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Kingdom of God..."*

THE ANTICHRIST

By J. Preston Eby

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Chapter 1

Innumerable works have been written, countless sermons have been preached, and myriads of tracts have been circulated on the subject of antichrist. The one outstanding feature, however, which attracts one's attention and which must be very perplexing to the average individual, is the confusion which exists, and which characterizes all such efforts. Generally speaking, every scholar has a different doctrine, and every teacher a different understanding of who the antichrist is or will be. And hence, as all doctrines cannot be correct, all therefore must be wrong, with the exception of one.

For years teachers of the Word have been speculating upon the identity of antichrist and the date of his appearance on the world scene. Unfortunately, these speculations have all turned out to be mistakes, which mistakes have to be changed and revised continually to meet changing conditions. It is very humiliating to have world events continually follow a course exactly opposite to that which has been mapped out by one's prophetic teaching, and to have one's predictions proven false almost before the ink is dry on his paper. The Church today is full of energetic and sincere preachers and teachers who are just full and bubbling over concerning things that are going to happen. They tell us that sometime, after certain events have transpired, or before certain other events will happen, there will be a super deceiver who will arise to show great signs and wonders, gaining political power over all the nations of earth, and ushering in a reign of terror and a time of tribulation unprecedented in the history of the world.

Those of my readers who are old enough remember when the world staggered beneath the weight of the great depression of the 1930's. The planet and all things on it seemed to suddenly fail apart. Thousands of earnest and well-meaning saints believed that this was the certain herald of the end of the age. Preachers became busy picking men such as Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin as antichrists, and indeed they were, but these tyrants, like so many before them, perished and the world continued on its tremulous course.

In the days of my youth, one of the first books I seriously studied on prophetic subjects was one setting forth "indisputable proof" that Mussolini was the antichrist! The only problem was that book came into my hands in the year 1949, and lo, Mussolini had already died a violent death in the streets of Milan, his name was held in disrepute throughout Italy and the world, and his "empire" was dissolved. Sixty-eight years ago (from 1982) preachers were telling how the Kaiser was the antichrist and was going to upset the world. Then when that failed to materialize, they frittered away much time and wasted much good paper and printer's ink telling us that Mussolini was the one. Then the false prophets declared that Hitler was surely the man of sin who would come riding into world power on the back of a ten horned revived Roman Empire. But Hitler's day ended too, a suicide in his bunker beneath the ruins of Berlin. Of course some of these teachers, too ashamed to admit their error, invented all kinds of ingenuous tales to keep the delusion alive, saying that Hitler's death was a "hoax", he was still alive somewhere in South America, and in due time would reappear on the scene to the astonishment of the whole world. One thing is certain. He never did reappear, and if he did not die in Berlin in 1945, and if he is still alive, he is now a very aged man of (over 100) years! A number of people even thought Roosevelt was the antichrist.

Some students of prophecy, for lack of anything else to speculate on, took up the story several years ago of a famous Arabian prince who was represented as having supernatural powers, and who the ignorant and the deceived were parading before the perennially gullible as the coming superman. This prince was reported by one well known evangelist to have created a fabulous golden celestial city in the middle of the desert merely by his spoken word, to have called down fire from heaven, and to have performed a number of other such phenomenal feats. According to the prince's own word, as quoted by this evangelist, he would reveal himself to the world as God and Ruler sometime during the 1960's. He failed to make his appearance. But certain saints in California, upon investigation, found that the man who invented the tall tale concerning this Arabian prince was working as a humble clerk in San Francisco, California during the time he was supposed to have been in Arabia as a guest of this prince.

In the last few years we have heard some teaching that Henry Kissinger is the antichrist, or David Rockefeller, or Anwar Sadat (now deceased), and another person stated that she expected him to come from outer space at any minute! "O, My people, they which lead you caused you to err" (Isa. 3:12; 9:16). But we now know the answers to all these predictions. They were nothing more than the presumptuous guesses of idle shepherds who were destitute of truth. And the unbelievable reality is that many Christians are so gullible and so susceptible to this kind of sensational trash, that they have no better sense than to glory in it, even though the statements are proven false, one after another, by the actual events then transpiring before their very eyes.

ANTICHRIST - INSTEAD OF

In I Jn. 2:18 we read, "Little children, it is the last hour: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; wherefore we know that it is the last hour." God's penman, 1900 years ago wrote, that as the coming of the antichrist heralds the last hour, therefore, since there were at that time "many antichrists", this fact proved that he himself was living then in the "last hour". And if he, John the beloved, saw many antichrists in his day, after only a few decades of progression into the dispensation of the Spirit, how much more may we today say that there are "many antichrists" after 1900 years of apostasy and shame, during which time God also said that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13). How much more should we today expect to find the Church full of these antichrists, since God also promised that in this same age "there will be a time when they will not endure wholesome instruction, but, having itching ears, will accumulate teachers for themselves, according to their own lusts; and they shall indeed turn away from the hearing of the truth, and be turned aside to fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

John saw many antichrists in his day. The number has been increasing steadily, all through the years, until we now find ourselves surrounded with these men. But who are they, what are they, and how do we recognize them?

