, but I have to go *raise the finances* for it, then I shouldn't go.

"It's only been since 1995 that I have been introduced to all those other ministries that operate this way. I didn't know there was anybody else that operated like we did — (here he named several) — there are so many men and women in the earth today that are moving in the realm of the Kingdom. I know a lovely couple that have a ministry, and their writings go all over. He just recently sent me every one of his manuscripts and he said, 'Gary, they are yours, you can send them all over the world.' He said that he just felt that I should have them. Would you please show me just one Christian author who is *buying and selling books* who would give me his manuscripts to do that with? But you see, these men and women whom God has raised up today really do *know their source!*

"I was in Elwin Roach's home a few months ago and I wanted to make a phone call. As I pulled out my calling card, he said, 'Brother, don't do that.' I said, 'Elwin, I don't want you to pay for my phone call.' He said, 'Gary, there's only one treasure house. The same God who pays your bills pays my bills; don't you believe He can pay for that phone call?' This is Kingdom! This is what our hearts have longed for year after year. And it's here. You'll find some of the most precious people, if you haven't met them yet you will be so blessed by people who are not manifesting anything but Christ. And folks, this is something I've said for years — you had better be careful if you are going to let a man teach you and minister to you — you'd better be careful and know that he's a godly man because, like it or not, men who believe what they say will reproduce in you that which they are. We are so blessed today to have so many ministers who know their true identity and can reproduce Christ within those they minister to" — end quote..

In closing this article I am impressed to share the following illustration which someone sent my way. It hits the nail squarely on the head, revealing with unmistakable clarity just *what spirit* the "**merchants of Babylon**" are of!

To: Jesus, Son of Joseph
Woodcrafters Carpenter Shop

Nazareth, Israel

From: Jordan Management Consultants
15 Zion Road
Jerusalem, Israel

Subject: Staff Team Evaluation

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new ministry organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; and we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each

of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant...

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education, and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capacity.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind, and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture...

Chapter 200

The Destruction Of Babylon (continued)

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues**" (Rev. 18:4).

John was still physically on the earth as he heard another voice out of the heavens of the spirit, not the same voice he heard before crying mightily that Babylon is fallen, but another voice, that is, a different word than the first word — for this word is not directed to John personally, but to God's people in general. It was a prophetic call to all true believers, to all who have an ear to hear the Spirit, to *come out* of "Babylon the great." It was a call appropriate to John's day, and it has been appropriate throughout the entire church age, and especially so at this present time at the transition of the ages. On more than one occasion in scripture, God has issued an invitation, addressed to a specific group, and introduced with the word "come." Interestingly, of the many definitions of the word "come" in the dictionary, the primary meaning is "to move from a place thought of as *there*, to or into a place thought of as *here*." It is just such an invitation that is given in our text!

The celestial call to "Come out of Babylon, my people," is better understood when we clearly see that *the Lord's people are in that mighty city of Religious Babylon!* This is a great mystery, and my prayer to God is that He may give all who read these lines the spirit of wisdom and revelation to perceive and see the true nature of all things. In the Old Testament it was God's people Israel that was led away captive into the Babylon of that day. The captives there by the river Chebar were the Lord's people! And the Lord's people were *not themselves Babylon*, but they were in captivity *in Babylon*. It is here that we must distinguish between the Lord's *people* and the *system* so many are involved in. The leading of the Lord in our lives has been two-fold. First, we seek to fellowship with all the Lord's precious people, regardless of their level of growth and development in Christ. They are HIS and I do not hesitate to call them my brothers and sisters, and I am mature enough to relate to them right where they are. Just as I can play with my grandchildren without looking down my nose at them or denigrating them for their immaturity, so I can fellowship with any believer without putting on an air of superiority. At the same time, we cannot, DARE NOT fellowship the Babylon System that believer is in! We can and will fellowship anyone — but we **will not** fellowship their system! This means that much of our fellowship is confined to a "one-on-one" basis — after we get past those who refuse to fellowship *us* at all because they judge us to be heretics, separatists from the body of Christ, or something worse!

Let us now notice that even in Babylon God honors His people! God always honors the seeking heart and faith — even in spite of their weakness, immaturity, carnality, and the fleshly system they may be bound in. Somewhere along the line they have not fully walked with the Lord or they *wouldn't be* in captivity in Babylon! Israel of old was there because of rebellion and idolatry! On far away Patmos John beheld in vision seven golden candlesticks. He also saw *in the midst* of the candlesticks One like unto the Son of man (Rev. 1:12-13). These are wonderfully significant words! The candlestick realm is the *church realm!* The One John saw was not in this instance seated upon His golden throne in the heavens. He was not standing in a rainbow before a waterfall, nor was He standing upon the dizzying heights of mount Zion.

Oh, no! He was standing *in the midst* of the seven golden candlesticks! He is standing *in the midst* of the churches! Now, we also know that there were some serious problems in the seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation! There was sin, carnality, error, pride, the Jezebel spirit (spiritual harlotry, Babylon), the Nicolaitane spirit (hierarchy, elevation of the clergy, man's control), the doctrine of Balaam (compromise), lukewarmness, and so on. The Lord admonished and rebuked the churches for these conditions!

My beloved brethren, I am as much opposed to religion and man-made, organized, carnal minded, fleshly religious systems as any man alive today. This has been my passion since that blessed day when the voice of Christ first fell upon my ear bidding me, "Come out of her." At the same time I recognize the *church* as something beyond the system of man, something in the *spirit* made up of those who *in and by the spirit* are the Lord's people. Now, there are those who come out of Babylon and they appear to be "another church." Some even deny that those in Babylon are the church! Coming out of Babylon does not then **make you the church**. All of God's people **are the church** by virtue of their union with Christ *in their spirit* — including those in Babylon! When God calls you out of Babylon you are His "called out" on a different or higher level than those in Babylon who have been "called out" of sin and alienation from God. But both are "called out" and all are "the church." The *people* are the church, the *system* is *not* the church. The truth becomes very clear when we consider the seven churches of Asia! Most of them were already living in some form of religious Babylon, yet they were the Lord's church whom He both praised and rebuked!. I thank God for the *church*, the seven golden candlesticks! It will greatly aid our understanding to see how the Lord Jesus, the Son of man clothed in the garment of His priesthood, with eyes of discernment like flames of fire, with burning feet of judgment like unto brass heated red-hot in a furnace, and the two-edged sword of His living word flashing out of His mouth, walks IN THE MIDST OF EACH OF US AND ALL OF US whom He has redeemed by His precious blood! Isn't it true that nearly all of us were *in the church systems* when we first heard the *Voice*? Was not the Lord walking in our midst even *then*, even in the midst of all the wretchedness of that harlot system and of our very own immaturity, ignorance, and carnality? Who can deny it!

In chapters two and three of the Revelation we see the seven conditions within the seven churches, good and bad, positive and negative, spiritual and carnal, commendable and reproachable. The Lord is right there in the midst of every one of those conditions! He walks in the midst of the churches, in the midst of their love, strength, patience, righteousness, truth, and faithfulness, and also in the midst of their weakness, faults, failures, fornication, false doctrine, nakedness, rebellion, and shame. The Lord is there in the midst of every condition! In the midst of images, crucifixes, candles, incense, holy water, ritual, and ceremony the Lord walks! In the midst of man-centered, flesh oriented programs and promotions the Lord walks! In the midst of organization, man-made structures, and grasping after men to draw them into the *system* and hold them in its clutches, the Lord walks! He condescends to come down right into the midst of all this religious foolishness and live and walk and move in their midst to bless men right where they are. What love! What matchless love! We cannot deny that He is there, touching men, saving men, delivering men, quickening men, healing, encouraging, strengthening, responding to heart-cries, answering prayers, *doing wonders!* I have witnessed "evangelistic crusades" where men were dangled over the flames of hell as a means of scaring them into the loving arms of Jesus, and when the frightened people ran to the altars screaming and crying out to God for mercy, He was *merciful*, for He was there and He met them there on that level, soothing their troubled souls and bringing salvation into their lives. What love! What humility! What condescension! What goodness! What compassion! Even the Psalmist recognized the great tenderness and

faithfulness of the Lord to walk wherever we walk when he cried out, “*If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there!*”

No wonder Paul the apostle admonished the saints, “*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that HE might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that HE might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*

” (Eph. 5:25-27).

Whatever work is wrought in our lives it is HE who does it! You will notice I put the emphasis on the word “HE” in the precious passage above. Oh, yes, place the emphasis on “HE,” for this is the work of the almighty Christ of God! It is HE who loved us and gave Himself for us, it is HE who sanctifies and cleanses us, and it is HE who shall present us to Himself a glorious church without spot, or wrinkle, holy, and without blemish. HE is the One leading His people! HE is the One who causes us to come out of Babylon! HE is the One who speaks from heaven, saying, “Come, and I will show you the whore.” If we have truly seen her for what she is, it is HE who birthed within our heart that blessed revelation. HE arranges the situation, HE determines the circumstances — HE is the One who CAUSES! When HE causes us to come out from Babylon, it is not to pick up the fruitless habit of wandering, nor to search for another group that is more to our liking, for that is not a “coming out,” that would only be exchanging one kingdom of Babylon for another. I do not mean by that that God will not *lead you* to fellowship others in a corporate way, but that is a different matter — when we are *led by the Spirit* we will be in the pasture where HE leadeth and where HE feedeth — not in a place we sought out by our own self-effort. God is leading a people out of the systems of man, out of the entrappings of Babylon. He is not exchanging one form of Babylon for another one — HE would bring us *out completely*, and then bring us INTO A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION IN HIM!

Make no mistake about it, HE WILL HAVE A GLORIOUS CHURCH, and it is the result of building — He is both the Author and the Finisher. There is a tremendous purging process on the horizon among the many groups and institutions of man, for although the systems themselves are Babylon, yet those within the systems are HIS PEOPLE. They may be but abused and brainwashed babes in Christ — but He will finish in them what He has begun! Oh, yes, there is a work begun, and salvation is a process, and those touched with His salvation are HIS, but in need of such purging and processing. The responsibility is HIS, for He is the One who has loved them and has redeemed them unto Himself, and line upon line Christ will work in each heart, every man in his own order, from glory to glory, until every man is made *complete in Him*.

God is now performing this great work in His **firstfruit company**, and we are experiencing what it means to be refined by fire, purged, purified, changed, transformed, and conformed to the image of the Son of God! For the called-out firstfruits the *place* is HERE, and the *time* is NOW! The work taking place in the lives of God’s sons in this hour is but the *first step* in God’s great redemptive, reconstructive, and restorational purpose. When God has finished His purifying, all who name the name of Christ will advance into heights and depths in Him! Mystery of mysteries, Christ *loved the church* and gave Himself for it that He might *sanctify and cleanse and present it to Himself* (as a *bride*) a GLORIOUS CHURCH without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. What anticipation this stirs in our hearts! The final vision of this glorious church is the NEW JERUSALEM COMING DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN PREPARED AS A BRIDE ADORNED FOR HER HUSBAND. And contrary to the teaching of some, this is not Israel, the wife of Yahweh — this is the church, the **bride of Christ!** The book of Revelation was not written

or sent to Israel — it was written and sent to the church! The New Jerusalem is ***the ultimate reality of the church!*** Aren't you glad!

There are two calls of the Spirit in relation to Babylon. The first is, "COME HITHER, *and I will show you...the great whore.*" The second is, "COME OUT OF HER, *my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*" "Come out!" Simple to say, but much harder to understand and do. It is impossible to do it in the flesh or by any human decision or self-effort. It is not first and foremost a *physical* departure, it is a *spiritual* departure! If you attempt this in the flesh you will only bring the spirit of Babylon away with you and raise it up again in your new endeavor. You must rise up in the spirit, as John, just to see her. "Come hither!" Arise from the lowlands of ignorance, deception, fraud, cunning, and trickery of man, from the soul encumbered with lies, misconceptions, misrepresentations, falsehoods, error, sense-knowledge, tradition, and static creeds and doctrines of men — arise until you ascend the mount of God from whose majestic peak you behold the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, the city of *truth* and *life* and *reality* and *glory* built into a living form and expression through a people who live out of the heavens of *the spirit*. Ascend until you become conscious of THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS, THE ETERNAL AND GLORIOUS REALITY OF THE SPIRIT, THE OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPOTENCE OF THE CHRIST WITHIN! Then, precious friend of mine, you will look with anointed eyes and quickly see and discern the difference between the *virgin* and the *harlot!* "Come hither," saith Christ, "*and I will show you!*"

You will understand a great mystery when you see that in the Revelation, in connection with the bride and the harlot, there are *four* companies. On the one side there is the sun-clad woman (the virgin bride of Christ), and then there is her child, the manchild (manifest sons of God). On the other side there is the great whore (the mother of harlots), and then there are her many daughters (the great city Babylon). Some precious people, because they have separated from some Babylonish denomination and have come out of the church systems of man *assume* that this was the "mother church" birthing them into sonship. This, my beloved, is a grievous *error!* No one is "birthed" into sonship by coming out of the church system! The "mother" of the manchild is ***not the harlot church system,*** for she can only birth harlot daughters like unto herself! It is the ***virgin church*** made up exclusively of a people who have fled out of Babylon by revelation of the Spirit and have followed on to become truly *virgin* unto the Lord, now clothed with the living glory of Christ (sun), crowned with the twelve stars of God's governmental authority, and having the cold, imitative, reflective light of the moon (ritual, ceremony, program, and creed) put under foot — this is the ***virgin church, the glorious sun-clad woman*** — ah, this is the "mother" who births the manchild!

When the Spirit cries, "Come out of her, my people," this is not His call to sons. This is His call urging a people to come out of the defilements of the harlotry of Babylon and be *cleansed* — that they might by the washing of regeneration and the miracle of sanctification become an entirely new creation — a virgin — unto Christ. And it is this *virgin company* that shall deliver to this sin-cursed world a *manchild*, a *male child*, a full redemption company of *sons of God*, overcomers, partakers of the divine nature, fully developed unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ, transformed in His pure and holy nature, imbued with His glorious mind, invested with His omnipotent power and authority, raised up in the power of His resurrection life, the many-membered "seed" of the many-membered "woman" which shall "bruise the head of the serpent" as he conquers sin and death within himself, dethrones satan, blesses and rules the nations, and

liberates the whole vast creation from the bondage of sin, sorrow, corruption, and death. O how wonderful are these things!

As I mentioned earlier, to truly “come out” of Babylon involves more than merely physically leaving a system. First of all it denotes a heart condition — a paradigm shift within ourselves — by which our thinking, understanding, and experience take on an altogether new and different meaning, purpose, and goal. Our spiritual life now revolves in an orbit and around a center that is different from those around us and different from our own previous experience. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the **Pattern Son**, was the first to walk this out and demonstrate it for all to see — hence He is called “...*the firstborn among many brethren.*”

As I have walked with the Lord for many years and the ever increasing wonder of the glory of God’s Christ has unfolded to my wondering spirit, I have come to realize that not only did our Lord speak in parables, but His *whole life* from the hour of His birth in Bethlehem to the day of His ascension into heaven was in itself a *parable* and a *mighty sign* of wonders which were to come in the lives of those apprehended to live and walk in that same blessed realm of sonship to God. His glorious life was a heavenly and divine life and those who have been born of His spirit and washed in His blood are called upon to walk even as He walked all the way into the fullness of God. In the light of this blessed truth I now declare that the wonderful life of the first-born Son was in itself a parable, expressly prefiguring the life, walk, experience, and destiny of all those holy sons of God who should follow after Him.

In this marvelous parable of parables, the life of the Son of God, is found this remarkable story of how His own family seized upon Him to take Him away by force because, said they, “He is mad!” The story is found in chapter three of Mark’s Gospel. “And He (Jesus) went up on the hillside and called unto Himself those whom He wanted and chose, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve to continue to be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach and to have authority and power to heal the sick and to drive out demons...then He went to a house, but a throng came together again, so that Jesus and His disciples could not even take food. And when those who belonged to Him (His kinsmen) heard it, they went out to take Him by force, for they kept saying, **He is out of His mind, beside Himself, deranged, mad!** And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, **He is possessed by Beelzebub, and, by the help of the prince of demons, He is casting out demons**” (Mk. 3:13-22), Amplified).

“He is mad!” His kinsmen after the flesh said. And I declare to you that from the world’s standpoint, *the charge is true*. It is useless to denounce this as a libel, a bitter, blasphemous slander. They could not be expected to understand the strange things Jesus was saying and doing, and from their human observation *it was true!* Your favorite psychiatrist today would probably reach the very same conclusion. There was no alternative. Either He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, or He was beside Himself. A holy and divine and heavenly life is always a phenomenon. A life which lives and moves after the principles of the kingdom of heaven is always a wonder. The world knoweth it not. It is either supernatural or weird. For what is being beside oneself? What is madness? It is **eccentricity** — ec-centr-icity — having a *different center* from other people! Webster defines eccentricity as: Not having the same center, as two circles; not having the axis exactly in the center; out of the ordinary; deviating from the norm, as in conduct; unconventional. Here is a man, for instance, who devotes his life to collecting objects of antiquarian interest, old coins perhaps, or old editions of books, or perhaps nothing more sensational than stray dogs or cats. His center is odd, his life revolves in an orbit of his own, his center is different from those around him, therefore his friends say, he is eccentric.

This was the pronouncement concerning the firstborn Son of God by His kinsmen after the flesh and by the religious leaders of Israel. Jesus wanted nothing of the religion of the scribes and Pharisees. He held nothing but contempt for the organized religion of that day, for the blinding traditions of the learned and prestigious Rabbis, the distorted and false doctrines of the Pharisees who walked about with the most imposing and pretentious titles, clothed in elaborate and gorgeous vestments, loving the chief seats in the synagogue, and binding upon the people heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, with all sorts of rules and regulations. Because He was a SON, Jesus' center was in nothing of earth, nothing of the physical world, nothing of the external order, nothing of man-made structures. Unlike other religious teachers He gives us no detailed instructions about what we are to do or not do; He does not tell us either to eat or drink, or to refrain from eating or drinking certain things. He does not tell us to carry out any ritual observances nor to keep certain days and seasons. He built no church buildings nor did He initiate any building programs, but He did say, "*The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father...the hour cometh and now is when true worshippers shall worship the Father IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH*" (Jn. 4:21-23).

Jesus did not establish any form of ecclesiasticism, or any hierarchy of officials, or any organizational structure, but He did say, "*Be not ye called Rabbi (Teacher, Master, Doctor): for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters (leaders): for one is your Master (Leader), even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant*" (Mat. 23:8-10). Can we not see by this that the blessed realm of **sonship to God** is an UNSTRUCTURED REALM for it is not of earth (form), but of heaven (essence); not of external or physical things, but of Spirit and Truth. Jesus never concerned Himself with external structures of organization, buildings, programs, choirs, ceremonies, nor any other carnal thing. He ministered LIFE, REALITY, SPIRIT, AND TRUTH AND SET THE CAPTIVES FREE. Period. He was unusual. He would not follow the methods and techniques of either the world or religion. He would not go with the multitude. And men were expected to go with the multitude! What the multitude thought, said, or did, were the right things to have thought, said, and done. Anyone who thought, said, or did differently, his folly be upon his head, he was beside himself, he was mad! And none of those things were of any consequence to Jesus!

Now all this was very eccentric. It was living on new lines altogether. He did God's will. He pleased not Himself. His center was to one side of Self. Therefore He was beside Himself! From the standpoint of the world, religion, and the flesh it was simply madness. Think of this idea of His, for instance, of starting out into life with so visionary an idea as that of *doing good with no strings attached* — no offering plate, no books for sale, no monthly newsletter informing about all the triumphs and needs of the work, no gadgets offered to those sending in a love offering, no special blessings or prophecies pronounced on those who "obeyed God" in contributing \$50.00 or more to the Kingdom work, no brochure on how to make out your will and leave your estate to the Lord's ministry. Jesus did not operate in worldly methods and techniques. Yes — they had a money bag, and obviously people supported the work, but it was done spontaneously under the direction of the Holy Spirit, not any promotion of man. Man was not His center, God was His center. His trust was not in God's people, His trust was in GOD HIMSELF! His God and Father was His source of life and supply.

Yes, Jesus was eccentric. He had a different center from other people. From the world. From the world's viewpoint He was beside Himself, mad. Think of this absurd notion that He had come into the world to usher in a kingdom in which God's will would be done on earth as it is done in

heaven and that God's mind would direct all things and God's life would quicken all things and bring all men and every nation under the blessedness of heaven's perfect order. It never ceases to amaze me how deep-seated and deep-rooted within the masses of Christianity are all the things which Jesus denounced, and how scarce are the **realities** which He spoke and manifested in the world. Because the average Christian today has been brought up with a CENTER OTHER THAN CHRIST he is totally unable to think except in terms of established orders, sects, denominations, creeds, assemblies, doctrines, meetings, communions, baptisms, programs, outreaches, campaigns, pastors, choirs, rituals, ceremonies, vestments, offerings, tithe envelopes, drives, conferences, elections, board meetings, committees, Sunday Schools, Seminaries, church buildings, fellowship halls, stained glass windows, robes, special numbers, special speakers, and the list could just go on and on and on! Think of it, beloved, Jesus used not one single one of any of those things! And yet He turned the world upside down! He had a different center. It was the right center. And it is the same center for every *son of God!* After men have spent a whole lifetime of this feverish "church activity," how many people are there who have taken time to wait on God long enough to HEAR HIM SPEAK AND DIVULGE HIS WILL TO THEIR SEEKING HEARTS? I declare to you of a truth that any man or woman who will *purge himself from these things* and take the time to seek God and God alone, hungering and thirsting after God's mind, God's heart, and God's eternal will — that man will find himself drifting away from all these aforementioned things and from there on THE MIND OF CHRIST will be his program, his quest, his eternal joy.

I can tell you of a certainty that every man who lives like Christ produces the same reaction upon the world as did the first-born Son. This is an inevitable consequence. What men thought of Him, they will think of you and me. The servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord. If they misunderstood Him, they will misunderstand you. If they persecuted Him, they will persecute you. A son is simply different from other people! Time has not changed the essential difference between the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christ, nor between religion and reality. They are radically different! And from the world's standpoint and from religion's standpoint sonship is eccentricity! For what is sonship? It is the projection into the world of a people who live out the very same LIFE OF CHRIST that Jesus lived. The LIFE OF CHRIST is not the historical story of a man who walked the earth two thousand years ago. The LIFE OF CHRIST is the very spirit of Jesus lived out in those who are members of His body, called to the high calling in Him. This is what makes the sons of God eccentric. There is no sanctioned place in the world as yet for a life with God and *only God* as both its source and its goal.

Let all who would be followers of the Lamb upon Zion's holy mount know that sonship is no milk-and-water experience. It is a *fire!* It is a *sword!* It is a burning, consuming heat, which must radiate upon everything around. The transformation from the world and from the religious systems of man to the *Christ-life* is so remarkable that when one really undergoes it, he cannot find words in common use by which he can describe its revolutionary character. He has to recall the very striking phrases of the New Testament: A new *birth*, a new *mind*, a new *heart*, a new *man*, a new *creature*, a new *creation*. His very life, the old Adamic life, has been dissolved and re-crystallized round a new center! Let a man depart from iniquity, let him depart from the myriad traditions of religion and make CHRIST AND CHRIST ALONE the center of his life and he will soon discover that the impression his friends receive from him now is the impression of eccentricity. The change is bound to strike them, for it is radical, it is central. They may even say what they said of Jesus, "He is beside himself, deranged, **mad!**" Or they might even say, "He is possessed by **Beelzebub!**" And it cannot be helped. We have a different center!

Many precious brethren are perplexed that we no longer find any desire to fellowship with them in their religious ceremonies, rituals, and sacraments; in their so-called "holy days" and festive seasons, in their carnal programs, in their static creeds and petty doctrines, in their fleshly board meetings and organizations. They wonder why we don't run from meeting to meeting, to hear every preacher, and teacher, and prophet, and healer, and miracle worker who passes through town. I do not want to beat around the bush in what I am saying, but I want to speak my earnest convictions with clarity and assurance. I find that even the Christian bookstores with their endless shelves of books filled with spiritual Pablum, if not with spiritual nonsense, have become a stench to my spirit. I tell you of a truth that I find the vast majority of Christian radio and television, with their showmanship, religious racketeers, and confusion of tongues to be nothing more nor less than ambassadors of the kingdom of Babylon. I sometimes refer to them as the BBN — the Babylon Broadcasting Network. These things satisfied once, but now I have tasted of the fruit of a tree more delicious, satisfying, and life-giving than all — CHRIST HIMSELF! I have changed centers.

Every saint of God and every group of saints who are moving on in God, had to come out of the Babylon that they discovered themselves to be in. Every one had to come out of the system that is death, that had a stranglehold on their spiritual walk and progress in God. We have had to come out of confusion, and we do not count ourselves as being out completely as yet, but we have come as far as He has led and enabled. There is still some confusion in the experience of many, but the light is shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect Day! All through the ages, God has had a few who heard His voice and came out of the Babylon of their time, but today His voice has become as the sound of many waters and those marching to Zion as an army of many troops. We ourselves are in contact with dear ones in many nations of the world who have been sovereignly separated *unto Him* for His high purposes in this important hour. It is indeed wonderful!

GO YE OUT TO MEET HIM!

When God created man male and female in His image, He revealed the great truth that He is Himself male and female in His attributes and nature. In spiritual maturity we enter into relationship with God in each of the facets of His being. We may truly become both the bride of Christ and the sons of the Father within ourselves, just as He is both male and female within Himself. Can we not see by this that *brideship* bespeaks the spiritually feminine relationship of intimate love and reverential obedience to Christ, whereas *sonship* embodies the spiritually masculine characteristics of strength, authority, power, and dominion to rule and reign over all things. Let us never become so over-balanced in our zeal to become *sons of God* that we despise the marvelous reality of being the *bride of Christ*!

The simple but sublime truth is that ***the way to sonship i-s brideship!*** This is why the Spirit has given us in Revelation chapter twelve the example of a glorious sun-clad woman giving birth to a remarkable man-child who is destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This wondrous woman is a corporate body of the Lord's people, and her illustrious man-child is likewise a corporate body of saints. This graphic picture reveals the blessed truth that it is the relationship of *brideship* that *births* the realm of *sonship!* The sons come from the bride. Jesus said, "*I am the way...no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" Can we not see by this that relationship with Jesus *leads to* relationship with the Father. Your relationship to Christ as a bride will forerun your relationship to the Father as a son. Brideship is the harbinger of sonship! It is through intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ, made ONE IN HIM IN LOVE, that we are prepared to find our place ***in Him***

in that mighty strength, power, authority, glory, and dominion over all things as the sons of God. This is a true and divine principle in the kingdom of God which I trust no earnest saint of God who reads these lines will miss!

This speaks to the heart. Our Lord prophesied of this, our day, "*Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom*" (Mat. 25:1). It is not our purpose to explore the identity of the bride, or who were the five foolish virgins, or the five wise ones. May our hearts rather be seized, my beloved, by this one compulsion — to detach ourselves from religion, from present things, from self and its demands, from the world and its pressures, from ALL — to **go forth**, in the spirit of our minds, in the affections of our hearts, to meet CHRIST THE BRIDEGROOM! It is not a question of going forth from one physical location to another; it is not a matter of soaring away into the skies to join Jesus on a cloud; it is not geographical at all, but deeply **spiritual**. It is the out-going of the heart to be uniquely joined in union with our Head and Lord. It means such a detachment from *this world* that our one goal, our sole aim, is Christ; we are going forth to meet HIM!

Brideship means "falling in love" with Jesus Christ our Head and Lord. It means being truly virgin in our desires towards the Lord; it means walking in the spirit, following hard after the Lord, seeking Him with all of our heart, keeping ourselves unto HIM and unto HIM ALONE; it means once and for all forsaking all others, especially any partnership with the wanton harlot, Mystery Babylon; it means renouncing the schemes and plans and ambitions of the carnal mind and our love of the world and the desires of the flesh; it means to have no other love and no other god before Him, no master that rules our life, no lord that dictates our actions, no reserved areas of our being. To those apprehended ones quickened by the Spirit in this hour I proclaim — THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM COMETH! Listen! Have not the ears of your spirit been opened to hear the joyful cry, "**Behold, the Bridegroom!**" Hearken! Has not your heart been deeply stirred and moved within you to hasten to obey the urgent command, "**Go ye OUT to meet Him!**"

There are two voices abroad in the land today. Each of these voices purports to be the voice of the Spirit of God. One of these voices rings out loud and clear, "*Come out of her, my people!*" The other voice issues forth from the mouths of men who profess to be Spirit-filled, tongues-speaking, Holy Ghost anointed leaders, teachers, apostles, and prophets of the Charismatic Movement, exhorting the people, "**Stay in her, my people!**" "Stay in your denomination, for, after all," they croon, "the Holy Spirit will make you a better Methodist, a better Baptist, a better Presbyterian, a better Catholic — a **BETTER BABYLONIAN!**" You will have to write a very large book, my brother or sister, if you are going to convince me that this voice is the voice of the Holy Spirit, for it requires but little of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God to discern which of these voices is the voice of the Spirit and which is the voice of the beast which has two horns as a lamb, but *speaks as a dragon*. The voice which urges people to remain in Mystery Babylon is unquestionably the voice of rebellion and blasphemy against the clear word of the Lord! "Come out" *never means* "stay in!" I have no hesitation whatever in declaring to you that God is not today in the business of blessing, renewing, or perfecting Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. He *is* in the business of *calling out* a people for His name, that is, to take His name, to *be a bride unto Him*. He *is* in the business of gathering together unto HIM. He *is* in the business of washing, cleansing, and sanctifying the *virgin bride of Christ*. He *is* in the business of building and preparing and adorning the HOLY CITY, NEW JERUSALEM!

There is a place in the spirit where saints may dwell in union with Christ. There is a true temple, not made with hands, eternal in the heavenlies. There is a church which is the *true church*. It

cannot be seen of men, for God is building it in the heavenlies of His Spirit. There is a realm where Christ is all-in-all. There is a “place by me” where we stand upon a rock and behold His glory (Ex. 33:21). There is a path that no vulture’s eye hath seen (Job 28:7). There is a church of the firstborn whose names are written only in heaven (Heb. 12:23). There is a church which is the *bride of Christ* (Eph. 5:21-33). It has always been an enigma to me to find that a truth so plainly set forth in holy scripture should be so confused and misunderstood and misinterpreted by the people of God. That the church is not only the body of Christ in the symbology of a *masculine body* from the neck down to the toes, but is in truth also the *feminine body* of Christ as Eve was the body of Adam — his wife — is as clear and obvious in the word of God as the sun blazing in the cloudless noonday sky.

So we are told that in this, our day, shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins. Virgins are pure and undefiled: not the common run of Christians who have defiled themselves with every lover-idol they can find and have departed from a walk in the Spirit of God and slithered off into the ditch, there to slop and flounder around in error and deception and ignorance and fleshly religious activities of every kind. These ten virgins took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. Not very many people who name the name of Christ are doing that! Not very many know who or what the Bridegroom is, and therefore do not know where or how to meet Him. Not very many Bible students even suspect that the coming of the Bridegroom is different than the coming of the King, or the coming of Christ in other dimensions. Not knowing who or what the Bridegroom is, they therefore cannot know how to go forth to meet Him. The vast majority of Christians, unfortunately, are busily preparing themselves to go “UP” to meet the Bridegroom! All their fuss and stir will be in vain. For no one will ever go “UP” to meet Him! There is not one scripture in the entire Bible that speaks of being “caught up” to meet the Bridegroom or to “eat the marriage supper in the sky.”

The preachers have the coming of the Lord all muddled because they cannot with their carnal minds distinguish the difference between the facets of His coming. They know nothing of the distinction between His coming as King and His coming as Bridegroom, and His coming in many other ways and forms. To their unenlightened minds there is but one single coming of Christ where He crashes down through the clouds of earth’s atmosphere. Most saints today are not preparing to meet the Bridegroom, but are trying to fix themselves up so that they will be all ready to be whisked away into the clouds instead. But not so with the virgins! They are in the right place at the right time, and all looking for a very blessed event — the coming of Christ as the Bridegroom. And they are spiritually intelligent enough to know that no one will ever go “up” to meet the Bridegroom! They know, anticipate, and understand the cry that is made at the midnight hour, **“Behold, the Bridegroom cometh — go ye O-U-T to meet Him!”** (Mat. 25:6). In order to meet the Bridegroom, one must go “out.” And “out” does not in any way indicate UP! The great truth that the Holy Spirit would now make real to our hearts is just this: the only way one may go “out” to meet the Bridegroom is to “come out” from among the world and the flesh and the harlot churches with their idolatries and miserable distortions of truth, to be JOINED UNTO THE LORD in intimacy of fellowship and vital union!

One cry of the book of Revelation is for us to “Come up hither” into a higher realm of life and glory. The important truth for us to understand now is that in the Revelation there is both a coming **out** and a coming **up**. “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18:4). That very word came to us in great power by the Spirit many years ago during the time of a sovereign move of God in our midst. We were obedient to the word we heard from heaven and hastened to come

out of the old order church system, and out of the whole religious order of man. God began in us a process of complete and total restoration of His truth, His ways, His will, His purpose, His life, His mind, His heart, and the things of His Spirit!

Then, after He called us out of the religious systems of man, and had consumed the spirit and ways of those systems out of our minds and hearts, we heard another Voice as of a trumpet talking with us, inviting us to "*Come up hither*" to a higher spiritual realm. When we came up to a higher place in the Spirit, He then said to us, "*I will show thee things which must be hereafter.*" Then we were immediately in the Spirit and saw "*a throne set in heaven (or in the realm of the Spirit), and One sat on the throne.*" When, at our Father's invitation, we ascended in the spirit into the **throne zone**, we beheld the Lord seated upon His throne of majesty and power. And what a revelation that was! Yet here is the wonder of it all — not just to see God in Christ seated upon His throne, but to comprehend the deep and eternal significance of His invitation to us to "Come up hither." Not just to see *Him* upon the throne — but to *join Him!* Thus His word comes: "To Him that overcometh will I grant to *sit with me in my throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). Ah, beloved, experiences like this teach us the wonderful fact that the book of Revelation is not meant to be *understood* — it is meant to be **EXPERIENCED!**

The reason we must go "out" to meet the Bridegroom is because He is Himself "out." The message of the Gospels is very clear — all things related to Christ are OUTSIDE of religion. In that day Judaism was the religious system of God's people. But when Jesus came everything concerning Him took place outside of that system. In plain language, Christ had nothing to do with religion — not even that religion which was purportedly based upon the holy scriptures. The birth of Christ was apart from the religion of the Lord's people. God did not send the angel Gabriel to king Herod's palace, nor to the company of priests, nor to the members of the Sanhedrin, nor to the leaders of either the Pharisees or Sadducees. God sent His messenger to a dusty little town in a despised Province, Nazareth of Galilee. Everything related to His birth was outside Jerusalem, outside the temple, outside the priesthood, outside the scribes and elders and all the religious sects; it had nothing to do with the organized religion of the day, although that religion had originally been founded according to God's holy word.

When the Christ child was found He was found outside of religion. He was not found by any priest, nor by any Levite, nor by any scribe, nor by any Pharisee, nor any so-called holy people. We are all familiar with the account of the heavenly star appearing in a pagan land to people who were not even worshippers of Yahweh. But they found the Christ by the star! We know also how the band of heavenly angels appeared to lowly shepherds attending their flocks at night, and how startled and wondering they hastened into Bethlehem to find the new-born Saviour. When the hour arrived many years thence for Jesus' ministry to begin, He was introduced to Israel outside any of the religious orders. John the Baptist, born a priest, departed from the organized priesthood and took up residence in the wilderness. He lived in a wild place and appeared to the cultured as a wild man wearing camel's hair and eating wild honey and locusts. He was not in the temple, he had no altar to offer sacrifices, his ministry was entirely apart from the religious system of the priesthood. This was the pioneer of the kingdom of God, the forerunner of the Christ. Christ was followed outside of religion. Who were those who surrounded Him, who made up the multitudes that thronged the valleys and the mountains? The high priests? The scribes? The Pharisees? The Sadducees? The Essenes? The elders of Israel? NO! They were fishermen, tax-gatherers, sinners, prostitutes, unlearned people, the poor and sick and needy, the common

people who heard Him gladly and were transformed in mind and heart and body by the wisdom and power of the gracious words that flowed from His anointed lips.