First, let us consider the meaning of the word. It comes from a compound Greek word made up of the preposition "anti" and the Greek word for Christ which is "Christos". "Anti" is a Greek word meaning "opposed to" or "instead of" or both of these meanings. The Greek word "Christos" means "anointed". When "anti" is compounded with a noun signifying an agent of any kind, or functionary, the compound signifies a vice-functionary, or a functionary of the same kind opposing, or sometimes both. Some apply only the first meaning - a person "against" Christ. But this would not be a very specific point of

identification. Millions of people have been against Christ. Paul, before his conversion, was “against” Christ. The Jews, pagans, communists, and members of non-Christian religions of all kinds have been against Christ. But such a broad application of the word could not be what was meant by John. His description is far more definite than this!

When John spoke of certain people which were a type of antichrist which was to come, he did not refer to all opposers of Christ. Instead, he referred to a certain class of people - apostates who were teaching things that were contrary to the revelation imparted by the Holy Spirit! These were not openly against Christ, they were professing Christians and apparent ministers of Christ! Therefore we find that the word “antichrist” properly signifies one who opposes, or one who sets himself up appropriating some of the attributes of Christ. That is, antichrist would appear as Christ and by so doing would actually be AGAINST Christ - usurping that place that rightly belongs to Christ alone! Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, is literally antichrist. We have contained and practiced a lot of attitudes, ideas, beliefs, doctrines, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, ordinances, religious forms, babylonish traditions, which have TAKEN THE PLACE OF TRUTH AND REALITY in our lives. These may have contained bits and shades of truth and life, but they WERN'T THE LIVING REALITY OF CHRIST HIMSELF at all! They were shadow, but not substance; form, but not essence. Any little form of SUBSTITUTION that detracts from HIS INDWELLING LIFE is ANTICHRIST.

If at any time we accept an “instead of” rather than HIS WORD AND WILL AND LIFE WORKING WITHIN US, we have accepted that which is “antichrist”. It is not merely that which is in direct opposition to Christ, but also includes anything, which of itself might be good, but is used INSTEAD OF Christ. And, beloved saints, the battle is not so much an outward one, but an INNER CONFLICT, until we are so cleansed by His blood, so purged of Babylon’s spirit and ways, that CHRIST IN US becomes our ONLY hope of glory! Praise God, the consuming fire of the dealings and processings of God in our lives is being used to remove all these “substitutes” and “counterfeits” and bring us down to the true and only reality found in the LIVING CHRIST.

FROM GLORY TO GLOOM

One of the questions which arises and which may well deserve our immediate attention, is why so much confusion does exist, and why the subject of antichrist receives so much attention. One would surely be led to believe, by all the hue and cry that the antichrist must be one of the major themes of the Word of God and we must be warned over and over about his coming. One would presume that the Bible writers spoke of this man in glowing terms and articulate language, giving profuse descriptions of his appearance. So let us examine the facts.

Actually, the Bible has very little to say about antichrist. The word “antichrist” appears only five times in the whole Bible. None of these occurrences are in Daniel, Revelation, or any other prophetic book. Four of these five are in the little book of First John and the last is in the book of Second John. Antichrist is referred to in the singular, plural, as HE, and as IT. John penned these warnings to the saints somewhere near the close of the first century A.D. Those to whom John wrote were expecting this antichrist to come contemporary with the presence of Christ in this age of the Holy Spirit. John tells them that we know we are living in the last hour and Christ is actually here, or His opposer would not have risen up. To John, the fact that many people in the Churches had become antichrists in his day was definite proof that it was the “last hour”. John was living in the

early part of that “last hour” and we are living in the latter part of it, but both he and we live in that same Holy Spirit day or dispensation. It is the day of a present Christ, returned in mighty spirit and power at Pentecost, and reigning over His Kingdom of redeemed men, purging and processing a “little flock” of faithful ones to become the firstfruits of His redemption, in due time to bless all nations, restore all things, and deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption that God may be ALL-IN-ALL. We would naturally expect the “opposing” spirit to rise up at that time, and so it did.

The burden of John’s message was for the saints to FOLLOW ON, to grow and increase in the spirit and glory of God poured out upon them from THE BEGINNING of this glorious day. Notice how John stressed that which they had heard and received at the “beginning”. “That which was from the BEGINNING, which we have heard... declare we unto you... This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you” (I Jn.1:1,3,5). John speaks of the instruction they had “heard from the BEGINNING” and the word which they had “heard from the BEGINNING” (I Jn. 2:7). “Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the BEGINNING. If that which you have heard from the BEGINNING shall remain in you, you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father” (I Jn. 2:24). He mentions “the message that you heard from the BEGINNING,” “that which you had from the BEGINNING,” and “as you have heard from the BEGINNING, you should walk (progress) in it” (I Jn. 3:11; II Jn. 5; I Jn. 3:6).