As John the Baptist and Jesus and His disciples and the multitudes who followed Him, we are going out and away from the kingdoms of men! Out from self-will and from our own preconceived ideas and religious understanding! Out from the doctrines of men and the traditions of the elders! Out from man's organization and promotions! Out from the prophets who preach for hire! Out from the shepherds who deceive and fleece the sheep! Out from the healers who heal for gain! Out from the hireling ministry that incessantly cries, "Money, money, money, money!" Out from bondage to the merchandisers, the dove sellers, the book vendors, the CD peddlers (for a price), the religious profiteers, who masquerade as prophets of God! Out from the confusion of Babylon, from man's laws, man's rules, man's heresies, which have no power to set you free! To those blessed ones walking about the city looking for HIM whom their soul loveth I now say, "BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH! Go ye O-U-T to meet Him!"

No man will ever go out to meet the Bridegroom until the ears of his spirit have been opened to hear that joyful cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom!" I would point out that it is in the original, "Behold, the Bridegroom," not, "Behold, the Bridegroom *cometh*." Many Greek scholars agree that the word "cometh" is an interpolation — an insertion into the manuscript by the scribes. If I tell you that the Lord is coming, I am putting the emphasis upon that coming, not upon HIMSELF. "The Bridegroom is here!" that is the cry. And it is a very solemn and yet blessed thing, and I am sure I seek to awaken my own soul to the reality of that cry — "He is here!" Suppose someone came to the door and cried, "He is here, go ye out to meet Him;" would we not drop all and go? It means an appointed place of rendezvous. We have no word in our language to express it properly. Let me assure you, precious friend of mine, that that place of appointment with the Bridegroom has to do with an attitude, a mind, a condition, a state of being. And it is right here within ourselves, where our soul bows low in surrender to the spirit and the bride-soul enters into union with Christ the Bridegroom within our spirit!

Some speak of the Lord *coming* because everything here about us is confusion and trouble. When the Lord comes, say they, He will settle all and solve everything. But I want to settle myself — to here and now be divested of everything that is unsuited to Him, that I may know Him in His coming, in His manifest presence. The apostle says, "...that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ...I am jealous over you...for I have espoused you to one husband." I covet that preparation, to be washed and cleansed and presented to Christ, a part of that glorious church which is without spot or wrinkle or blemish.

I say to all as far as our message can reach: Listen! Do you not hear the cry which rings over the land? Listen! Soon it will swell to a mighty chorus. Listen! High above the cry of battle; high above the deafening roar of the grinding wheels of business; high above the clamorous voices of a pleasure crazed world; high above the rantings and ravings of the hucksters of religion. Listen! It is the Voice which cries: "Behold, the Bridegroom!" The Voice of the Spirit of God is calling you to lift up your eyes to the heavenly hills to behold the Bridegroom who sits in the heavenly places of the glory of God, enthroned within your regenerated spirit. Behold, the Bridegroom! Oh, my friend, forsake the bawdy harlot and let us arise and go forth unto the Bridegroom. Many tens of thousands of voices re-echo the soul-stirring cry until it passes in its mighty power, from pole to pole, from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, rousing all the elect of God to abandon all and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth!

Before closing this article, once more I would quote the challenging words of George Hawtin, "With all my heart I believe that the days are few for the people of God to escape from the power of Babylon, but escape they must if they are to avoid being partakers of her sins and receiving of her plagues. There is only one way to escape Babylon's hypnotic power. It is in strict obedience to the command, 'COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE.' This obedience is not difficult. Leave great Babylon behind, as Abram did in the long ago, and go unto HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach. Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" — end quote.

Have you done it? Can you say that you have gone out to meet the Bridegroom? For a number of years now a cry ever increasing in its intensity has been going forth to the Lord's listening saints — and, thank God! untold thousands have heard the trumpet call and gone forth to meet Him. Many others think they have come out — perhaps they have physically, but often their mind is still in the clutches of the old traditions. So wrapped in the grave clothes of creed and doctrine and delusion, there is a long process of coming OUT, to where we truly enter into UNION with the Bridegroom, becoming ONE IN HIM — one in His mind, will, nature, and purpose.

Each one who is truly virgin towards the Lord will cry with the Shulamite, "Draw me and we will run after Thee" (S. of S. 1:4). We know that we are helpless in ourselves, and He alone can do this. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee," saith the Lord. Each one of the virgins who run after Him must be drawn by God's personal dealing and working in the soul; and as each one yields to the Bridegroom's drawing, they will all find themselves in the company of those who go forth to meet the Bridegroom. The word reads: "Draw ME and WE will run after Thee." ME and WE! The drawing of God is upon each elect member who will make up the bride and bring forth the manchild. His hand is cutting and shaping each living stone for the habitation of the Spirit, which He is building for Himself. It is as each soul is drawn, that all run after Him; it is as He perfects each one, that all come forth in perfection; it is as each one is put into the purifying fires, that the gold in each life comes out pure and shining, and the glory of God shines out from the whole. Oh, the wonder of it!

Oh! let the ones that hear these lines know Revelation speaks;
Your mysteries are unfolding now: give ear unto the meek.
The proud and haughty will not hear the word you now proclaim;
They — like the Pharisees of old — hold fast to what is vain:
Tradition of theology, philosophy of men — will fight against the truth of God
Until the very end.
But — blessed are they who flee "her" walls,
Yea, blessed are they who weep: for God has heard, He bent His ear,
And He shall span the deep.
And everywhere His river flows, a healing shall be borne...
Oh! Marvel not — for great is He — His wonders to perform!
Twas not His choice to make a name — tho nonetheless He knew
That He was King of kings supreme — but He was like the dew
Which falls when men behold it not — even now it speaks anew;
Will you believe His word can speak — THO YOU'RE NOT ON A PEW?
Hail to the woman who's elect! THE LADY OF GOD'S PLAN!
Woe to the woman faked in gold! Her treasures are of man!
Hail to the Lady! God's elect! who in His footsteps trod.

GRACE BE TO YOU ABUNDANTLY...Grace be to you FROM GOD!
— Carlene Appleby

Chapter 201

The Destruction Of Babylon (continued)

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues**" (Rev. 18:4).

There is a place OUTSIDE THE CAMP of Babylon's vain worship and pseudo-church. "**Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach**" (Heb. 13:13), and when you have departed from all these things and broken Babylon's idols from off your neck and cast their image from before you, then you will see NO MAN BUT JESUS ONLY, and then you will understand what it means to be JOINED UNTO HIM. When this wisdom is sweet to your soul, then you will discover the secret place of the Most High, where the King brings you into His chambers, a hidden place of meeting with the Lord, that place within our own being where our Lord ever dwells, where we go in and shut the door, where we meet Him alone in the most intimate fellowship and the most exquisite union of soul and spirit. This is a place which the world cannot invade. Even should soldiers come with guns and carry you away they cannot separate you from it, for it is within yourself. "I will come again and receive you *unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also*" (Jn. 14:3). Where is this place? Jesus said, "Where I am." That is sufficient! It is a place *in the spirit* that no man can violate. A hidden place for those who are in the world, but not of it, in the very sanctuary of the Spirit of God. A place where we can see the countenance of the Bridegroom, and hear his voice!

Ah, we do not arrive at this secret and sacred place with one grand leap. It is a continual leaving, leaving, leaving, and the nearer and dearer HE becomes to us, the more rejoiced we are to leave everybody and everything for Him. But where are we to go? Outside the gate, outside the city which hath played the harlot. Do you think that we shall see Him if we stay inside the city? inside with all those who do not love Him enough to go **out** to meet Him? if we stay with those who spurn Him and are half-hearted? NO! It is as we "go forth" that we behold Him, the King in His beauty, and discern His beauty as He sits upon the throne of our lives. Let us go **out** to meet Him, outside the city wall that we may behold Him; let us leave everything which is in the city that our eyes may be anointed to behold Him who is altogether lovely, the Bridegroom of our soul. When earth is in our eyes, we cannot behold the Christ; when Babylon is in our eyes, we cannot discern the Bridegroom; when anything else is before our eyes, we cannot embrace Him. Everything must be cleared away if we would see and hear and know Him!

I was blessed by the sweet testimony of Patricia (Gus) Savas, a former Catholic Nun who was called out of Roman Catholicism and led into the paths of sonship by the sovereign dealing of God. She wrote, "When the GUS book came out, I was frequently asked to give my testimony. Sometimes, I would look at the audience and say, 'Some of you out here have been delivered from drugs, from alcohol, from pornography or sex perversion, but I have had a major deliverance. I have been delivered from *religion*.' When you are under the control of most addictions, during moments of sobriety or lucidity, you know you have a problem. Religion, however, is a blinding spirit; it's actually like having a blindfold on. You're following these rules, this program, doing 'good works,' so you must be okay, right? I've Got my religion; don't confuse me with the truth. I am a good person" — end quote.

Some time ago a sister in Christ shared with me a dream she was given by the Lord. She said, "I saw a country type brownstone church building, which obviously was very old, and quite dirty from age and neglect. As I watched, I heard music coming from the building. I said, 'There is a wedding taking place.' The music, however, was not wedding music and I could not see inside. Then my eyes fell upon a young woman and a young man out front with their backs to the church building. I wondered why they didn't go in. Then the scene changed, and I saw inside the building. There I beheld the groom coming up the outside aisle with his bride by the hand. He was very tall, clean-cut, with a prominent nose — walking so fast his bride was almost being dragged (not unwillingly). He was hurriedly rushing out of the building. Then I saw the outside of the church building again and fire was shooting out from under the eaves. A force from the heat was blowing down, enveloping the two people I had seen outside earlier. The girl's hair was blowing like a cyclone and my thought was, 'Why don't they get away?' But they could not. The power of the heat and the wind simply enveloped them. As I watched, the whole front wall collapsed over them. I awoke, and the power of the dream stayed with me for days. I believe it is speaking what Christ is doing today — calling a people out unto Himself and drawing them in a quick work out of the old systems of man" — end quote. To which I can add a hearty, Amen! The dream speaks powerfully of our text: "*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues...therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord who judgeth her*" (Rev. 18:4,8).

The Holy Spirit imparts a revelation on how much the institutional religious system is Babylon the Great, and then He whispers in our heart the solemn secret that not only is Babylon judged and destroyed as a system "out there" — it must *first* be judged and destroyed right within the heart and experience of every member of God's called and chosen elect! The Lord is coming to deliver His creation from every evil influence, and He deals first with the great harlot to rid the earth of such a thing. We see this so clearly in the Revelation! *Before* the marriage of the Lamb, *before* the One riding the white horse smites the nations, *before* Satan is cast into the abyss, *before* the holy city, New Jerusalem, descends out of the heavenlies, *before* all men stand before the great white throne, *before* the nations walk in the light of the city, *before* all things are restored and made new — *before any of these* and many other wonderful events — BABYLON IS JUDGED AND DESTROYED! Therefore, on a personal level we must *begin* by judging all the elements of Babylon in our own hearts! I do not believe that there is a corruption in any of the carnal church systems of man (or any other realm of the world) of which I could not find the germ in my own heart. That is the mystery!

In his book *Seven Lamps of Fire*, George Warnock wrote these penetrating words: "When we see One *like the Son of man* walking among the lampstands with *Seven Eyes* — God wants us to look at Him, because He wants to change us. We can't look into those eyes and not be changed! I recall looking into the eyes of a prophet, whom the Lord used in fellowship with other members of the body of Christ, to bring forth a new prophetic movement in the middle of the last century. When I was called forward to receive *prophecy with the laying on of hands*, after a brief time of waiting he said, *Look at me!* As I looked up I was very much aware of light in his eyes...as he began to prophesy. I will never forget that moment, and I know that it was from that time that I began to see the Word of God in a new light. I feel strongly it is time for a new moving of God in the earth. He desires to bring His people into still higher realms in the Spirit. We must have the Lamb look upon us, with those seven eyes.

"The movement I mentioned became known as the Latter Rain — a name that people gave it a year or two later. But in the beginning it needed no name, and they simply referred to it as *this move of the Spirit*. God was graciously pouring out His gifts on the church. These gifts are intended for the edifying of the body...gifts of healing and miracles and other wonderful operations of the Spirit — besides gifts that impart spiritual wisdom and understanding. But it was not God's intention to start a new denomination with this prophetic movement, and I think it is for this reason that those in later generations wonder what it was all about. And they ask, Where is it now? Multitudes of people in all parts of the earth, partook of the blessing of this movement — and the impact of it has carried on in succeeding generations, as any real move of God should. But as far as I know, it never became a *denomination* known as *The Church of the Latter Rain* — at least not prominent enough to make its mark in history. And for this reason it is considered by many to have been a little shower that soon evaporated.

"In the beginning of the movement there was a certain emphasis on *coming out* of the old systems — *coming out of Babylon*. But it soon became evident that many would *come out of the visible Babylon*, while bringing some of the system along with them. I recall a few years later what one of the leaders said about his own experience. He said the Lord spoke to him one day, 'You are trying to get the people to come out of Babylon, but I want to get the Babylon out of you!' I'm afraid this continues to go on in the church, and because one has left the mainstream of the denominations, and has set up his own organization — is no proof that he has *come out of Babylon*. The Babylonian desire for greatness and enlargement, and wanting to make a name of renown, and keeping the whole system well under control — is strong in the hearts of men. And God must deal with all those inward desires that continue to plague the church" — end quote.

Douglas Clark, in a little writing he sent me, shares the following instructive remarks. "When we hear the clarion call to come out of Babylon, God opens our eyes to the mixture of flesh and spirit that exists in the religious systems of man. For many the journey stops a few yards from the church door. We may come out and become separate, but there is often a failure to go further. Why is that? There was a movie out some years ago called *The Sixth Sense*. Bruce Willis played the main character, a psychologist who had a patient who saw the spirits of dead people. The psychologist didn't believe the boy, and so the whole movie was about him trying to help the boy overcome his hallucinations. Finally, at the end of the movie the psychologist realizes that the boy is actually seeing dead people. Then comes the interesting twist. The psychologist begins to realize that *he* is one of the dead people! What a revelation! First the psychologist couldn't see the truth about the boy. Then he finally realizes the boy does see dead people and then at the very end he finds out that he is one of the dead people!"

"Sounds a lot like our journey. We begin as most church folk not recognizing all the spiritual death around us. Then we begin to see it in our surroundings as the Lord calls us out and unto Himself. Finally, if we continue on in our journey to know Him, He shows us the death *is in us!* How easy it is to see the Babylon within the Institutional Church while overlooking what in us needs to be overcome. It is true our eyes need to be open to our surroundings, but I declare to you that until the Babylon in us is exposed we will not grow in our quest to know Him! The same spirit that gave birth to the mixture of flesh and spirit within the church systems is alive and well right within us! Right now it is trying to figure out ways it can pervert what God is doing in this hour so that it can escape its own demise! The spirit I am speaking of is called *Self-preservation* and he is in the temple of God seeking a way to sit on the throne of God, ruling in place of the true King. This is why some home fellowships encounter the same old problems we dealt with back in the system. Babylon is in us! How often do we fail to see that the calling of God to come out of the religious

systems of man is only the *beginning* of our journey? It is a much longer process removing the spirit of Babylon from us! That is why in our journey to know Him He often strips us of *ministry and gifts for service*. His gifts and anointing often become diffused with our carnal reasoning and self-efforts. This is the confusion that is defined in the name, Babylon” — end quote.

The good news is that the strongholds of Babylon are surely falling within God’s elect by the omnipotent indwelling Spirit of the Lord! God is forming a people in this very hour who fulfill within themselves the prophecy of David wherein he said, “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauty of holiness from the womb of the morning*” (Ps. 110:3). Even now God is raising up a people who **are willing in this day of His power!** Willing to change their concepts, willing to give up all their old beliefs, willing to forsake the old ways, the old associations, the old priorities, willing to silence the demands of the flesh, willing to crucify every carnal religious desire, willing to follow the paths of HIS LEADING, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, but to press forward with an eye that is single to HIS GLORY. Oh, yes! This is not easy for many to accept, and that is why in the Revelation such a great cry goes up for the city that is going down! Even some among us are going to mourn because they have built up a little kingdom that they don’t want to see God’s fire come to!

The people of the Lord have long been held captive by the spirit of the world. Thank God, there has been a little light in Babylon, and there has even been the voice of the *bride* and the *Bridegroom* (Rev. 18:23), for the people chained in that horrible darkness have been the *Lord’s people*. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead a few to the Saviour. A few of these have received of His Holy Spirit and His gifts. They have in measure tasted of His reality and drank from His fountain of life. But from here on, practically everything that is taught and done is nought but defilement and shame: nothing but the precepts of the elders, and the lies and deceptions of the antichrist. Organized religion today, while totally ignorant of the fact of there being an antichrist, is busy teaching his doctrines, observing his forms and ceremonies, and glorying in his shame. To His people who sit shackled in these chains of Babylonian bondage the voice of the Lord commands, “Come out of her, my people!” Thank God, the chains of the Babylon system are doomed to destruction. This mysterious system is to be finally and irrevocably destroyed. Wherefore the Lord saith, “**Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: LOOSE THYSELF FROM THE BANDS OF THY NECK, O CAPTIVE DAUGHTER OF ZION. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money**” (Isa. 52:1-3).

The hour of the final deliverance of God’s people from Babylon and the manifestation of His glory, majesty, wisdom, and power upon them is at hand. The King is coming! He is coming to His temple! He is coming within to set His people free, that they in turn may deliver creation. The strong walls and high towers of Babylon shall all come down. Her chains and shackles upon God’s people shall be broken. Our release from all bondage and captivity is even now under way. Once the church is cleansed from her idols and defilement, she will be in a position to bring deliverance to a sin-sick and judgment-weary world, when “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). Only when Christ’s church is delivered from her idols can she ever hope to bring deliverance to the world. And that deliverance has to come. It will come through those who have given up their all, those who have lost everything to be married to their Lord, and who henceforth live only unto Him. The water of life must flow from the city to bring healing to the nations. The sons of God constitute the *throne* in the city of God, but the city

itself is the *bride* of the Lamb. It is made up of all those who are delivered out of Babylon, released by its mighty destruction, then cleansed, purged, refined, changed, and transformed by HIS LIFE. Before any of us can have any part in God's great restoration of creation we must forsake all and follow the Lord alone. No one can deliver men from the lies of the antichrist while continuing to preach those lies. No one can deliver the world from the bondages of sin, fear, carnality, limitation, and death while himself remaining a captive of those things. And before God's true church can persuade men to give up their idols, and loose their bands, she must first get rid of all her own golden calves and come to Zion with everlasting songs of joy and praise upon her head.

Alma McClure once printed a letter in her paper *The Winnowing* which she had received from a sister who had had a startling experience of the dealing of the Lord. This sister wrote, "I began going to a church, and after about eight or nine months, I was awakened one morning from an ominous dream. I dreamed I had just parked my car in a funeral-home parking lot which was filled with cars. I knew they all had a special permit to park there, but I didn't have one. And I thought, 'Well, no one will catch me if I just stand behind my car and watch it so I can drive away before the authorities arrive.' But, as I stood there, I became off my guard, in a state of unawareness, and first thing I knew, this policeman was standing in front of my car writing me a ticket. I had let down my guard, and now I was going to pay! Heavily! I asked him how much it would cost me, and he said, \$88.00. That's when I awoke!"

"Immediately I knew the Lord was telling me that if I didn't get out of that funeral-home (dead church) parking lot, I would really lose out! I felt the number '88' stood for a double anointing, or something spiritually very, very valuable, that would be taken away from me! If I didn't get out of the church of dead people, I'd really lose out! So I didn't go back. For more than a month I went nowhere. But I got **so** lonely! So then I began attending another church...until He took me out of *that* one! It's very dangerous to 'let our guard down' thinking we're just going to 'park' in the parking lot of death for a few moments. But, thank God, He warns us in a dream to *get out* or we'll *lose out!* He cares for us when we're too much asleep to realize our unawareness. Thank God, He truly **is** our Shepherd, to guard us so well! We're such stupid, careless sheep, sometimes...when we get so hungry to be with other sheep, we wander from His voice. But He does come after us, if we are truly called and chosen. Thank God, He really has chosen me, in spite of all my stupidity! And I *will* walk alone now, whatever the cost! I'd rather pay it *down here*, than lose out in the *up there* high calling! Thanks for your letter of great encouragement, that makes it a joy for me to go on without man's order...his perfect order...of dry, stacked bones...so very, very neatly stacked in man's perfect order...of dry, bleached bones!" — end quote.

"Come," said Christian, "and join me. For I am on my way to the Celestial City. It is a place of great delights, of everlasting joy, and wondrous comfort." "Indeed, it sounds good," said Pliable, "and methinks that I will join thee on the King's Highway." Thus it is that John Bunyan delineates for us the journey of Christian and Pliable on their way from the City of Destruction to the City Celestial, in his immortal *Pilgrim's Progress*. However, they had not gone very far out of the City of Destruction when unexpectedly and precipitously they plunged headlong into the Slough of Despond. "Is this," lamented Pliable, "the happiness you have told me all this while of? If so, then I think that should I ever get out of this alive, I shall return to the city from whence I came and you may possess that brave country alone for me." So, with several strenuous exertions, he made his way back to the side of the slough from which he entered and, dripping mud and muck behind him, hastened himself back to the City of Destruction. Thus we have the profile of this unforgettable character, Pliable, drawn for us by Bunyan.

Now, what is this City of Destruction, what is this City Celestial, and just who is this character called Pliable? I am certain most Christians would identify the City of Destruction as the world, or man's lost state, or perhaps even hell itself. They would in turn view the City Celestial as heaven. In the Revelation, however, the City of Destruction is **Babylon, the great harlot**, and the City Celestial is **New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ!** And the character, Pliable — why his name is legion and his descendants multitudinous. Through the age vast numbers of saints have heard the call to "Come out of her," to flee Babylon lest they be partakers of her sins and receive of her plagues, to depart the City of Destruction before her judgment falls. Many make their professions and they start on the journey out of the harlot city in search of the Holy City, the bride of the Lamb. But alas, it is only a short while till many of them, staggering out of the loneliness, pressures, trials, testings, and tribulations of their own Slough of Despond, are hurrying back to the comfortable City of Destruction, even though they have been told that God intends to destroy that city and judge all who remain therein. Yes, my beloved, there have been many who for a season have treasured the beautiful hope of the high calling of God, but despairing of the aloneness of the walk, the dealings, the provings, and refining fires encountered upon the journey, they soon make their way back to Babylon. Their eye is upon the crown and not upon the cross! Their eye is upon the glory and not upon the processing that qualifies for the glory! The idea that one must truly *suffer* with Christ in order to *reign* with Him is exceedingly repugnant to them. There is no place in their soul for a Slough of Despond! The gifts, the blessings, the excitement, the comfortableness, the prosperity, and the busy-ness of Babylon are much more to their liking. So they have turned back to the City of Destruction!

The following admonition from the anointed pen of the late Carl Schwing still speaks powerfully to us even today. "When we were 'taken' from the camps of the fun, food, and fellowship crowd, the Holy Spirit led us into the 'Wilderness of Aloneness.' In our aloneness, we found our Beloved...and He freed us from the doctrines and religious notions of human thought. He gave us freedom...freedom to be all He would have us to be...freedom to become all that He is...freedom to sit with Him in heavenly places and to have fellowship with the Father. It was then that our 'Wilderness of Aloneness' became our 'Fortress of Aloneness'...closed in with our Elder Brother and our Everlasting Father. A Fortress to 'keep out' those who would 'gaze' and to 'keep in' the sons that would be prepared for the Day of the Lord...sons that would regain His presence and the knowledge and experience of His life, joy, and glory, they shared with Him in their beginning.

"There are those who say that we are part of the occult. Others call us spiritualists, mystics, isolationists, and even heretics. They say these things because we will not seek the *Living One* among the *dead ones*; because we will not worship in temples built with hands. The *liberty of the sons of God* will not be found among those who are bound hand and foot to the ideologies and programs of men. It seems strange to those that worship in religious shrines that we would worship in our home, or in the mountains, or forest, or at the water's edge...or worship in the house of grief and sorrow, or upon a bed of pain and suffering, or in the shadows of heartache and disappointment. It seems even stranger to them that we should glory in our cross, rejoice in our rejection, and find life in our aloneness...and to receive the overwhelming power of His Presence and Love here within our 'Fortress.' Oh! What great gifts the Father has given to us...with Him in the vast family of God's sons! Ten thousand hallelujahs! Now, in the light of this glorious dawn, He is gently and lovingly gathering the Lillies of the Field...to bind them together with the cords of love and give them to their Everlasting Father. Oh! Sons of the morning, be still and know that our God is a 'Mighty Fortress'!

"Alas, there are those among us that are *turning back* to the old ways, the old order, thinking they will find life in the steeple-houses of the fun, food, and fellowship crowd. Though our Elder Brother has done wondrous works; though He has taught them wondrous truths; and though He has shown man how to have spirit converse with our Father, there are those who have gone back to the temple of flesh, to the blind leaders of the blind, back to the bondage of ordinances, holy days, and numberless religious practices, praying the prayers of their fathers of old, eating once again of the wilderness manna. However, it was the very 'turning back' of the multitude which brought forth the living words of truth from the depths of Peter's heart: 'To whom shall we go? *Thou hast the words of eternal life.*' And we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!' Therefore, may the 'turning back' of others stir the truth within us, reminding us of all the wondrous things the Lord has done for us, reminding us of all the words of life He has revealed to us, reminding us of the *still small voice* that speaks within, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.' Let us slay the giant of religion that would take us captive and return us to the rulers and children of the house of divisions and bondage...slaying him with the Stone that the builders rejected...the living Stone that is so precious to us...the Rock of our salvation! And we, also, are living stones, fitly joined together to form the City of the Living God!"

"Our Elder Brother said that when we pray (worship or praise), we should go into our closet (our secret place) and close the door — that we might have private and intimate converse with our Father — assuring us that our Father would hear us and answer us, that He would come into the secret place of our heart, and would close the door, to be alone with us, to commune with us, to shed His life and light upon us, to assure us of His abiding presence, faithfulness, and love, for He sees and *hears and speaks* in this secret place, and therefore is He there. There is no room for forms or rituals within our secret place. It is the place where the Spirit of God comes as a 'rushing mighty wind' to fill our inner son with the fire of the Father's matchless love, to prepare our inner son for the time of divine worship, for the time of the communion of the saints, the time to consciously sit with Christ in the heavenly places, the time to eat of the Manna of Life.

"The outer man has no part in this worship! This is when the hand of our inner son reaches out to touch the hand of God. This is the assembling of the firstborn (the first to come forth from the Father in that most glorious beginning of beginnings). This is when the Holy Spirit lifts the veil of the Holy of holies for us to enter, that we might worship the Father, who is spirit, *in spirit* and in the beauty of holiness. This is the holy time of the renewing of our inner man; the hour of *remembering our place in Him* in ages past. My beloved, as you know, the secret place of which I write is where we walk in the liberty of the sons of God! It is the holy ground upon which mighty angels fear to tread! It is the place where flesh and blood cannot enter! It is the assembling we must not forsake...as is the manner of some who have returned to the assembly houses of brick and stone. Let us enter our '*secret place*' even more, as we see the day of our manifestation approaching. In the preciousness of our aloneness...in the beauty of our secret place...in the glory of His presence...let all that is within us, praise His holy Name!" — end quote.

THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

"For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, **death** and **mourning** and

famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her” (Rev. 18:5-8).

“*For her sins have reached unto heaven...*” The meaning is not that the sins of Babylon are like a mass or pile so high as to reach to heaven, to pollute even the realm of the spirit, but that they had become so prominent and offensive as to attract the attention of God and move Him to action.

“...*God hath remembered her iniquities...*” That God “remembered” Babylon’s unrighteousness does not mean God had forgotten it. The phrase “God remembered” is a Hebrew expression meaning God had been remembering it all along and now was about to go into action to do something about it. The same phrase is found in Genesis 8:1 where God “remembered Noah” and caused the rain to stop and the waters of the flood to recede. It is found in Genesis 19:29 where God “remembered Abraham” and sent Lot out of Sodom, for God knew of Abraham’s loving concern for his nephew. Genesis 30:22 states that “God remembered Rachel” and answered her prayers by opening her womb so she conceived and bore a son. Thus, God’s remembering Babylon’s unrighteousness means He had been considering it all along and now was about to bring His righteous divine judgment on it.

“*Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.*” The scene changes now with a call for the agents of God’s judgment to do their work on Babylon. Some think this call is a response to the angel’s call for the people of God to leave Babylon. As they leave, they call for retribution for what Babylon has done to them and to multitudes of others who have been deceived, or suffered, and even died at her hand. It is my conviction, however, that the voice here is still the voice of the same “angel” mentioned in verse four — indeed, it is the voice of the Lord Himself who says, “Come out of her, **my people...**” The call is for God’s agents to act in divine justice and render or recompense to Babylon as she herself has rendered to the Lord’s people. True saints of God will not try to avenge themselves on any adversary. The love of Christ will cause them to forgive those who mistreat, malign, and enslave them. But the time must come when those who have been the masters of Babylon’s deception and bondage must face God’s righteous judgment. The Voice tells us plainly that those who willfully *partake in her sins* will also *receive of her plagues*. Babylon will be judged “double the double” according to her works. This does not mean that her punishment will be double what she deserves. The judgment will still be *according to her works*. “Double the double” is a cryptic way of saying that she will receive a *full measure* of all she deserves. That is, she deserves punishment in *two categories* — not only for the harm, damage and suffering she has caused the Lord’s people, but also for the corruption of the ways and truth of God, and the greed and immorality behind what she did to them. In this way she receives “double the double.” She will drink the passion of God against her from the same cup she used to pour out her corruption upon the people of the Lord!

“*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*” Part of the reason given for her judgment is that she is always thinking in her heart that she is sitting a queen, not a widow — that is, she sincerely thinks that she herself *is* the true church, the actual Bride of Christ, well favored of the Lord, the very kingdom of God on earth with authority to *rule!* She positions herself for leadership, sitting on the throne as queen, as did Jezebel in the days of Elijah, and her counterpart in the church at Thyatira, the Jezebel who called herself a prophetess and a teacher, seducing God’s people to commit fornication. She expects always to rule, to be in

control. She loudly *professes* that she shall “see no sorrow” or tribulation. So she continues on in her abominable lifestyle, “living deliciously,” foolishly justifying her lust and greed and travesties, “naming and claiming” whatever appeals to her at the moment, not knowing what her end shall be. In her drunken, deluded stupor, she is blind to the impending judgment God has appointed for her! She does not believe the plagues of God’s judgment will ever come upon *her*. Babylon of Isaiah’s day felt the same way, but in fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy it was leveled to the ground and made a swamp, “pools of water” (Isa. 14:22-23), as archaeological records of Sennacherib confirm. It is also just as sure that the present Babylonian world system will come to a total end!

“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” Because of Babylon’s self-exaltation, taking glory to herself that belongs only to God and His called and chosen elect, and because of her greedy, sensual luxury, the plagues of divine judgment will come on her suddenly, swiftly, and powerfully. In “one hour” the prophecy says! It’s not talking about 60 minutes. Spiritually, it signifies that her judgment comes *swiftly*, and in the *day*, the *hour*, the *time*, the season of God’s dealing. **Death, mourning, and famine** will be part of the judgment. **Consuming fire will complete it!**

The scriptures specifically foretell a number of judgments which are *destructive* in their nature. Here the Revelation points to the time when “Babylon the Great” or “Mystery Babylon” will be judged — and consequently **destroyed**. Mystery Babylon is not limited to any single ecclesiastical body, but is composed of many, indeed of ALL who are walking apart from the LIFE OF THE SPIRIT and the HEADSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST. For two thousand years God has been calling out and forming a heavenly people, born from above, filled with the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, led by the Spirit, growing up in the life and power of the Spirit, the workmanship of GOD BY THE SPIRIT, the true church of the *firstborn* whose names are written in heaven. Along side this glorious company of the Spirit-born and Spirit-led the enemy has planted the tares: the doctors of the law, the bishops, theologians, ministers and priests organizing carnal systems, legislating laws and commandments, writing static creeds, instituting ordinances and sacraments, performing empty ceremonies and powerless rituals, and teachers poring over the dead letter of the Word, but never being quickened by the Spirit of Truth.

These blind leaders of the blind are the **lords** of a vast and powerful system which calls itself “the church,” but is not the church at all, but a blinding, restricting, abyss of incomprehensible darkness and confusion that holds men’s spirits in such bondage to lifeless traditions that they can never see the glory of God nor His transcendent purpose in their lives. It is only when the blazing fire of the Omnipotent Spirit sovereignly penetrates the dankness and death of Babylon’s walls that men first catch a glimpse of the living Christ of God and rise up to FOLLOW HIM. The chains fall off, the prison doors swing open on their rusty hinges and these followers of the Lamb behold a world of freedom and revelation and reality and life and glory beyond the constricting walls of denominationalism, ritualism, tradition, and the kingdoms of men. Rather than continuing to call a few souls here and there out of the City of Destruction, God has now decreed HIS JUDGMENT against this idolatrous system of Babylon, and has already established by His immutable counsel just HOW THE JUDGMENT SHALL BE EXECUTED.

“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning...and they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein

were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate” (Rev. 18:9,19).

Let me share some spiritually poignant words written by David Wilkerson many years ago. “Babylon is not a physical city; it is a spiritual condition — even as Zion is not just a city in Israel, but also a spiritual representation of the true church of Jesus Christ. Babylon is the harlot church! It really is not complicated. Forget about the seven heads and the ten horns — those are only symbols that signify the worldwide influence of the harlot. What we have is a vivid picture of the apostate, sensual, rich church of today! A famous, influential harlot, in possession of great wealth and prestige — but polluted with nakedness, fornication, and filth! God has decreed ‘Enough! I’m going to put a sudden end to all spiritual foolishness!’ What does it mean to us — right now, in our day? So much, in fact, that God says it will tingle the ears and astonish the whole world! We are going to witness the fall of some highly esteemed ministries! Multimillion dollar projects are going to come crashing down! It will be headline news! Some churches that have strapped themselves with monstrous debt will go bankrupt! Liberal denominations will suffer an even greater loss of revenue! God is going to shut down every TV program that uses ungodly men and methods! There is coming a great purge! Only the spiritual ministries will remain! Those who hear the call of the Spirit to purge their ministry, God will bless and increase. Those in league with the world will only grow more unspiritual and worldly. The spiritual man of God will fill the breach!

“God is getting ready to do a new thing! He is going to bring down the proud, the famous, the ambitious — and lift up humble, unknown prophets to bring the church back to repentance and holiness! Friends, the days of superstar evangelists are all over! No more one-man shows! No more stealing God’s honor! No more glamour! No more showmanship! No more world-directed choreography in God’s holy place! No more big-time religion! The Holy Ghost is going to shut down corporate religion! God has declared He will not finance the ego of any preacher of the gospel! The Holy Spirit is already wooing the children of the Lord away from bigness, brightness, and sensationalism. Even sinners are fed up with all the pitiful appeals for money! A revived, sanctified people are going to discern between the clean and the unclean! Those in the middle of building their little empires ***will weep and despair — as God brings it all down!*** He is going to write ‘Ichabod’ over their doors! His glory will depart from them! God is going to cause the hustle and bustle — the busy pace — to ***burn out and wear down all who have wasted so much time at building — instead of seeking the face of God!*** ‘I am against you Babylon...I will lift up my hand against you and roll you down from your heights and leave you a burnt-out mountain...you shall be desolate...you shall be completely wiped out...’ (Jer. 51:25-26, L.B.). The scripture commands — ‘***Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquities; for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense***’ (Jer. 51:6)” — end quote.