The dawn of this day brought a revelation of God, fuller, truer, more glorious by far, than any that had preceded it. “God was manifest in the flesh,” men saw, and heard, and spoke with, incarnate Deity. “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.” “No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” Not the power and wisdom only, not the righteousness and justice only, but the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man, appeared, in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. God was proved to be a gracious Redeemer, as well as a holy Lawgiver, and an Almighty Creator. The great salvation so long foreshadowed, was accomplished and brought nigh to man. God provided Himself a Lamb to take away the sins of the world, and that Lamb, His own glorious Son, the Lord of all! “Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

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 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 few 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 had 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. The mighty Roman Empire shut 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, filled with divine wisdom and keen in spiritual discernment, 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 Christ began to appear. We read of the deception of Ananias and Sapphira and of the murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. We read of hard-bitten-old Judaizers who insisted on adding the bondage of their law to the liberating grace of Christ, perceiving not that those who freely partake of the grace of God already have the very SPIRIT OF THE LAW written and engraven in their hearts.

The very moment the love of God and the power of His indwelling Spirit begins to wane from our spirits and fly out the windows of our soul, then EXTERNAL FORMS, RITUALS, and OBSERVANCES with all their emptiness and foolishness stalk boldly through the door. Then men begin to cry for SOMETHING OTHER THAN CHRIST, or for another head in place of Christ, saying, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas" (I Cor. 1:12).

I do not believe there is any way to explain, imagine, or understand the many ways this SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST works. Even before the apostles had passed from this life, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and many people were wearing the Babylonish garment. They were instituting rules and regulations, laying down laws, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and ordinances, elevating human government, becoming disciples of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, and of many others. The Babble had begun and the mysterious antichrist was raising his ugly head.

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, 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. 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 reality. When one does not possess REALITY then something else will be used to fill the void to take the place - instead of - an ANTICHRIST!

The powerful, mighty, glorious presence of the indwelling Christ was supplanted by endless ritual and ceremonial cleansings and outward observances of feasts, holy days, communions, and robes, shrines, cathedrals, holy orders, incense etc. etc. The ministry could only teach and practice these things because they had lost the presence of HIM.

As the blind led the blind the visions of the people were in error and darkness, 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 ages 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, as we have seen, 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 to be pliable, moldable clay formed into vessels of honor and respect and glory unto the King. Ah, I do not hesitate or fear to tell you that religion is there, but it is a hollow mocking form; worship is there, but it consists in lip service and genuflections, it is not worship in spirit and in truth; 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 saints and angels, of Pope and Virgin Mary, of picture and crucifix, of statues and dressed-up dolls, of shrines and altars and buildings, of concerts and programs and 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! Dressed in fine linen and gorgeous silk, in lace and scarlet, and robes of glittering gold, they lead the people from the pure spiritual life of Jesus Christ dwelling and formed in the hearts of redeemed men, to holy sacraments without transforming power, to holy places of stone and marble, to holy fumes of burnt wood, to holy days of their own appointment, to holy water which can never wash away sin, to holy candles which enlighten no dark mind, to mass, to confession, to penance, to indulgences, to extreme unction, to myriad more religious exercises, to anything, everything, EXCEPT to God the Judge of all, to Jesus Christ the only Saviour, and to CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY!

GOD IS SUFFICIENT

I want to speak with utmost solemnity here. Beloved brother, sister, if any man will follow God and walk in the glorious light of revelation streaming into the hearts of those called unto Sonship in this momentous hour at the close of the age, it will not be long before he discovers that the coming of antichrist IS NO BRIEF FUTURE EVENT, lying between us and the dawn of the age to come; he was revealed 1900 years ago, and has run a long and pompous course; but once discerned by the Spirit, and forsaken by any saint of God, he is speedily CONSUMED WITHIN by the spirit of Christ's mouth and the brightness of His coming.

The fact that the traditional doctrine of antichrist as some individual super deceiver-maniac yet to emerge upon the world scene with international political power has been, and is now held and taught fervently by the HARLOT CHURCH SYSTEMS, is itself a plea that IT MUST BE ERROR. If BABYLON staunchly believes it, arrogantly teaches it,

continuously preaches it, loudly proclaims it, dogmatically defends it, and resolutely demands it - then, dear child of God, must it not, in all probability, be WRONG?

In the Spirit of Jesus Christ I exhort you, beloved reader, wait not for a mad-man antichrist to appear upon the scene, for you will surely be disappointed. "Little children, it is the last hour: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; wherefore we know that it is the last hour" (I Jn. 2:18). Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, is literally antichrist. All the things which appear so good and religious, but which usurp the place of the LIFE OF HIS SPIRIT, are antichrist. The natural mind is ever seeking something visible and tangible. Throughout the centuries in the life of the Church systems they have accumulated a great number of traditions, rites, creeds, ordinances, methods, institutions and practices each of them supplanting something of the pureness and freshness and glory of the Spirit of Christ. These things have become so universal in the Churches of the world, and in the lives of their members, that there is no thought of ever being able to "run" the Church and its business without them! Generation after generation, people have been raised up from childhood in this atmosphere and have absolutely no knowledge of anything else or another way. It never even enters the minds of these people that THE CHRIST is the Head of the Church, He is the Life of the Church, and the whole sufficiency for the Church, its people, its work, and its needs.