The following dream was given to Richard L. Jones, a pastor in Tulsa, Oklahoma, U.S.A in March, 2006. “In this dream I was in the downtown area of a large city and there was a lot of activity going on around me. The next thing I knew, I was on the top of a tall structure that was being dismantled. It was not being torn down, but dismantled and carried away on flatbed trucks. I was directing heavy equipment, like huge cranes and such, that were being used to dismantle the many structures of the city. These structures were made of stone, or cast concrete facades, with steel beams used as supports for the structures. Again, I was having the cranes and other heavy equipment lower large pieces of these structures and facades to the ground so they could be moved and taken away on heavy trucks.

"I awoke from my dream and inquired of the Lord what this meant. The Lord said to me, '*I am dismantling the old religious structures that have been erected by men. I am clearing the way to build what I desire to be raised up in this place and at this time! There is a large city to be dismantled, but I will raise up a new city built upon foundations of Divine Truth which support pillars of Righteousness and Justice. But first there will be a great dismantling and many will be exposed to the winds and the rain, to the hail and the hot sun, to the snow and the darkness. I am their Strong Tower. Oh, how I so desire for them to run to Me in that day of the great dismantling! For I am raising up a New City for those who will.*' I knew then that my dream was about the 'dis-mantling' of the old church structure as we know it and that God was going to raise up a new church, one that is built according to His divine providence and not built on the plans and ambitions of men" — end quote.

The picture given us in chapter eighteen of the Revelation, of the judgment of Babylon, is a picture of utter desolation that is drawn before our eyes. Instead of the joyful light and illumination of her festive streets, there is now absolute (spiritual) darkness: for even the light of a candle shall shine no more. Instead of the bustle of machinery (her programs and promotions), the joyful sound of music, the glad voice of bride (God's true people) and bridegroom (Christ the Head), there is now a doleful and gloomy silence. She is set on fire and her fire burns so brightly that all the world beholds it together in awe and somber wonder. Then with great steaming convulsions she sinks into the depths of the sea to be seen never again. Babylon is turned into a region of death and destruction! All her glory is gone in one hour, and that forever. God has sent judgments upon that system throughout the age, as in the days of the Reformation, and in the days of the French Revolution, but this is the final and complete judgment upon Babylon. She has committed fornication with the kings and the princes of the world. She has made the nations drunk with the wine of her fornication. She has deceived them with all her sorceries. In her was found the blood of the saints and prophets. She has made war with the Lamb throughout the ages. Her iniquity rises to heaven. Therefore, in one hour has her final and complete destruction come!

I recently quoted some words from Ray Prinzing's wonderful book, *Revelation — A Positive Book*, and I will quote a small portion of that again as it is so vital to the present message. "Particularly we are led to emphasize coming out of religious Babylon. '*We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies*' (Jer. 51:9). We would have healed her — oh, how we tried to bolster her up and heal her! We poured our strength into her, ignoring the instruction to '*Give not thy strength unto women...*' (Prov. 31:3). We fasted and prayed for God to revive her! Though she reeked with abominations, traditions of men, false doctrines, and platitudes for itching ears, still we tried to heal her. But in time the holy Spirit speaks so loudly, '*flee out of the midst of her,*' that we have to obey. All her works, her kingdom building endeavors for self, are not sufficient — but are as filthy rags ready for the burning" — end quote.

There are many sincere, good people who are trying to reform and heal the old church systems. But they cannot be reformed, revived, or healed — they must one and all be *destroyed* — just as the Lord has revealed! "*The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God...for His device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of His temple*" (Jer. 51:10-11). Even those within the church systems who truly love the Lord must be thrown into the melting pot, melted up, refined, and reconstructed. No healing is possible! No reform is possible! John Wesley found out that it was not possible to get the people saved in the Church of England, therefore he was led to form a society for the salvation of souls. But John Wesley himself prophesied that his new society

would depart from the faith and decline. He prophesied that one day *Ichabod* would have to be written over the Methodist societies, for “the glory would depart,” as they themselves apostatized. And today “the glory has departed,” except in flashes here and there where a truly consecrated preacher and people rise, for a brief season, above the level of the dead sea of formalism, hypocrisy, and moral and spiritual corruption. The movement as a whole has gone all the way from being a society for the *salvation* of souls, to becoming a society for the *damnation* of souls!

Fear not, saints of the Most High God, for your Father is in control of all these things and is directing all these events. He concludes none of these ominous judgments until *first* He brings His sons to mount Zion with authority and power to fill the earth with His glory. Notice the scripture I quoted in the paragraph above — “*The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare IN ZION the work of the Lord our God...*” Then the prophet goes on to tell how God is against Babylon, to **destroy it**. Oh, yes! The Lord will bring forth His righteous people, His holy sons upon mount Zion, those who sing the new song, those who are virgins, undefiled by women (harlot churches), those who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth (all the way into the fullness of God), those who are redeemed from among men (out of the Adamic nature), those in whose mouths is found no guile (deceit, false doctrines), those who have ascended into the **throne zone!** The pattern, the order, the sequence is clearly seen in the Revelation — the manchild is birthed and caught up to the throne in chapter 12, the 144,000 sons of God are seen standing in righteousness, glory, and power upon the mount Zion in chapter 14 — *then* Great Babylon is judged and destroyed in chapters 17 and 18! The Lord will bring forth the righteousness of His Zion company and reveal to them His purpose *before* moving in mighty power to judge the harlot and destroy her kingdom from the face of the earth. That is God’s order! It will, at long last, be the hour of the exaltation and ministry of those humble followers of the Lamb to whom shall be committed the rule and reign of the kingdom of God under all the unbounded heavens! Isn’t it wonderful!

We used to wonder who was going to judge Babylon, but we have found out. In Revelation 18:20 we read, first from the King James Bible, “*Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*” Those words appear to indicate that God is going to judge Babylon with HIS OWN JUDGMENT. But we will read the literal translation from the Diaglott, “*Exult over her, O Heaven! and you saints, and you apostles, and you prophets; BECAUSE GOD JUDGED YOUR JUDGMENT ON HER.*” The actual word by word translation from the Greek text reads thus: “...because judged the God the **judgment of you on her.**” What a word that is! So we see it is first of all the judgment of **heaven**. “Exult over her, **O heaven, and you saints...**” “Heaven” denotes the realm of sonship, throneship — kings and priests. Then it is the judgment of saints, of holy ones, that is brought upon her. Paul said the saints are to judge the world! How my heart rejoices that God has declared that the judgment that He shall bring upon this Babylon, shall be the judgment of sons and of saints, the apostles and the prophets. We will pronounce the judgment and God will enforce it! But it will not be a vindictive or retaliatory judgment, for it is the judgment of THE MANCHILD IN THE THRONE AND OF THE HOLY ONES! We will not be as we have been, mixtures of flesh and spirit, of truth and error, of carnality and spirituality, of Adam and Christ. Oh, no! As of now we have no desire for any of God’s people to pronounce judgment upon us, neither do we want to pronounce judgment on anyone else. There must come a mighty change in all of us for this, until we have fully PUT ON THE MIND OF CHRIST! Jesus said that He judged righteous judgment, **because He sought not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him.** All the holy sons of God must come to this before being able to judge Babylon in the spirit of RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT!

This great truth was first revealed to John the beloved in chapter seven of the Revelation. “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, *holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.* And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, *Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*” (Rev. 7:1-3).

There are many beautiful truths and deep mysteries hidden in the symbolisms of this passage, but I am sure the reader can discern in the action of the four angels the ministry of *judgment*. Four is the number of that which is world-wide or universal, and the winds which blow with devastating force are the symbol of judgment. Everywhere in scripture the winds are revealed as divine agents and used either for blessings or for judgments. Here, the four winds are significant of judgments which for the time, the four angels are holding back in order to permit the Seer to have a vision of something that must be brought forth and established *before* the winds are permitted to blow!

Let not the winds blow — *until!* He holds the winds back — hold everything in restraint for a season — endure the corruption, UNTIL THE SONS OF GOD ARE SEALED IN THEIR FOREHEADS! Bring no judgment upon the earth realm, or the sea realm, nor upon the trees, representing those activities, works, creations, and institutions of men which grow and are produced out of the carnal mind (earth) — let there be no judgment upon any of these things *until* the sons of God have put on the mind of Christ! As I write these things and meditate upon them it becomes crystal clear within my spirit that there can be no *righteous judgment* out from God’s elect until we all have been imbued with the *nature of the Father and the mind of Christ*. Any man, apart from the mind of Christ, is unqualified to render any kind of judgment — and he will never be able to judge even his own soul, or his body, or the trees that grow out of his earth, apart from the understanding and wisdom of the mind of Christ. Much less is he prepared to administer righteous judgments to those realms outside himself — the world of mankind and the harlot systems of Babylon. Righteous judgment comes only out of the heavens of the spirit of the Lord! Thus the divine fiat issued by the word of the Lord that the four winds be restrained from blowing upon the earth, the sea, or any tree, until the mind of Christ has been fully formed in God’s kings and priests!

The fruit of this judgment will be glorious indeed! The long dispensations of apostasy and backsliding and faithlessness will be ended. We shall have come to the most blessed age of all: to the time when God is introducing yet one more provision, a new, incorruptible, and eternal order and arrangement which shall never go down to defeat as have all the provisions of the past. Great Babylon shall have fallen to *rise no more!* “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, AND SHALL BE FOUND NO MORE AT ALL!” (Rev. 18:21). **“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.** Behold, I will do a ***new thing***: now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert (that all men may seek the Lord and be refreshed). The beast of the field (natural man) shall honor me, the dragons and the owls (men of unclean natures): because I give waters (or life) in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they *shall show forth my praises*” (Isa. 43:18-21).

In this glorious Day apostasy has raised her ugly head in God's church for the last time! The adversary, with all his lies and deception and ignorance, is now a vanquished foe! God's ***new thing***, God's ***new order*** must now triumph as Great Babylon sinks into the sea never to be found anymore! God's manchild company ***ascends*** the throne. God's holy city, New Jerusalem, ***descends*** out of the heavens of the spirit. The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads...and they shall reign for the ages of the ages. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it!

Chapter 202

The Destruction Of Babylon (continued)

"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; because no man buyeth their merchandise any more...and every ship-master...and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning...and they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness (wealth, all the money involved)! for in one hour is she made desolate" (Rev. 18:8-11, 17-19).

The lamentation that begins here is the first of three listed in chapter eighteen. The first is a lamentation by the *kings* of the earth-realm, or the lords and rulers of the carnal church systems of man (verses 9-10). The second is by the *merchants* of the earth-realm, that is, all those who have "made merchandize" of the gospel and the Lord's people in those carnal systems (verses 11-17). The third (verses 17-19) is by all the *ship owners*, all the *sailors*, all who make their living by the sea trade. Ships in Bible days were vessels of wood, signifying humanity, the carnal nature, the Adamic life. The ship owners and sailors were involved in merchandising, moving goods, transporting the delicacies of the Babylonian kingdom. In religious Babylon these are the deacon boards, committees — finance committees, building committees, etc., money raisers, program directors, music directors, campaign directors, concert organizers, advertisers, all the "movers" by which the desires and ambitions of the leaders of the church systems are planned, financed, produced, and fulfilled.

In John's vision he saw that all of the people mentioned above who witnessed the fall of Babylon were terrified and filled with horror. They had trusted in it. Now it was suddenly being destroyed! It is significant to note that *none* made any attempt to come to the aid of the great city Babylon. Fear of its torment, fear that they too might suffer its fate, has already caused them to move far off where they are standing, observing the destruction of the city. The lament of the kings, the merchants, and the ship-masters and sailors is dramatic: "Alas, alas, that **great city Babylon**, that **mighty city!** For in one hour is thy judgment come!" The cry is one of displeasure, even horror. The Greek may be translated either "Woe!" or "Alas!" However, the cry is very emphatic and is like a hopeless wail. "Mighty" is the same word that is translated "strong" in verse eight wherein we read, "...for *strong* is the Lord who judgeth her." It suggests that Babylon claimed for itself the very power of God! But Babylon was not strong "in the Lord, and in the power of His might," and therefore could not stand before Him. It was all a flimsy facade and it fell quickly when the breath of the Almighty blew upon it — and great was the fall thereof!

It is for Babylon's incredible *wealth* that the mourners mourn over her. The "merchandise" of Babylon is itemized as an inventory in verses twelve through thirteen. These passages clearly indicate that Babylon is no *literal city* — and literal *wares* could not be meant, since no single city in the world could be the sole emporium of the whole earth, as it is presented here. All this

merchandise is not to be understood literally, but as representing the traffic in things both carnal and spiritual and showing the fabulous luxury of the church systems of man. That's the *merchandising spirit* — you can make money in Babylon! Religious Babylon has become a merchandising business and has abounded in all that wealth. The world empire of Babylonish religion, after millenniums of accumulating untold billions — probably trillions — of dollars in real estate, bank accounts, and vast holdings of various kinds, is doubtless one of the richest institutions, if not actually *the richest* organization, on earth today. Self-seeking businesses of all kinds have found it financially rewarding to patronize the materialistic world empire of Babylonish religion. And day and night you can see them crying on TV, pleading for finances for this and that project, offering CD's, DVD's, and trinkets of all kinds. There is no shortage of men and women seeking gold and glory. The land is overflowing with them, those seeking their own gain and each staking his own claim.

Some years ago, CBS's *Sixty Minutes* did a profile on mega-pastor Joel Osteen and his "prosperity theology." His sermons focus on how faith in God and worship of God bring material blessing. That is a positive message, and I certainly prefer a positive gospel to a negative one! But it can easily spill over into ungodly superstition, and it explains the great conundrum of modern religion: that many people's faith is not necessarily making them into better people, not establishing righteousness in their lives, not investing them with the mind of Christ or conforming them into the image of the Son. How could it, seeing that religion is no longer about righteousness, but rather about success, health, and wealth; no longer about God's will and plan, but about *us*; no longer about compassion, love, and a laid-down life, but our own physical and material needs? To inversely paraphrase John F. Kennedy, what so many religious leaders today are essentially saying is, "Ask not what you can do for God; ask what God can do for you!" I too want to be blessed! I too am thankful to my heavenly Father when my needs are abundantly met! But in turning God into a fury rabbit's foot to ward off evil spirits and help us win the lottery, what chance is there that we will ever find transcendence in life or anything uniquely divine, heavenly, and spiritual? More so, what chance is there that we will ever be liberated from the incarceration of the ego — the carnal mind? If the one thing that can free us from the prison of the Self — the Christ-life — is changed into yet another shackle of the self-life, then we are damned to self-absorption forever!

Within recent decades, several of the most famous international television pulpiteers have been exposed and their vast financial holdings have been publicized. They have millions of dollars invested in their personal homes and property both here and abroad, while they fly around the world in their private jets, at the same time begging and pleading for money from the widows, the poor, and struggling families. They live sumptuously the lifestyles of the rich and famous while those who support their grandiose programs are living as virtual paupers. Where are those who are true harvesters of souls rather than those who gather (harvest) money? Where are those who are building God's kingdom rather than their own? Where are those who truly feed the sheep? Where are those who are not lifted up with pride? Where are those who are not puffed up with their own importance? Where are those who do not promote and exalt themselves? Where is the preacher who doesn't seek to ingratiate himself to the one with expensive clothes, luxury automobiles, fine homes, and all the marks of success and wealth? Where is the weeping before the altar? Where are those who refrain from using the world's methods to conduct God's business? Where are those who do not charge for the gospel? Where are those who do not have a ministry for sale? Where are those who have not taken unto themselves the gold and the glory? Where are those who are not displaying their flesh in their man-made promotions?

Where are those of a broken and contrite spirit? Where are those with the meekness and purity of the Lamb? Where are those who have not brought the spirit of this world into their midst? Where are those who do not put their picture on every page of their magazine and their name on everything they do? Where is the simple message of the kingdom of God without the Hollywood extravaganza and showmanship? Where is the worship in the beauty of holiness, in spirit and in truth, rather than musical entertainment? Where are those who approach God with reverence and godly fear and do not treat the sacred things as though they were part of a carnival? Where are those who have laid hold of God? Where are the humble? Where are the pure in heart? Where are those that are conformed unto the image of the Son of God? Where are the prayer warriors and the intercessors? Where are those who proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God without the slightest motive of financial reward for themselves? WHERE ARE GOD'S TRUE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE HOUR? Of this you may be certain — these will not be found within the halls of Babylon's religion! They will only be found among God's faithful remnant who have received the call to come out of Babylon and, forsaking all, have gone unto HIM, without the camp, bearing His reproach, separated unto HIM ALONE.

Yet — all that is but child's play when compared with the "merchandising spirit" of Babylon's "Christian holidays." Hear it! "*And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise anymore*" (Rev. 18:11). Let me quote that again. "*And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man celebrates Christmas and Easter anymore...*" Oops...I made a mistake and quoted that wrong. "...*no man buyeth their merchandise anymore.*" Did you know that most of the merchants, stores, and malls in the United States of America depend upon *Christmas alone* for a full 50% of their annual gross sales? The fact is, without Christmas most of them would go bankrupt and the entire American economy would utterly *collapse!* Add to that the other religious holidays — Easter, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving, and a host of others. The fact is — the stores rearrange their merchandise and restock their shelves at various times throughout the year based primarily on *religious holidays!* No sooner are all the products from one holiday cleared from the shelves, than they are filled full with merchandise for the next holiday! Then add all the religious bookstores, religious cards, Christian concerts, religious broadcasting, music sales, religious trinkets, etc., and you are talking about far more than 50% of the economies of most so-called "Christian" nations! Tell me that the gospel isn't big business — the collapse of which would cause the merchants of the earth *literally* to cry, and weep, and mourn!