Each Church must be constantly creating new plans, programs and activities to keep the people busy "doing something". The idea is to keep the people busy and to keep up the interest, so that they may be kept in that Church. In the Church world such a Church is known as a "lively" Church, and the pastor is known as one of the more successful pastors. Spirituality has little, if anything, to do with it, for the whole group, including the pastor and Church leaders, is simply a natural body of people, carrying on what THEY THINK is a Church.

Then there are the creeds to be learned, catechisms to be memorized, and confirmation services to go through. There are so-called prayer meetings (where very little praying is done!) to be attended, committee meetings to be held, programs of all sorts to be developed in both Church and Sunday School, choir practice, youth meetings, door-to-door canvassing, and Vacation Bible School. All these are things that must be partaken of if the person is to remain a member in good standing and considered "spiritual" and a "mature Christian" by the Church.

In the minds of most people today the Church systems are looked upon as the true Church, and whatever it does or says is considered to either come directly from God or is sanctioned by God. I must say that such thinking is a product of the ignorance and dense darkness of nearly all people concerning the things of the Spirit of God. The world today has its own religious dictionary of definitions of "God" and "Spirit" and "Church" and they think and speak in the framework of those definitions. But GOD SPEAKS A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE and has a different dictionary of definitions by which He speaks to His people and according to which He works!

If all the multiplied practices and methods employed by the Churches today WERE SUDDENLY SWEEPED AWAY, it would in all probability CEASE TO FUNCTION! If all the preachers and priests were compelled to lay aside their robes and their trappings and stand before the people in ordinary street clothes, they would lose much of their glamour and most of their prestige. If they had to tear down their altars, their elevated platforms,

their statues, lay aside their professionalism and showmanship, and throw out the candles and the prayer books, their services would appear very “lack-lustre”, losing their sense of beauty and pageantry.

If the Churches had to drop all their rituals, forms, programs, and ceremonies; all their confirmations, baptisms, and communion services; all their special singing, organ music, and altar calls, they would feel as though they had been stripped naked and could not serve God in any way. All this simply demonstrates the terrible fact that the faith and dependence of the Churches IS NOT IN GOD, but is in the trappings that they have accumulated to themselves throughout the centuries. The thought that God is perfectly able and fully willing to run His Church without the aid of anything in the way of man’s contributions, is found to be abhorrent to the average Church member.

I shall never cease to thank God that as Jonah was vomited out of the belly of the whale, I was vomited out of the belly of this religious whale and my heart can now 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). We, as some of you, have been through all of this, and we became sick of it all. It was so wonderful to be free from it all and simply worship 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 those things wherein is no life or reality? Back to the observance of days, ceremonies, symbols and outward show rather than following the pure path of the Spirit. Once the Spirit has begun to move in our hearts, imparting the REALITY of all these symbols, then the moment you forsake the Spirit, returning to the symbols, those very symbols become INSTEAD OF - they are ANTICHRIST! That is the strong beguilement of today.

Surely we are able to see that there is nothing in these religious trappings that would appeal to the SPIRIT of a man. It is the FLESH that attaches value to outward things. For those walking in the sunlight of His glory those things hold nothing anymore, for they are to us but cheap tinsel. What does the regenerated SPIRIT care about such things? Does it really matter to the SPIRIT whether the choir has on robes, whether the windows are of stained glass, or whether the corruptible body consumes a bit of bread and wine? Ah - there are a few simple tests by which any saint of God can try a thing, whether it be of CHRIST or ANTICHRIST. Anything one practices in his spiritual life that is not a product of HIS INDWELLING LIFE - is antichrist. Anything one has participated in or leaned upon which can be eliminated WITHOUT AFFECTING OR DIMINISHING THE INWARD WORKING OF CHRIST - is antichrist. Anything that LOSES ITS FORMER PRECIOUSNESS once we come into intimate relationship with the Lord - is antichrist. And let me add, anything you can get along without, and STILL CONTINUE TO GO FORWARD IN GOD - is antichrist!

God’s true Church has never been contaminated by antichrist. There is a little flock, there is a body of Christ, but its members are scattered abroad and almost invisible to the great Babylon. They are the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and they are the called and chosen and faithful who follow the Lamb. They are those who have turned to God from all the religious idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for the glory that shall 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 doctrines of the Church systems; 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 placed in the world of men! Because God is sufficient, because the Christ within is all-in-all, this Church is left entirely free from all encumbrances to pursue the work God has given it of developing 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 Kingdom of God. Let all who treasure the call to Sonship know that CHRIST WITHIN I-S S-U-F-F-I-C-I-E-N-T! All else is - antichrist!

The truth that is set like a diamond in the pages of God's Word is the absolute and total SUFFICIENCY of Christ within. To say that the 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 improve on what HE IS WITHIN US is an insult to God and 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 doctrine. They need to KNOW HIM. They do not need to perform ritual. 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. It is not a soothing service you need to still your troubled spirit. It is Christ!

When Jesus came in the flesh, He came into a world steeped in religion. He came into a condition brought about by centuries of teaching of the law and the rites and sacrifices of the temple worship. Into this had been woven the traditions of the elders, an accumulation of those same centuries. It had come to include also even the washing of pots and cups, together with ceremonies of washing of hands before eating and a multitude of other practices imposed upon the people by their leaders. The temple in the city of Jerusalem was the symbol of all this to the people. Their whole life revolved around that building and the rites and sacrifices the priests offered in it. It was the sacred spot of the nation and of all Jews wherever they were in the world. Every Jew had that one desire to go to Jerusalem and worship. This system of religion was imbedded in the lives of the people, and had been for long centuries. It had become a part of their life and they endured it all with the hope perennial within their hearts that some day the Messiah would come and lift not only this yoke, but that of the Roman empire also.

But when the Messiah came, they did not recognize Him. For here was all this great mass of law, ritual and Pharisaical teaching and tradition, while the Messiah was but an unknown man, of almost unknown origin. Jesus brought a new and revolutionary way of life. It was a way of BELIEVING, and not a way of DOING. It was faith in the Christ and right relationship with God and did not consist in the doing of anything, or the keeping of

external observances. It was simplicity in the highest degree, set up against organized worship of the highest degree. The revolutionary way of life which Jesus brought to the people was in exact and complete opposition to the bondage under which the people now found themselves.

God's displeasure with this whole religious system of externals was expressed through the prophet as he proclaimed these words of inspiration: "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah 6:7). Again in Isa. 1:11: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me says the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs, or of he goats." And again in verse 13: "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me, the new moons and the sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is an iniquity (grief), even to the solemn meeting."

Can we not see by this that though God gave all these things to the people, yet they were not pleasing to Him. They were but an interim arrangement and were to be replaced with something else in the age to come. But the rulers of the people had laid hold upon these TEMPORARY THINGS and embraced them as a PERMANENT ARRANGEMENT and a fixed way of worship.

Jesus constantly urged people to COME UNTO HIM and to BELIEVE ON HIM. In Jn. 7:37-38 we read, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him COME UNTO ME AND DRINK. HE THAT BELIEVES ON ME as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." These wonderful words were uttered on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. This was the last of the sacred festivals under the old covenant. It began five days after the Day of Atonement, and lasted eight days. It marked the completion of the harvest, and historically commemorated the wanderings in the wilderness. During this festival people lived in booths and tents in Jerusalem to remind them of how their forefathers wandered in the wilderness and lived in booths and tents. The sacrifices at this feast were more numerous than at any other.

The last day of the feast marked the conclusion of the ecclesiastical year. On this day, the last day of the feast, there was the ceremony known as "The Pouring Out of Water." In the fulfillment of this ordinance, the people, led by a priest, marched to the fountain of Siloam at the time of sacrifice, where the priest filled a golden vessel with water, and carried it back to the temple amidst the blowing of trumpets and shouts of joy. Then the water would be mixed with the wine of the sacrifices, and advancing to the altar of burnt offering, at the cry of the people, "Lift up your hands!" he emptied the pitcher beside the altar on the west and on the east. As this took place the people chanted, "With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation!" (Isa. 12:3).

One purpose of this ceremony was to implore God for His blessing upon the rains of the coming year, and His blessings upon the land and its people. So here was the scene. Jesus is standing in the temple watching the ceremonies. For eight days people had been going through these ceremonies and rituals and now they have arrived at the time when they draw water from the well of Siloam. They will have the ceremony of pouring out that water to God, showing to God their hunger for His blessings in their lives. Jesus the Christ is here placing Himself in opposition to all this ceremony, and as they pour out

this water unto God, and perform the ceremonies, Jesus lifts up His voice and cries, saying, "IF ANY MAN THIRST, LET HIM COME TO M-E AND DRINK!"

A few of the people understood, for some said He was a prophet; others said He was the Christ. But the vast majority of them would not believe. They preferred their forms and ceremonies to the living water! These people were soon to "tear down" the very "temple" that had spoken these words, and it would be "rebuilt", resurrected from the dead, to become the mightiest power in all God's creation. But more than that, the Roman armies were soon to destroy completely the temple of stone in which all these ceremonies were being held, and it would NEVER BE REBUILT. Truly there stood in their midst that day One whom they knew not.

The people were constantly taught and instructed that they must observe all the things the priests and Pharisees told them, or they would perish. Jesus came into their midst and said that all those things would do them absolutely no good whatever, but if they wanted LIFE they should COME UNTO HIM AND DRINK - merely by BELIEVING ON HIM! He was placing Himself and faith in Him against all the accumulated tradition of the people. He was assuring them that they would NOT LOSE A SINGLE THING by coming unto Him, and casting all else away from them. And they would gain LIFE.