Who can deny that Christmas is indeed a *commercial* season, sponsored and kept alive by the heaviest retail advertising campaigns of the year. You see a masqueraded "Santa Claus" in the stores. Ads keep us deluded and deceived about the "beautiful Christmas spirit." The newspapers, magazines, catalogs, television networks, and radio stations who sell these ads, print flowery editorials and publish advertising slogans exalting and eulogizing the pagan season and its "SPIRIT." A gullible people has become so inoculated, many take offense when told the TRUTH! Think about it. The "Christmas spirit" is actually *created* each year, not by some unique moving of the Spirit of Christ, not even to honor Christ, but to SELL MERCHANDISE! Like all of Satan's delusions, it appears as an "angel of light." Materialism and commercialism so dominate this "season to be jolly" that there can surely be no soul so blind as not to see it. Although it is the season of giving — and everyone is propagandized to feel evil if they are not involved in the giving — the overtones, from the candy store on the corner to the department store that has everything and the mail-order catalog business and the internet, obviously put the stress on getting them more business during this time of the year than any other comparable season. In fact, many commercial ventures rely on this season of the year for their *survival*. Whenever a question is

asked after the 25th of December is past, it is generally, "What did you GET for Christmas?" Each vies with the other, determined to express the idea that he got more. But God is revealing to His elect sons in this hour *the difference between the precious and the vile — the difference between that which is born of God and that which is born of the harlot Babylon.* God by His Spirit is bringing forth a people OUT OF EVERY VESTIGE OF BABYLON!

Historical records in encyclopedias, which are available in any city library, and are noted for their authenticity and reliability, give us these facts that Christmas is of heathen origin. It is traced back to sun worshippers and observed among the pagan nations. All these pagan festivals originated in heathendom. The word "Christmas" means "Mass of Christ," or, as it later became shortened, "Christ-Mass," and finally just "Christmas." It came to us as a Roman Catholic Mass. But where did they get it? Certainly not from Christ or the Bible, for neither Christ or the Bible make any mention of it or even suggest that we should in any way celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Since it has come to us through the Roman Church, and has no authority but that of the Roman Catholic Church, let us examine the Catholic Encyclopedia, published by that denomination. Under the caption "Christmas" you will find: "Christmas was *not* among the earliest festivals of the Church...the first evidence of the feast *is from Egypt.*" "*Pagan customs* centering around the January calendar gravitated to Christmas."

The Encyclopedia Americana, 1969 edition, says: "CHRISTMAS. The name derives from the Old English Chrites Maesse, or Christ's Mass, and the present spelling probably came into use about the sixteenth century. All Christian churches except the Armenian church observe the birth of Christ on December 25. This date was not set in the West until about the middle of the fourth century and in the East until about a century later. The reason for establishing December 25 as Christmas is somewhat obscure, but it is usually held that the day was chosen to correspond to *pagan festivals* that took place around the time of the winter solstice, when the days began to lengthen, to celebrate the 'rebirth of the sun.' Northern European tribes celebrated their chief festival of Yule at the winter solstice to celebrate the rebirth of the sun (god) as a giver of light and warmth. The Roman Saturnalia (a festival dedicated to *Saturn*, the *god of agriculture*, and to the renewed power of the sun) also took place at this time, and some Christian customs are thought to be rooted in this ancient *pagan* celebration. It is held by some scholars that the birth of Christ as 'Light of the World' was made analogous to the rebirth of the sun in order to make Christianity more meaningful to pagan converts. Many early Christians decried the gaiety and festive spirit introduced into the Christmas celebration as a pagan survival, particularly of the Roman Saturnalia." In our little booklet *Five Reasons Why the Sons of God Should Not Celebrate Christmas* (available free upon request) we cite many more historical proofs of the pagan origin of Christmas.

"But," you say, "isn't exchanging gifts scriptural?" The answer is NO! From the Bibliotheca Sacra, Volume 12, pages 153-155, we quote: "The interchanging of presents among friends is a like characteristic of Christmas and the Saturnalia, and *must have been adopted by Christians from the pagans*, as the admonition of Tertullian plainly shows." The fact is, this custom fastened upon the people of exchanging gifts with friends and neighbors and relatives at the Christmas season has not a single trace of Christianity in it! This does *not* celebrate Christ's birthday or honor it or Him. The partiality which is even exercised in the giving of gifts is another sign of failing to harmonize with scriptural principles. We do not object to the spirit of giving gifts, God forbid! But why wait until the traditional month of December when often times other seasons of the year would be more practical. A dear relative who insisted on continuing to send gifts to our house each Christmas long after we had ceased to reciprocate, when the subject came up one day,

said, "Can't I continue to give to you just because I love you?" "Certainly," I replied, "but why do you love me only on December 25?" Furthermore, generally the method of giving fails to reveal the true spirit of charity. The major method of giving is to give to those from whom we expect to receive again in return. Even if we only suspect that a person may give something to us we then feel obligated to get something for him or her! That is *not* the true spirit of "giving"! It is certainly apart from the Spirit of God and all who give in that way already have their reward!

Consider this: Billions of dollars are spent for gifts every year because of *one false doctrine*. That false teaching is this: "The wise men gave gifts to Jesus, therefore we should give gifts." But do we give our gifts to Jesus? To His work? Even to the poor and needy? No. NO. NO! We give gifts worth billions of dollars *to each other*. The *truth* is just this: The wise men gave their gifts directly to Jesus, not to one another. And their gifts were not birthday gifts! The Bible evidence shows that it was two years after His birth when the wise men visited the *young child* (not a baby) in a *house* (not a stable) in *Nazareth* (not in Bethlehem). When a visitor came into the presence of a king he was supposed to bring a gift. That was a common custom in the far East. The wise men did not give any *birthday gifts* to Jesus at all! They inquired for the KING OF THE JEWS and they gave Him royal gifts because He always was, is, and forever will be a KING!

Some credit the activities of Christmas to a nebulous "spirit" which they call the "Christmas spirit," and many praise the workings of such a "spirit." But, do people suddenly change their beliefs and character? Do they suddenly all act like Christians and then cease to act as such after December 25? But that isn't right either, is it? The so-called "spirit" of Christmas has absolutely no power to transform men! For most of their actions under the influence of this "spirit" have nothing what ever to do with Christ! In fact, the "Christmas spirit" seems to cause almost all to behave in a manner that is totally out of harmony with the spirit of Jesus! Stores raise many prices (except in bad economic times), often pushing cheap and flimsy merchandise for "gifts," men exchange bottles or cases of whiskey, employers give "Christmas parties" with free liquor, often with consequences of drunkenness, and sometimes with more tragic consequences of auto accidents, or illicit sex liaisons. Tens of thousands of families, caught up in the "Christmas spirit," overspend, go into debt, max out their credit cards, and lay an additional burden upon themselves for months afterward. Is this "spirit" that inspires them the *Holy Spirit*? Of course not!

Then what is this festival which is called CHRISTMAS? The answer, which should be suspected by all true Christians as they watch both the secular and the religious world "celebrate," is that this festival called "Christmas" is NOT a Christian holiday at all, but is exactly what it appears to be, a pagan debauchery whose origins are not, and cannot be, in the Holy One of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, in His sermon on the mount, taught that "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit" (Mat. 7:17-18). The aged apostle John wrote with the pen of inspiration and wisdom, "Beloved, believe not every *spirit*, but try the *spirits* whether they are of God" (I Jn. 4:1). This simply means that the Lord's people are *not* to be influenced or moved by everything that seems to have a "spirit" behind it. As the "spirit of Christmas" comes wafting out of the necks of millions of bottles, as millions of people tiredly shuffle through the required routine, spending money they often can't afford, braving the jostling crowds looking for various gifts, attending neighborhood parties, eating and drinking in excess, sneaking kisses under the mistletoe, the nation inexorably heads toward that all-too-brief evening called "Christmas eve," followed by the nostalgia of "Christmas day" with cuddly scenes of little children in their pajamas gleefully giggling over what they find under their pagan "Christmas tree." It's a time of nostalgia; of childhood memories, of family gatherings, massive air travel, Christmas dinners, and football games — an orgy of spending, gift-giving, burning the midnight oil, eating too

much and drinking too much, resulting in headaches and stomach disorders and other ailments that go along with drunkenness and gluttony, followed by the inevitable letdown. All this is outright heathendom and an insult to the Master, for it is done in *His name*, yet it has absolutely *no connection* with the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Some contend that the *Christmas spirit* and the giving of gifts is a good thing. Instead it is a CRUEL PAGAN CUSTOM. Should you still think Christmas is a holy time, consider this: Christmas is a time of high carnality and low spirituality. We know that the *unregenerate* do not worship or serve Jesus. But they SURELY DO ENJOY CHRISTMAS! Why? Because of the decorations, the lights, feasts, gifts, parties, etc., all of which appeal to the **natural man**. THIS IS THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT in which the whole world is caught up! Is it the Lord's Spirit? Verily No! No one can dispute that — yet those who pay no attention to Christ, or His Spirit, or His Word all the rest of the year, those who fit the description of "the world," enter into the activities and rituals of "Christmas" with a frenzy that borders on a passion! How can this be? How can the unbelievers be so stirred by this "spirit" at *this one time of the year* to venerate a day proclaimed as the "very birthday" of Jesus Christ, when they ignore Him or blaspheme His holy name the rest of the year! Oh, my beloved, that alone should tell you something! It is *high time* for all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to God to forsake the polluted house of the Harlot!

If with one sweep of the hand all the so-called holy days, all the commercialism of Christian products and services could be erased out of our land, the economy of the entire nation — and perhaps the world — WOULD COLLAPSE! Think about it! Can we not understand by this the heart-wrenching scene in John's remarkable vision: "*And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all kinds of scented wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves...the merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing...for in one hour so great riches is come to nought*" (Rev. 18:11-17). Check that list carefully, my friend, and consider just how many of the items enumerated there have been purchased by the untold billions of dollars from the merchants of the earth *just at Christmas time!*

That is the great word-picture of the merchandising empire of religious Babylon! The luxuriance of the language must not blind our eyes to the fact that though it involves the *kings* of the earth, the *merchants* of the earth, and the *ship-masters* and *sailors*, it is really just one great lamentation, and one too of unequalled pathos; for the saddest sight imaginable is not the judgment of a World but the crashing to destruction of a professing Christian Church — the vision of a church first faithless, then fallen, and finally destroyed, consumed by the fire of God's judgment! So great a space is devoted in the Revelation to the lamentations over her — one entire chapter — because so momentous, surprising, complete, and far-reaching is her destruction! The age and the land in which we live are full of the merchandising of Mystery Babylon. On every side we see the church and the world on the best of terms, and in such close alliance the one with the other that in reality they can only *fall together!* Thus, while Babylon burns, the world stands by and wrings its hands, casts dust on its head, and in stark fear weeps and mourns!

There is, of course, a spiritual dimension to the wealth and merchandising of Babylon. Our friend, Connie Asbill, expressed it so well when she wrote: "Like Israel who was *rich* in covenants and promises, this woman (Babylon) is rich with the word that has been brought to her, not only by the scriptures, but by those men who have been raised up out of the midst of her to speak truth under the anointings of God. In Revelation 17:4 she is seen 'arrayed in purple and scarlet color, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand...' Babylon is, indeed, a RICH WOMAN! That she is rich by the hand of God, and is not merely pretending to be rich, is seen in Hosea 2:8 where the Lord Himself affirms that He is the source of her wealth. Babylon is not, however, aware in the depths of her being that He is her supply, and therein lies her ultimate undoing, for the Lord said, 'She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold...therefore will I return and ***take away my corn in the time thereof and my wine in the season thereof and will take away my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness, and now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers and none shall deliver her out of my hand.***'

"Babylon is a rich woman — but it is with these very riches from the hand of God that she has prepared her own idols, having held the truth in unrighteousness and changed these riches and truths of God into a lie. That is what the Lord says in this passage: 'She did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil...which THEY PREPARED FOR BAAL.' Deceived by the very riches that were given to bring her to God, Babylon exalts herself because of that which she possesses, saying within herself, 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow' (Rev. 18:7). All that the church possesses was given to her out of the anointing of God, imparted to her through anointed men, and these men of bygone generations she admires. Nothing has changed, however, since the days of Jesus when He said to the religious leaders, 'You garnish the sepulchers of the dead prophets — but kill the living ones.' The anointed word has been set in concrete in the church system, and like the *rephaim* — the physicians of no value who *embalmed* Israel — so has the church system so *embalmed the Christ* — fixed Him in a ***static position*** so that He can move no further. Holding the very *form of truth*, the church system denies the essence and life of that truth...and boasts in her wealth! Yet, the Lord says, 'Because thou sayest, ***I am rich and increased with goods*** (doctrines and forms and rituals and eschatology charts) and have need of nothing (not even the anointing) and ***knowest not*** that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked...' because of all this, '***I WILL SPEW YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH!***' — end quote.

With this *higher spiritual dimension* firmly in mind let us reverently and prayerfully consider together once more all the things that are merchandised in Babylon. "*And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all scented wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.*"

It is doubtful that in all of scripture there are words more specific, pungent, and precise than these! The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones — to list only the first three. Gold bespeaks the *divine nature*. And I do not hesitate to tell you that the ministers of Babylon will offer to sell you even the *divine nature* for a price! Oh, yes — if you are *committed* to the church, if you are *faithful* in attendance, if you *pay* your tithes and offerings, if you *sell your soul* to their programs and agenda — then you are promised that you will thereby grow spiritually and become

a strong, mature Christian, Godlike in character — that is, full of ***divine nature!*** These ministers of Babylon will also *sell* you their seven-step book on ***Overcoming Made Easy.*** They will *sell* you their CD's and DVD's on ***Prosperity and Healing.*** And if you want to really understand how to grow and mature in Christ, if you need faith and understanding on how to receive and move in the gifts of the Spirit, if you covet to prophesy, if you need healing, if you seek to have your marriage strengthened, if you want to be a better husband or wife, if you need wisdom to nurture and raise your children, if you hunger and thirst after righteousness and yearn to appropriate the riches and glory of the promises and covenants of God — just register and PAY THE ADMISSION PRICE of \$30.00, or \$100.00, or \$300.00 to attend their Seminar or Retreat! In Babylon you must ***pay*** for all of this! Babylon does not freely minister the deep spiritual truth, blessing, life, and reality of the Lord — they neatly package it, then put a price on it, thus *making merchandise* of the holy things of God! **For a fee** you are able to access the gold of *divine nature*, the silver of *redemption*, the precious stones of *divine strength and godly character*, the pearls of *death to self*, the fine linen of *righteousness*, the purple of a *kingsly, royal life*, the scented wood of *His fragrance*, the precious wood of a *redeemed humanity*, the odors of *His attributes*, the ointments of *His healing power*, the wine of *His joy*, the oil of *anointing*, the fine flour and wheat of *His word*, the sheep of *His humility and sacrifice*, the chariots of *the movings of His power*, and many more besides. How wonderful are all these things! Are they not indeed of great value? Yet — one can easily discern the difference between the great city Babylon and the holy city New Jerusalem — in the “great city” of Babylon all these things are ***merchandised!*** In the “holy city” of New Jerusalem they are ***freely given!*** “*And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there...and the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY!*” (Rev. 21:25; 22:17). Great is the mystery!

REJOICE OVER HER!

“*Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her*” (Rev. 18:20).

If ever there was a facet of the pleasure of the Lord that we desire to see in manifestation, and to joyfully participate in, it is this — that He do His pleasure on Babylon. In the natural it would appear cynical to rejoice over a city that is burning and merchants who are lamenting, weeping, and mourning. Yet what a day of rejoicing and singing when HE delivers, yes, when HE breaks asunder the prison bars, removes the blindfolds from the faces of the inmates, when HE REDEEMS man from all of the religious systems of our day, and finally men are freed to truly know God and “worship the Father *in spirit and in truth.*” Even now His remnant have been drawn out and cut off from the world of man’s religion, and from the contention of creeds, to partake of HIS LIFE in a very personal and powerful way.

But the hour draws nigh when the Son, and those who follow the Lamb, shall execute the will of the Father, and the command shall be given, “*Repay to her what she herself has paid to others and double her doom in accordance with what she has done. Mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed for others. To the degree that she glorified herself and reveled in her wantonness, to that measure impose on her torment and anguish and tears and mourning...so shall her plagues come thick upon her in a single day, pestilence and anguish and sorrow and famine; and she shall be utterly consumed with fire, FOR MIGHTY IS THE LORD GOD WHO JUDGES HER*” (Rev. 18:6-8, Amplified).

We find so many today, even among God's elect, who bemoan the awful conditions of the church and the world. Shame on them! God reminds you and me now, when we see Babylon made desolate, "REJOICE OVER HER, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." This is the day of reckoning, the day of judgment on this ungodly system. It will be followed by peace and righteousness and glory and rejoicing! It is indeed wonderful! Only faintly can our hearts contemplate the wonder of such a day when the Babylon religious system exists no more, *replaced* with the ***manifestation of the sons of God and a universal outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord!*** And while false prophets and calamity-howlers of every brand and hue are prophesying the darkest days of earth's history soon to fall as a shroud upon the whole world, yet the word of the Lord tells a far different story. To all the people in Babylon the Lord says, "Come out of her, *my people!*" Make no mistake about it, precious friend of mine, every single person in Babylon *is the Lord's people.* And now we find, "***Thy people shall be delivered, EVERY ONE that shall be found written in the book***" (Dan. 12:4). This is the day of victory, not of defeat. It is the day when God is "bringing again Zion" (Isa. 52:8), that is, bringing all His people out of Babylon and establishing Zion as the city of God in the earth. This deliverance is for "every one" that belongs to Christ, whose name is written in the book. THEREFORE, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets!"

The whole system shall come to nought, and we shall see the establishment of HIS KINGDOM in righteousness throughout the earth. Believe it, my beloved, He taught us to pray it, "***THY KINGDOM COME, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.***" And this pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand! "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). Truly, ***redemption*** means a "loosing away" from all of Babylon's corruption. And most especially is this essential from all of its religious tyranny and corruption. And what a day of rejoicing that brings!

We stand in the glory that Jesus has given,
The moon as the day-spring doth shine;
The light of the sun is now equal to seven,
So bright is the glory divine!
Now filled with the Spirit and clad in the armor
Of light and omnipotent truth,
We'll testify ever and Jesus we'll honor,
And stand from Babylon aloof!
The prophet's keen vision transpiercing the ages,
Beheld us to Zion return;
We'll sing of our freedom, though Babylon rages,
We'll shout as her city doth burn!

THE MILLSTONE CAST INTO THE SEA

"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great *millstone*, and cast it into the sea, saying, ***Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all***" (Rev. 18:21).