But who could hear such a thing in the day of Christ? In fact Jesus Himself said that no man could come unto Him, except the Father who had sent Him, would draw that man. It is just as true today! Ah, beloved, if you were to go into any Church on any Sunday and say to the people, "If you will cast aside all your form, all of your traditions, all your rituals, all your ordinances, all your solemn assemblies, all your myriad activities, all your committees, and SIMPLY COME UNTO JESUS AND BELIEVE ON JESUS AND DRINK OF H-I-M, YOU WILL LOSE NOTHING, but you will gain the glorious and eternal REALITY OF GOD forever," what kind of reception would you receive? You would actually be asking the people to give up EVERYTHING THEY ARE DOING and all the THINGS they have been given by their ministers and Church systems with which to serve and worship God - exchanging it for GOD ALONE. What an unbearable burden it would be for the people to be REDUCED TO GOD, to possess nothing but GOD HIMSELF! You would find this to be an almost impossible thing to accomplish. Truly Christ has been traded for ANTICHRIST!

If you tell them they do not need their forms, or their rituals, their baptisms, their holy days, their confirmations, their committees, their programs, or any of the other activities their Churches engage in, you will be branded a false prophet and given the right foot of fellowship! These same Church members love to sing and talk about Jesus being ALL THEY NEED, but they still must have all these other things! So actually their faith is not in the Christ at all, but in ALL THESE RELIGIOUS THINGS. Jesus opposed all this religious order that He met, and He opposes the whole thing today.

Precious saint of God, the world cares nothing for what we believe about baptism, communion, church buildings, church government, church services, church activities, Sunday Schools, rituals, doctrines, creeds, or ceremonies. But the world does care desperately about getting out from under the bondage of the awful weight of sin, sorrow and death. It needs nothing of WHAT we believe, but it is desperately needing WHOM we believe. WHAT we believe will never, through unending ages, save the world, or even change its way of life. But the WHOM we believe will bring a whole new life to all the

world, yea, to all God's creation. How we long to see the Sons of God begin their promised ministry for the release of the whole creation from the bondage of corruption!

We have tried the ANTICHRIST WAY now for nineteen long centuries, and it has been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Is it asking too much for once to cast all that aside, just as Jesus asked the people to do in His day, and simply COME UNTO HIM? Shall we COME TO HIM AND DRINK, or shall we go on with our works and Churches and ceremonies just as He found in His day? Shall we choose reality, or continue in the emptiness of what we are doing? Will it be the Spirit, or shall it continue to be THINGS? In this hour it will either be CHRIST ALONE or ANTICHRIST!

Forsaking the "instead of", learn, Oh man of God, to fellowship with Christ, rejoicing in His Holy Spirit, communing with the Father, becoming one with Him in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, walking in His will and doing His bidding, being His sheep and knowing His voice and not the voice of strangers, and you will BE A SON OF GOD, AND GOD HIMSELF WILL RECEIVE YOU AND BE TO YOU A FATHER.

Chapter 2

The subject of the antichrist occupies much of the religious thinking, public preaching, and writing today. Evangelists crisscross the country advertising sensational forecasts of events connected with prophecy which they say are about to happen. Shelves in Christian book stores bulge with books dealing with the antichrist. Radio and television speakers are engrossed in telling curious listeners about this mysterious being. Bible Schools include diligent treatment of this study on their curricula. Information abounds giving dire forebodings of this fearsome creature whose spectral shadow casts a pall of gloom and terror across the future. Tens of thousands of scary sermons have been preached through the years warning that the days would come when the antichrist would arise, and then the Christians in Western lands would have their Bibles taken from them, their children would be trained in atheism, they would be put against the wall and shot in mass massacres, and then with its last gasp the beaten, battered, bruised, broken, bleeding would cry, "Even so, come Lord Jesus, and rescue us from total defeat!" One popular writer writes a series of books, which have brought to him an enormous reputation and (be it said) an equally handsome monetary reward, by telling us, almost as though reading the morning newspapers, exactly what is going to happen at any moment now, yet assuring us in the same sentence, and with the same impression of infallibility, that it really does not concern the Church anyway because we shall be safely away in heaven before the events of his books begin to come to pass!

ANTICHRIST - INSTEAD OF

In I Jn. 2:18 we read, "Little children, it is the last hour: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are their many antichrists; wherefore we know that it is the last hour." God's penman, 1900 years ago wrote, that as the coming of the antichrist heralds the last hour, therefore, since there were at that time "many antichrists" this fact proved that he himself was living then in the "last hour". And if he, John the beloved, saw many antichrists in his day, after only a few decades of progression into the dispensation of the Spirit, how much more may we today say that there are "many antichrists" after 1900 years of apostasy and shame! The number has been increasing steadily, all through the years, until we now find ourselves surrounded with these men. But who are they, and how do we recognize them?

Let us consider again the meaning of the word. It comes from a compound Greek word made up of the preposition "anti" and the Greek word for Christ which is "Christos". "Anti" is a Greek word meaning "opposed to" or "instead of" or both of these meanings. The Greek word "Christos" means "anointed". When "anti" is compounded with a noun signifying an agent of any kind, or functionary, the compound signifies a vice-functionary, or a functionary of the same kind opposing, or sometimes both. We find a classic example of this use of the word "anti" within the terminology of the Roman Catholic Church. During the Middle Ages, a man who was considered a hostile, self-substituted, usurping Pope - one occupying the proper Pope's place and receiving his honors and exercising his functions - was called an "antipope". This term is commonly used in history in this connection. Such a "Pope" was not merely a person that was against the Pope. It was a person who was against the Pope by attempting TO TAKE THE POPE'S PLACE. Likewise, the antichrist comes TO TAKE THE PLACE OF CHRIST - and by so doing opposes Christ!

Therefore we find that the word “antichrist” properly signifies one who opposes, or one who sets himself up in the place of Christ, by appropriating some of the attributes of Christ. That is, antichrist appears AS Christ and by so doing is actually AGAINST Christ - usurping that place that rightly belongs to Christ alone! Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, is literally antichrist. The very moment the love of God and the power of His indwelling Spirit begins to wane from our spirits and fly out the windows of our souls, then a whole host of attitudes, ideas, beliefs, doctrines, rules, regulations, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, ordinances, forms, and empty traditions stalk boldly through the door to TAKE THE PLACE OF TRUTH AND REALITY in our lives. Any little form of SUBSTITUTION that supplants the all-sufficiency of HIS INDWELLING LIFE - is ANTICHRIST!

I continually meet Christians today who are too lazy or unconcerned to press on into deeper depths and higher heights in Christ, but take pride in the fact that they are, at least, average Christians. Well, I ask, what is that? “Well, I get shaved every Sunday morning, and put on my best clothes and go to Church.” Well, what more? “I join in a little in the singing, I like music very much, and I sit back and listen to the choir.” Well, what else? “I pay for the music director and the preacher of course. We have a smart up-to-date pastor. Oh, he does preach wonderfully! He never hurts anybody; he never calls anybody names as you do; he says we are mighty good people, and pats us on the back, and he is a swell fellow. Yes siree, I am no saint. I am an average Christian.”

Well my friend you are very candid, and I will be the same. I will tell you what you are. You are a sham and a fraud. If your Christianity lies in helping to pay a song leader and a minister to read and say nice things for you, and then go back to the job on Monday and your various other pursuits to act in the same carnal and ungodly way as before, you are a sham and a liar, and it is my duty as God’s minister to tell you so. And those who sing for you, pray for you, preach for you, and do all those nice little religious things for you are THE ANTICHRIST whom you serve and before whom you bow. You need not look for another!

Some time ago I read a parable that goes like this: A king once excelled in greatness, not only in war and affairs of state, but also in music and song, So great was his desire for musical expression that he made himself a harp. And had you seen this harp and heard him play, you would have said the harp was almost alive. As it was, no one ever heard the harp, except the head servant. For on the day that the harp was finished, the king was suddenly called off to war. The head servant was given charge of all the affairs of state, the people, and the harp until the king returned. “Take care of my harp,” said the king, “for I intend to use it to bring great joy to my people.” But this head servant was a wicked servant, and he said to himself, “I will take the harp, and I will bring joy to the people, and I will make myself king.” So he took the harp and began to strum. And as he strummed he broke it - string by string! (For you see, he hadn’t truly learned the ways of the king’s harp.) Filled with anger, he made himself another harp which looked very much like the real harp but didn’t sound at all the same. Where the king’s harp played joy and laughter, his harp played flippancy and riot. Where the king’s harp played love, his played passion. Where the king’s harp played peace, his played something much like peace, but it always left you dissatisfied. Nevertheless, the phony harp was an instant success among the people. For, you see, they had never heard the music of the real harp! And not having ever heard the real, they applauded the counterfeit. The wicked servant was made king within a month. Bigger and better copies of the phony harp were made and spread throughout the land so that everyone in the country had a phony harp. Even now,

if you come to that country you can hear the sickening chords of gloom and staleness and niceness and lust.

From the earliest years of my memory there stirred deep within my bosom an insatiable longing after reality. Though only a child, I wanted to know Him who once was spat upon for me, who was crowned with thorns for me, who died and rose again and ascended into the effulgent glory of the Father for me. I wanted to intimately KNOW the Christ, oh! how I wanted to KNOW HIM! At the tender age of twelve the Lord revealed Himself to me in a remarkable manner, flooding my life with billows of His presence, power and glory. I had found the 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. From that moment Christ was the ONLY REALITY. He filled the skies. He filled the earth. He filled my life and flooded my heart with unspeakable love, joy, and peace, and unfolded within the depths of my spirit the wonders of His awesome holiness, His ineffable glory, His fearful majesty, His inscrutable wisdom and His unsearchable ways.