Here an angel appears. Observe that it is a *strong* and *powerful* angel. What he is about to do requires great strength. All alone — we read *one* strong angel — he picks up an enormous millstone. Not any ordinary stone from a handmill but a *great* millstone, that is, one from a mill turned by strong oxen. What does the angel do with this great millstone? Does he roll it upon the land? No, he thrusts it into the sea where it disappears into the depths. Does he merely permit it

to fall? No, he lifts it up and then *hurls* it into the sea — quickly the waters close over the stone so that it may be buried deeply in the ocean floor. Violence, suddenness, and permanence combine in the overthrown of Babylon. So thoroughgoing and complete will be Babylon's destruction! Never will the millstone be retrieved! The "angel" prophesied that in the same way, that is, with the same sort of power and violence, the great city Babylon would be thrown down and disappear forever. The prophecy is emphatic — Babylon will never, ever, be found any more at all! Thus, this wicked system, as center of seduction, will perish forever. Its devastation will be final, total, and irreversible. By this we are assured that God is bringing in an order in which apostasy cannot and will not ever raise its ugly head anywhere, or at any time, ever again! Oh, saints of God — it's REJOICING TIME!

The prophet Daniel beheld a stone cut out without hands which became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. The stone of Babylon, on the other hand, is removed from the earth and cast into the sea! The beast of Revelation 13:1 came out of the sea; Babylon is, as it were, engulfed in the sea, never again to raise its proud head to deceive the nations with its sorceries. The imagery of the scenes is very precise. We have seen again and again that the sea represents symbolically the unconverted state of mankind, the wicked which are tossed about like the troubled sea, the raging, surging, restless masses of humanity foaming out their shame in the old Adamic mind and nature. As the Father graciously unfolds this mystery to our wondering hearts, can we not see that the destruction of Babylon as a millstone cast into the sea signifies that she will sink to such a low level of degradation until she comes to a devastating collapse. She will become completely absorbed by the world and simply disappear into the sea of humanity as a viable system in the world of religion.

Verses twenty-one through twenty three of chapter eighteen are like waves sealing Babylon in the deathly silence, stillness, and darkness of a watery grave — from which there is no return or recall. The recurring words "no more at all" are used six times in these three verses. "No more at all" has about it the doleful sound of a dirge and of the somber tolling of a death knell. *No more* music (praise and worship), *no more* craftsmen (true ministries), *no more* sound of a millstone (preparation of the word of God), *no more* light of a candle (even the little truth she had), *no more* the voice of the bridegroom (the voice of Christ the Head), *no more* the voice of the bride (God's remnant) — all spiritual progress, all spiritual action, all spiritual life, all spiritual reality, and all spiritual people CAN BE FOUND **NO MORE AT ALL IN HER!**

I now close this message with the sober and urgent admonition of brother George Hawtin from one of his issues of *The Page*. "Thus with violence endeth great Mystery Babylon, which for centuries has ruled the nations...binding the professing church with the chains of tradition and bringing into slavish subjection all who are unaware of her whoredoms. Times without number I have sought to show God's dear people the cunning mystery of ecclesiastical Babylon, warning continually of the danger of remaining in her fold. Oh that God's people would awaken and obey the Father's call, 'Come out of her, my people,' that God may be their Father and they may be His sons and daughters. I solemnly warn and admonish the people of God that *it is not possible to attain to sonship or a life that is controlled by the Spirit as long as their lives are under the influence of this satanic system, which is doomed to such utter and complete destruction.* Not only are the kingdoms of the world doomed to desolation, but the whole church system, identified as it is with the world system, is also doomed to irreparable dissolution and ruin. If you obey God and come out of it, you will be spared her woes; but, if you remain in it, you will be condemned with it. For what other reason does the Lord call to His people, saying, 'Come out of her, my

people, *that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues?"*" — end quote.

Chapter 203

The Destruction Of Babylon (continued)

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters, *shall be heard no more at all in thee*; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, *shall be found any more in thee*; and the sound of a millstone *shall be heard no more at all in thee*; and the light of a candle *shall shine no more at all in thee*; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride *shall be heard no more at all in thee*: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived" (Rev. 18:22-23).

Two thousand years ago the firstborn Son of God declared, "For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until John*" (Mat. 11:13). God spoke to an age through the law and the prophets who gave the word of God to Israel until John the Baptist came on the scene preaching repentance and the kingdom of God. This means that the prophets and the law revealed God's will for that age and were in effect until John showed up in the wilderness and began his ministry. The Lord ended the previous age by **removing His blessing, presence, and authority** from that previous order, and then spoke a new order into existence purely by His word. And by a similar unrecognized word of authority, Father shall conclude *this age* of the *perfection* of the bride of the Lamb, and the *formation* of His body of sons, and inaugurate the new age of the *manifestation* of the sons of God on earth (Rom. 8:18-30). When the Lord changed the order two thousand years ago, did He send a mighty cataclysmic upheaval and judgment to *instantly* eliminate the Old Covenant priesthood, laws, rituals, sacrifices, feast days, synagogues, temple, and religious forms? Did He quickly move to completely wipe them out and abolish it all from the face of the earth? No — not at all! Remnants of the old Jewish order remain in the earth to this day as an abiding and unimpeachable testimony to the blindness and emptiness of unanointed, uninspired, unspiritual religion! God removed every vestige and particle of His presence, unction, power, activity, and glory from that passing order and there is no spiritual or religious **death** more stark, barren, grim, empty, and desolate in any religious system of earth today than in Judaism! *Ichabod* — the glory has departed!

When Father changes the order in this day, replacing the old church order with His manifest sons, kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek, will He then *immediately* eliminate and obliterate off the face of the earth the old Catholic order, the Baptist order, the Methodist order, the Lutheran order, the Episcopalian order, the Presbyterian order, the Mennonite order, the Pentecostal order, the Charismatic order, the Word of Faith order, and all the other church orders of man? Not by any means! They will perish in due time, sinking into the sea of oblivion, but first He will simply **remove what is left of His blessing, presence, anointing, working, and authority from that order!** It will be just as the heavenly messenger announced to John: "Rejoice over her (Babylon), ye heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her...and the voice of harpers and musicians (spiritual praise and worship), and the voice of pipers (prophecy and prophets), and trumpeters (announcers of new truths and purposes in God), SHALL BE HEARD NO MORE AT ALL IN THEE; and no craftsman (spiritual ministry), of what ever craft (gifting, ministry) he be, SHALL BE FOUND ANY MORE IN THEE; and the sound of a millstone (grinding flour for bread — the living word of God) SHALL BE HEARD NO MORE AT ALL IN THEE; and the light of a candle (the little light left in Babylon) SHALL SHINE NO MORE AT ALL IN THEE;

and the voice of the Bridegroom (Christ the Head) and of the bride (the true church, God's remnant) SHALL BE HEARD NO MORE AT ALL IN THEE..." What a word that is!

It simply means that there is no longer any anointing, no spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, no life-flow, no living reality present in Babylon. Who can deny it? Jesus said, "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine" (Jn. 15:4). It reminds me of the story I heard of a young woman who sat down to speak with the receptionist in the bank lobby, and with an innocent, eager smile she said, "I'd like to get some of those little papers with my name on them that I can use instead of money." The receptionist eventually figured out that the "little papers" this customer wanted were checks. The customer had no concept of how a checking account worked: she didn't realize a check was drawn on a bank account, against money that was in the account. She thought it was enough just to have "those little papers." In Jesus' parable about the vine and the branches there's something just as absurd as this naïve request from a bank customer. Jesus pictures a vine on which each branch exists to produce fruit. But some branches decide they want to be independent of the vine. So they stop accepting the nourishment from the vine, and some of them even cut off their attachment with the vine completely and head out on their own. The absurdity is that we can't head out on our own! Just as we need money in a bank account in order to write a valid check, so also we need the Christ-life raised up within us as a steady supply of resources in order to bear the fruit of divine life. We are branches — Christ is our vine! Only in the *union* of our soul with Christ in our spirit can we bear kingdom fruit!

That's just the problem — Babylon is a dead stick — a branch separated from the vine! Ah, a dead branch still looks like a branch, retains the form and appearance of a branch, can still actually claim to be a branch, but there is no life and no fruit. It maintains a structure void of any life-flow, a structure of void and death. Babylon is the custodian of structures of spiritual desolation and death! What appears outwardly to be a branch of Christ is just the dry stick of empty forms, dead works, lifeless rituals, uninspired theology, and carnal organization and programs of man!

There is an ancient story of a sentry standing day after day at his post with no apparent reason for his being there. One day, a passerby asked him why he was standing in that particular place. "I don't know," the sentry replied, "I'm just following orders." The passerby then went to the captain of the guard and asked him why the sentry was posted in that place. "I don't know," the captain replied, "We're just following orders." This prompted the captain of the guard to pose the question to higher authority. "Why do we post a sentry at that particular spot?" he asked the king. But the king didn't know. So he summoned his wise men and asked them the question. The answer came back that one hundred years before, Catherine the Great had planted a rosebush and had ordered a sentry placed there to protect it. The rosebush had been dead for eighty years, but the sentry still stood guard! Can you not see the mystery?

Oh, yes, Babylon is standing guard over static creeds, ancient traditions, empty forms, sterile sacraments, spiritless worship, unfructuous works, uninspired preaching and teaching, and carnal, man-made organization of the church systems of man. When the church was birthed on the day of Pentecost men and women were gloriously filled with the Holy Ghost! The ascended and glorified Christ shed forth His gifts upon the church, and the manifestation of the Spirit was given to every man to profit withal. God gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. These were ministry-gifts raised up by the power of the indwelling Christ! They went forth everywhere, preaching the word, and God worked with them, confirming

the word with signs following. Oh! There was a mighty river of life that flowed from the throne of God and it flowed and flowed and flowed, bringing LIFE everywhere it went! But over the centuries men trusted more and more in the flesh, and less and less in the Spirit. Gradually, theology took the place of the living word of God. Sacraments substituted for the supernatural power of God. Prayer books supplanted intercession and praying in the Spirit. Form, ritual, and tradition replaced the ministry of the Spirit. What is *tradition*? It is keeping on doing something by *rote* that God did *by His Spirit* in an earlier move! Little by little the life dissipated, the anointing lifted, the power subsided, and the glory departed. BUT THE SENTRY STILL STOOD GUARD! The rosebush was dead, the branch was withered, nothing left but an empty shell of *form*, but the bishops, pastors, ministers, ecclesiastics, teachers, deacons, and church officials of all kinds continued to stand in their places guarding the dead branch of *Babylonish religion!* And they stand, still! You can see this evil without me having to make any application. Just go to *any* church service almost *anywhere!* You will run headlong into this evil of *form*. We have our three songs, pastoral prayer, announcements, special music, testimonies and/or communion, receive the offering, have the sermon, sing another song, go out and shake the preacher's hand. And all of this is watched over by the sentry who still stands where the rosebush stood in that long-ago...

Someone has said that reading through the book of Psalms is like driving on a divided highway through some lovely section of the countryside. We pass through new and beautiful scenery with a spectacular landscape on each side. One of the unique scenes of the book of Psalms is found in Psalm 137. It deals with a particular portion of the history of the Lord's people belonging to the southern kingdom of Judah. It is an historical Psalm — which is very unusual. The history of the children of Israel as recorded in the Old Testament books does not cover the history of God's people during the seventy years they were in captivity in Babylon. There is a record of them being carried away into Babylon, and then a record of them coming out of Babylon and returning to Zion, but there is no record of the seventy years of captivity. Ezekiel was in Babylon, but he was prophesying to the captives there, not writing a journal of their condition. Also, Daniel was in Babylon during that period, but he was in the court, dealing with governmental matters and prophesying to the Gentile rulers. He leaves us no record of the activities or state of the many thousands of captives there. The seventy years of Babylonian captivity are a period of almost absolute silence. It is a vacuum. It is a void so far as information about the people of Israel dwelling in Babylon. This fact gives great emphasis to Psalm 137 because it serves as a bridge over this vast chasm of silence. This Psalm enables us to look through the keyhole, as it were, and gives us a bird's-eye view of the captivity of God's people in Babylon. This is what we are permitted to do here. We don't see very much, but we see enough and it speaks powerfully to us today about the spiritual captivity of the Lord's people in Mystery Babylon the Great!

The Psalm begins with these melancholy words, "*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion*" (Ps. 137:1). By the rivers of Babylon! "By the rivers of Babylon" was a place where they were captive, where they had lost their freedom, their joy, and their power, where they performed slave labor, a place where they suffered — "by the rivers of Babylon." They had no business being there! God had placed them in His most favored land with profound and abundant blessings beyond description, kissed by His presence and glory manifested in their midst, with deliverance from all their enemies. God had promised to cover them with His mantle as long as they were true to Him and stood as His witnesses in the midst of the earth. But they were *not* true to Him, they ceased to walk in His Spirit, they forsook His ways, they broke His commandments, they followed after other lovers, fornicating with the gods of the

heathen, and worshipping idols. And now, as the judgment upon their many sins, they are here — “by the rivers of Babylon.”

The rivers of Babylon are, of course, the canals. It is now quite certain historically that these captives are in fact the very people who dug those canals leading off the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers! Babylon was in modern day Iraq, a hot, dry, dusty plain. Those canals threaded through that desolate terrain to irrigate the land, turning it into a green, flourishing section. These are the people who from sunup to sundown wearily dug through that dry desert land. “By the rivers of Babylon, *there we sat down.*” What a somber, heart-rending scene that is! What a picture of deep dejection! What a portrait of heartbreaking despair! What a representation of desperation! “There we sat down.” What else could they do? Ah, another thing. “Yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.”

This is no Psalm of praise. This is a Psalm of deep indigo, as blue as you can possibly get. What a contrast between Jerusalem and Babylon! Jerusalem yonder in the everlasting hills, Jerusalem the city of God, Jerusalem beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth! Babylon, down on a blazing hot plain. What a contrast! And they are homesick, acutely aware of their great and terrible loss, wretchedness and torment flaming in their souls. They are there because their city has been destroyed. They are there because their sins weakened the strong walls of their defense — the righteousness and power of God — and the Babylonians, a people stronger than they in their defenseless state, had invaded their city, carried them away captive, herded them like animals, and put them in slave labor camps “by the rivers of Babylon.” Now they are homesick. “We wept, when we remembered Zion.”

The sad narration continues. “*We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion*” (Ps. 137:2-3). The citizens of Babylon had heard about the singing of Israel. It was world famous, and not without cause. When the news spread about the Jewish captives being brought into the canal country of Babylon, that they were being located there in slave labor camps, this became both a curiosity and an excitement on the part of the Babylonians, because the people wanted to hear them sing. You see, Israel was world famous for its music! In Jerusalem there was a temple to the one true and living God. When visitors came to Jerusalem from the many nations of the world, they found a people who were not worshipping images and idols of many gods, but a people serving a living God who spoke audibly and manifested His visible glory in their midst; and by the spirit of praise and worship the people were singing praises unto Him. They had never seen or heard anything like it!

It was more than hymns written by men and intoned by trained choirs — it was indeed singing in the spirit and by the spirit — it was prophetic singing, indeed, the very *song of the Lord!* This joyful and heavenly sound was first heard in Israel at the time of the dedication of Solomon’s temple. When all the work that Solomon did in building the house of the Lord was finished, he then summoned the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes to Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David where it had been kept. The priests and the Levites brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place in the temple, in the Holy of holies, under the wings of the cherubim. When the ark was positioned in its place and the priests had come out of the Most Holy Place, then the elders, the priests, the Levites, and thousands of the people of Israel were assembled at the glorious temple. The Levites stood arrayed in fine linen, having cymbals, harps, and lyres — and an hundred and twenty priests took up their trumpets. Then we read, “*And when the trumpeters and singers were joined in unison, making*

one sound (tone, harmony) to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and other instruments for song and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good, for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever, then THE HOUSE OF THE LORD WAS FILLED WITH A CLOUD, SO THAT THE PRIESTS COULD NOT MINISTER BECAUSE OF THE CLOUD, FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE HOUSE OF GOD” (II Chron. 5:13-14).

Ah, my beloved, I have witnessed and been a glad participant in scenes like the one described above, and I am sure that many who read these lines have been there. Having been raised as a child in the Pentecostal Church, singing the old “I’ll Fly Away” songs of Pentecost, which was all we knew — what indescribable glory, what awe, what reverence, what heavenly wonder and rapture flooded my soul when the glory of God came into *my house* as God sent down the torrents of His presence and power into my soul when He first moved many years ago to do a new thing in the earth. I shall never be able to forget the glory as heaven came down, as the musicians, the ministers, and all the congregation were instantly imbued with the celestial music of heavenly choirs, all joining their voices in unison, ***making one sound, one tone, one harmonic, rhythmic, divine flow of prophetic singing*** — no song that we had ever heard or learned, but HIS SONG, THE SONG OF THE LORD! George Hawtin once described the wonder of it when he wrote of his own experience when the glory came into their class room while he and his students waited on God that glorious 15th of February, 1948. He wrote, “How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs of earth went sweeping up the sky sweeps while angels stood at heaven’s gates and swept their harps of gold. Day after day, month after month the celestial wonder continued, heaven came down our souls to greet and glory crowned the mercy seat.”

When this glory came to Israel the news of it spread throughout the world. People came for thousands of miles to witness the wonder and to drink at the ever-flowing fountain of life and glory. The Queen of Sheba came from the ends of the earth when she heard of it. She thought the report couldn’t be true. It wasn’t just the *wealth* of Solomon’s kingdom that drew her — it was the *glory!* During Israel’s feast seasons the people from throughout the land would gather in Jerusalem and they would sing the songs of the Lord, many of which, in time, became the Psalms. David arranged a choir and an orchestra with hundreds of musicians. It is estimated that there were times when one hundred thousand people gathered in and around that temple, singing the praises of God! To hear and behold such a divine and transcendental expression was a sensational experience. But now that glorious temple was burned, Jerusalem lay in rubble, and the people were doing slave labor in Babylon. Before the captivity many travelers had come to Babylon saying something like this: “I was in Jerusalem during a feast these people had. They were from all over the world. They gathered around their temple over one hundred thousand strong. When that sacrifice was burned, and the smoke ascended, the spirit of their God came upon them and out from the throats of those people rose a psalm that lifted me off the ground into the heavens! I have never heard anything like it!”

When the people of Israel assembled according to the command of the Lord and sang the high praises of God, the world heard about it. God intended the world to hear about it! Now that they were captives in Babylon, the Babylonians said, “We’re going out there to hear some of that heavenly music!” But when they got out there, the Babylonians saw the harps hanging on the willow trees. They saw these people sitting in deep dejection — instead of singing they were weeping. They have no heart for singing. They have quit singing now. They will not have a choir

there. There won't be any worship service there. They are wailing instead of singing. They have put their harps upon the willows; they won't be needing them any more. And with a sneer they said to them, "Sing us a song of Zion. We've been hearing about you. We thought you people could sing with the harmony of the gods! Come on, let's hear it!" Listen to the response of the captives — "*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*" (Ps. 137:4). With a sob in their soul, they said, "We've lost our song. You command us to sing a song of Zion. Our Zion is back yonder in the ashes and rubble and ruin. We can't sing the songs of Zion by the rivers of Babylon. We can't sing anywhere but back there. OUR GOD IS IN ZION. But we are not in Zion! How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land — where Yahweh does not dwell!"

Oh, yes, my beloved, Babylon is a *strange land!* I am at home in Zion. The Lord dwelleth in Zion, it is His resting place, and upon Zion the glory rests. I can tell you today that Babylon is a strange land. Its culture is not the culture of the kingdom of God! Its music is not *the song of the Lord!* Its language is not the language of the Spirit! Its creeds and commandments are not the living word and truth of God! Its vestments are not the robe of righteousness nor the garment of salvation! Its blood-line is not the life of God! Its organizations and institutions are not the divine order of God! Its methods are not the ways of the Lord! Its food is not the bread that cometh down from heaven! So long have I dwelt in Zion that when I walk into one of the meetings of the Babylonian church system, my first thought is, "My God, can it be possible that people are still preaching, performing, and worshipping *like this?*" I have crossed a national boundary. I have entered another "country." I am in a strange land! Babylon is a strange land of captivity where the flow of God's spirit and God's life is bound in the chains of tradition, ritual, program, and carnality. The captives in Babylon were perfectly right in refusing to sing! To begin with, they couldn't sing. Neither did God ask them to sing where they were. They were to sing the songs of Zion *in Zion.* Personally, I do not enjoy the music of Babylon. I cannot bring myself to listen to "Christian" radio stations, nor do I watch "Christian" television. I can no longer sing the songs of Babylon, nor can I sing the song of the Lord in a *strange land!*

When the voice of harpers and musicians (spiritual praise and worship), and of pipers (prophecy and prophets), and trumpeters (announcers of new truths and purposes in God), ***shall be heard no more at all in Babylon,*** her day of judgment shall have arrived. For a season they will continue on with their meetings, fellowships, activities, programs, ceremonies, rituals, crusades, and religious works. For a season, until the time appointed of the Father, all will continue to function but *without* Father's authority or the precious anointing and working of His Spirit. Thank God! There is a remnant, a chosen company, a firstfruit, a people with a purpose, called to be ***sons of God,*** who have now been awakened to this new day and are entering into its purposes by the leading of the Spirit of God. These have already received and obeyed the call to come out of the Babylon system, because a new and greater manifestation of the kingdom of God is at hand. We are standing in an hour that parallels the day when John the Baptist appeared by the Jordan, and a voice from heaven is now heard, proclaiming, "These are my *beloved sons* in whom I am well pleased." God is about to manifest these sons to the world and creation! What a day this is!

This call to come out of Babylon, this call to be separated unto the Lord and unto *Him alone*, that God may be a Father to us and that we may be *His sons*, has come from the SPIRIT HIMSELF, confirmed by many thousands of saints in all parts of the earth, in practically every nation under heaven! It is not a matter of doctrine, not a matter of the interpretation of scripture, to endeavor to prove from holy writ that ***this is the time*** for God's sons to be manifested and for the kingdom of God to come in great power and glory. Just as it was with Jesus when the Spirit led Him to the

Jordan to be baptized by John, to be announced in His sonship by the voice from heaven, then to be led into the wilderness to be tested in His sonship by the adversary, and then returning in the *power of the Spirit* into Galilee where His sonship ministry began and there went out a fame of Him throughout all the region round about — just as it was with Jesus it is a matter of HEARING FROM GOD! Let it be thoroughly known — those who reject this vision reject the voice of the Lord from the heavens!

Now God has called us to “come out of her,” to depart from all our religious backgrounds, to repent of our doctrines, creeds, and beliefs; to repent of our denominationalism and our non-denominational denominationalism; to repent of our carnal religious methods, our dead works, and all the baggage we have brought with us into this kingdom walk, from the systems of man. Only as we repent, and follow the Lamb up Zion’s mount, becoming invested with a *new mind*, a new spirit, a new vision, a new purpose, and a new reality, can we enter into this new and higher and more glorious dimension of the kingdom of God revealed through **sons**.

As the sons of God come forth out of their wilderness of separation and testing *in the power of the Spirit*, as there goes out a fame of them throughout all the nations, as the glory of the Lord arises and covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, the whole system of Babylon will collapse and go up in flames! Do you think for one moment, dear one, that if God does not completely remove His blessing from Babylon, the people of God will ever leave her? No way! But every blessing and moving of God within her will **die**. In that blessed day God will have His man, His manchild, His corporate man, His new creation man, His one new perfect man, His man in the image of God, His many-membered son, His man in the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, full of incorruptible life, full of heavenly light, full of infinite love, and full of divine, omnipotent power — and upon HIM shall the glory be seen! Aren’t you glad!

“Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, 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. And the nations shall come to THY LIGHT, and kings to the brightness of THY RISING”** (Isa. 60:1-3).

...FOR BY THY SORCERIES...

“And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; **for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived**” (Rev. 18:23).

It is significant to note that in all the previous 65 books of the Bible the words “sorcerer,” “sorcery,” and “sorceries” are translated from words denoting magic, witchcraft, or wizardry which were arts as ancient and established in human civilization as have been the true workings of God. As far back as the time of Moses and the kingdom of Egypt we see the experts in the magic arts were able to keep up with the supernatural workings of the Lord before the Pharaoh — rather convincingly up to a point. Of course, as with all counterfeits, they inevitably are exposed sooner or later. Though some are outright frauds, fakes, and phonies, with others their power is often very real — divination through the assistance of evil spirits, black magic, enchantment, witchcraft.

Only in the book of Revelation does the reference to magic arts or sorcery take on an entirely **new** meaning! The word used throughout the book of Revelation is an altogether different Greek word than is used anywhere else in scripture. In Revelation 21:8 it is *pharmakeus* and in Revelation

22:15 it becomes *pharmakos*. Then in Revelation 9:21 and here in our text the word is *pharmakeia*. Obviously the prefix “pharma” reveals that the meaning of the word has something to do with drugs, as in the words “pharmaceutical,” “pharmacy,” and “pharmacist.” No other place in scripture, but in the book of Revelation, is the idea of “sorcery” associated with drugs! The three Greek words listed above are simply different forms of the same word denoting *drugs* and *druggists*. It identifies deadly poisons and those who either make or sell those deadly poisons. That is just what the words mean, nothing else. In the Greek language a Pharmacist is, therefore, a Sorcerer, a maker or a dealer, a vendor or a user of deadly poisons sometimes administered as medicines. Legal or illegal, in many cases they destroy the brain and other vital organs and systems, madden the user, and weaken and ruin the spirits, souls, and bodies of the countless millions who use them. If you doubt that practically all drugs are dangerous, deadly poisons that are, even at best, destructive to human life, just listen to the plethora of warnings and side effects at the end of most pharmaceutical ads on television! Oftentimes more seconds are spent on the warnings and side effects of the drug than on the actual promotional and beneficent content of the ad! That is the actual meaning of the words “Sorcerers” and “sorceries” in the book of Revelation. As a matter of scholarship it cannot be contested.

The purpose of this message is not to attack drugs, medicines, or pharmacists. Let us keep our minds *in the Spirit!* Again I remind every reader of these lines that the Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and its realities are *spiritual realities!* No one knew better than the beloved John what, in its spiritual meaning, “drugs” signifies! The message is clear — it signifies the *doctrines* and *teachings* of religious Babylon which dull the spiritual senses of the Lord’s people and are destructive to true spiritual life, giving them a false hope, a mis-directed goal, and causing them to live by religious superstitions, myths, traditions, legends, and folklore. Doctrines about the power of the devil, financial prosperity, the rapture, so-called end-time events, the antichrist, the great tribulation, a mansion over the hilltop, along with holidays, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, and a hundred more delusions ***drug God’s people into a spiritually hallucinogenic state.*** They live in a false, starry-eyed fairy-world of soulicious imaginations which they suppose to be spiritual realities! Pleasure! Fun! Thrills! Excitement! are the result of a cunning spirit that saturates the church systems as they run after the “high” of soulicious programs, concerts, fleshly manifestations, emotionally stirring singing, entertaining preaching — the same as any drug user in the world. God says that all nations are deceived by the “sorceries” or the “spiritual drugging” of Mystery Babylon!

The people are drugged to sleep by the word of Babylon simply because the *true word* and the *true ministries* of God ARE FOUND AND HEARD NO MORE AT ALL IN HER! They have nothing of life to offer, no reality to meet your deepest need, so they give you a drugged word to induce either a deep spiritual stupor or a fleshly, emotional high which keeps you ignorant of the real, eternal values. You are so drugged out of your mind that you’re not aware of the lack, of what’s missing. It’s a numbing effect, you’re in a hypnotic trance, an illusory world of imagination, unreality, and make-believe, as they “soothsay” you, casting over you their spell, bringing you under their control so that you listen to their voice and blindly obey.

There are not many people who are sufficiently awake to believe it, but at this very moment hundreds of millions of church goers of every sect and creed are walking and talking and acting under the delusions of Babylon’s drugs. They are filled with false doctrines, false hopes, false expectations, false understandings, false interpretations, false forms of worship, and though they profess to be Christians, they would not know the real Christ if they met Him on the street. They are so “high” on their mixed potion that they giddily imagine that they are going to be caught up in

the sky where they will sit on a cloud with Jesus eating pork chops, or some such foolishness, at the marriage supper of the Lamb, while the inhabitants of earth suffer the excruciating pangs of "great tribulation" under the rule of a superman dictator called "the Antichrist."

When I read fairy tales like that I recall what one brother wrote some time ago. He was ministering in a meeting in California and one morning they had a session in which he answered questions from the congregation on the subject of Bible prophecy. He said, "We had one man there who gave me literature, which evidently he wrote, saying that John F. Kennedy is the Antichrist, and even though John F. Kennedy was supposed to be dead, he is alive; and he said that he had been to the island of Scorpis in the Grecian sea, and he had seen John F. Kennedy still alive, and that he is the Antichrist. And as we began to talk there, I just let him talk a bit. He said, 'In the tribulation period, the Antichrist will take his image and put it in the Temple.' I said, 'That's interesting. Where do you find that?' He said, 'It's over here in the book of Revelation.' Now these folks were sitting around listening, and I just decided to push it as far as I could, and I said again, 'Where do you find this?' He said, 'It's right here in the book of Revelation.' So I said, 'Well, you find it. We'll go ahead and talk. You find it, and let me know where it is.' So he began to go through the book of Revelation, on and on. After a while I looked over and said, 'Did you find that yet?' And he didn't say anything; he just kept on looking and looking. I said, 'All I want to know is where it says an image will be set up in the Temple in Jerusalem during the Tribulation period.' He never found it. But you know, he was not a man who would humble himself and say, 'I'm wrong.' This is bad about anybody. I want to tell you, friends, in my life I have always been willing to say, 'I'm wrong,' and I have had to say it a lot of times about prophecy as I have learned some new things that God has shown me. But the book of Revelation doesn't say that any Antichrist, or Beast, or anybody, will put an image inside of a Temple in Jerusalem!" — end quote. Such fairy tales are preached from the pulpits of thousands of churches with great earnestness and conviction, with sober faces and an air of great Bible knowledge, and yet how pitiful is such an understanding! You really do have to be "high" on something to create such inaccurate, distorted and convoluted theories of supposed truth!

Ah, Babylon, and the multitudes who are deceived by your sorceries, your psychotic hallucinations are so intense that you actually believe that the vast majority of earth's billions of human souls will be *lost* to the all-loving and omnipotent God — finally, irrevocably, and eternally — and not only will they be separated from God and heaven forever and ever, but they will be given over to the most sadistic, inhuman, ungodly tortures that could be devised by the vilest fiends — a thousand times worse than anything inflicted on man by Adolph Hitler or any other tyrant of human history. To add to the stupidity of these drug-induced, mind-altering distortions of reality, you conceive that these billions of men and women for whom Christ died go to a red-hot, sizzling, burning hell the moment they die, where they will twist and scream and blaspheme in agony and torment throughout an endless eternity, without compassion, mercy, or reprieve. Who can deny the great truth the Holy Spirit has so clearly revealed to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear: "*For by thy sorceries (doctrines which dull the senses and drug God's people into a hallucinogenic state) were all nations deceived!*" Oh, yes! The so-called "fundamentalist" and "orthodox" churches are constantly warning and harping about the "cults." But I have no hesitation in saying that denominational Christianity *is itself* the leading cult of our day as it spews forth an unceasing stream of the most absurd and hideous and offensive distortions of God's nature, character, plan, and purpose — proclaiming as *God's truth* the most heretical and spurious teachings extant!

The same beloved John who heard the heavenly voice on Patmos proclaiming the great truth of which I now write also left us this solemn warning, "Little children, keep yourselves from IDOLS (that is, false gods, or false ideas and representations of the true God)" (I Jn. 5:21). Does the church worship idols — false representations of God? I fear we do! We say God is all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful, and then turn around and deny it. We say that God "so loved the world" and that Jesus is "the Saviour of the world" and then turn around and say that only a few will be saved while God sends the vast majority to suffer the excruciating pains of eternal fire and brimstone — without His feeling or showing any concern for their suffering, and without mercy! We say that God is all-powerful, and then turn around and say that God has "provided" salvation for all men, that God is "trying" to save the world, that God is "pleading" with men to repent, but the devil who blinds and possesses men's souls is so much more powerful than God that he will carry captive with him into eternal damnation countless billions of men for whom Christ died! I don't know what kind of Kool-Aid the people who preach such things are drinking, but methinks there is no doubt that it has been spiked with some of Babylon's *hallucinogenic drugs!*

Also, folk who claim that they are true to the Bible say that God the Creator and God the Redeemer are the very same God, but they deny it in their attitude toward the question of the salvation of all men. As Dr. Hurley has written, "They have an infinite Creator, but a very little Redeemer. Their Christ is a comparatively helpless and puny Saviour who is going to lose most of those for whom He died. He can pay the price for the sins of the whole world, but the stubborn will of man makes it all ineffective. Man's will is mightier than God's will! Thus, God is infinite to create, powerless to redeem! But either God is all-powerful, or He is not. Either God's will is sovereign, or it is not. Either God is all-wise, or He is not. Either God is all-loving, or He is not. Either God's grace is infinite, or it is not. Isn't it time for the church of Christ to decide one way or the other, and then make her theology fit her expressed faith?" — end quote.

THE BLOOD OF PROPHETS AND SAINTS

"And in her was found *the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth*" (Rev. 18:24).

In today's terminology the statement in the passage above could be framed thus, "In her was found the **very life-blood** of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" Spiritually, what Babylon requires of every man and woman she controls is every ounce of life-force you have! She will demand your time, she will pilfer your money, she will exploit your talent, she will harness your anointing, she will capitalize on your giftings, she will control your ministry, she will dominate every step of your walk in God. She will use the life-flow of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all whom she "slays," that is, *takes their life*, to enrich, enhance, and embellish her stature before men!

George Hawtin expressed this same significant truth when he wrote, "For over twenty years I have earnestly sought to show God's people that the modern church system, whether Protestant or Catholic, which daily becomes more closely allied with the world, the flesh and the devil, is MYSTERY BABYLON. She is drunken with *the blood of the saints*. She saps and sucks their life away! While she grows richer in silver and gold, plush seats and lavish buildings, she robs the saints of their progress in God. She denies and contradicts all true revelation and so shuts out the transforming light of God's glory. Her preachers preach and prophesy, but tell their people nothing they have not heard a thousand times as they rehash the philosophies of bygone years.

They have taken away the *key of knowledge*. They enter not in and those who would enter they hinder. It is the bright shining of the face of Christ that brings the knowledge of the glory of God. I write these things because I know it is not possible for any Christian to proceed to the realm of the more excellent glory while he remains associated with the harlots of Babylon. ‘*Give not your strength to women*,’ was the exhortation of the wise man of Israel. It should not be difficult in the least to grasp the spiritual application of that statement, because the women here referred to are the ecclesiastical harlots of our generation, the entire church system, mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.”

The harlot thrives on power. The more people she gets under her power, the more people she hooks on her drugs, the more people she hypnotizes with her enchantments, the stronger she gets. Her sole motive is to survive. She is like the imaginary blood-sucking vampire that continues to devour the life-blood of the saints in order to survive and thrive. She must continue to exert her authority over people, over precious saints, even over prophets and other gifted ones, exploiting their gifts so that people can flow in, yield up their time, talents, money, yea, their very lives. Thus she gets people all involved, wrapped up, committed, and enslaved in her program.

There is also, of course, a more literal sense in which “the blood of all that were slain upon the earth” is found in this evil harlot, for she has truly martyred millions of believers through long centuries who spurned her affections and rejected her pernicious doctrines and ways. Even to this day in some countries she martyrs them still, some by death and others by excommunication and disgrace. I am not wrong, but speak forth words of truth and soberness, when I tell you that the church system of the twenty-first century, even as in times past, is part of the world system and is one of the kingdoms of *this world*. She is part of the great image that shall shortly be smitten by the omnipotent force of the little stone (manifest sons of God) cut from the mountain (of God’s great kingdom and authority) without hands. Thus with violence shall Babylon be thrown down to come to its end. Never will it exist again. But the little stone — O glorious stone of God’s omnipotent power and righteous government! — shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

“*And the kingdom, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey them.* This was the end of the matter” (Dan. 7:27-28, Goodspeed).

About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit – and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him – in family or church associations – embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God's elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God's Word is always free to all. God's way is, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8).