Unnumbered multitudes of men and women and children have experienced such a divine encounter with God since that glorious day 1900 years ago when the first one hundred and twenty disciples were assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Suddenly a sound was heard like the rushing of a mighty wind coming straight down from the sky, and flaming tongues of divine fire crowned the heads of those humble saints gathered there. This little band of believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, was ushered into the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power of the Kingdom of God as Christ the Lord returned to them in mighty spirit, to indwell their believing hearts and reign upon the throne of their yielded lives. How they sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of their souls and re-echoed among the battlements of celestial realms! With what power, signs, and wonders did they bear witness to the living presence of the Christ! God through them began to shake the entire world. Day after day, month after month, year after year the celestial wonder continued, thousands upon thousands came to drink at the ever flowing fountain of life, and it looked for a time as though all the kingdoms of men would be broken down, and the whole world would come marching to Zion.

But such was not to be, for the long night of FLESH was not yet over. The Church had progressed only a few years into the dispensation of the Spirit when the SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST began to show its ugly head and men began to substitute THINGS in place of the anointing. The apostle John warned of this spirit of antichrist in these graphic words: "Hereby know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and EVEN NOW ALREADY IS IT IN THE WORLD" (1 Jn. 4:2-3).

So here it is so very soon! Did you ever see it fail? The moment God begins a mighty work of grace and power and glory, someone rises up in the spirit of antichrist to establish some CARNAL ORDER and puts the unsanctified fingers of FLESH to the exquisite strings of THE KING'S HARP, at once striking a discordant note. It is not long thereafter until all the strings of THE WAYS OF THE SPIRIT are broken, and men begin to make their own harps, designed to resemble to some degree the King's harp, and play their own music. Ah, beloved, if Christ fills us we want no more. If Christ does not dwell

richly within us, we must have some thing else instead of Him, and that is some antichrist!

THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT

I have pointed out that “antichrist” is a compound word made up of the preposition “anti” and the Greek word for Christ which is “Christos”. “Anti” means instead of and “Christos” means anointed, and by extension anointing. Our Lord Jesus Christ is THE ANOINTED, but Christ in us is THE ANOINTING, as the apostle affirms, “But you have an unction from the Holy One ... the anointing which YOU HAVE RECEIVED OF HIM abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the SAME ANOINTING teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide IN HIM” (I Jn. 2:20,27). There is in the Christ within, or in THE ANOINTING such a generous, copious, abundant, plentiful, profuse, rich, full, and overflowing bestowal of the grace and abilities of God that there is no need for anything that men might add to such an anointing. And that is the great truth that the man-made Church systems do not and cannot understand. The CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT. The ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT! Nothing else is needed to quicken, support, or guide the true Church of Jesus Christ.

The anointing is sufficient to bring it into being. The anointing is sufficient to quicken it and give it life. The anointing is sufficient to teach and mold the lives of the members of this Church. The anointing is sufficient to bring it unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. No rituals of any kind are needed. No sacraments of any kind are needed. Its ministers need no robes, no costumes, no ornaments of any kind. This true Church has no need of ceremonies, no lofty spires, no stained glass windows, no chiming bells or great and wonderful organs to inspire worship in its members. It has no need of elegant and costly Church edifices, fine furnishings, artistic choirs, polished orators, and no need of a hierarchy of any kind, elevation, or rank. Its apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are not lords but SERVANTS, and therefore need no couriers running before them to announce their coming. THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT.

There are many Christian people that the devil does not bother himself about. When the devil comes to certain Churches and looks in, he thinks he is not in any trouble at all; because he sees a fellow there in the pulpit who has all his religion written out before him, and he finds the people grinding out their prayers from a prayer book, just in the same way that a Tibetan turns a prayer wheel, always saying, “God have mercy upon us poor miserable sinners, for we have left undone the things we ought to have done, and we have done the things we ought not to have done; and there is no help in us.” The devil thinks that is right, and that congregation can be left safely.

But in the true Church there need be no creeds and no litanies memorized and repeated over and over for these are “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” and, “though we know not what we should pray for as we ought, the Spirit also helps our infirmities ... the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered... He searches the hearts... and makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom. 8:26, 27). THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT!

There is no need for these or myriad more religious trappings in the true body of Christ, for the ANOINTING WITHIN will abundantly supply this Church with all of everything it can possibly ever need. This anointing has no need to count noses or erect attendance

boards to show how many people attend the meetings, neither does it need a membership roll to keep track of its members or what they are doing. The hour has come for us to realize that only THE LORD knows them that are His. Only THE LORD can call His sheep by name and lead them in and out to find pasture. Only THE LORD can look into the four corners of the earth and call forth His elect. The anointing within every member keeps that member in his or her proper place at all times and in everything. Who, then, are we to circumscribe anything? We must learn to know men not by what they say, what they believe, how they appear on the surface, where they are, or by what Church they do or do not attend, but by that strange witness that made Jesus say to Peter, "You are Peter," and by that same spiritual revelation that made Peter say to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!" How often we have been shockingly disappointed in men! Ah, how often has the man who could "preach like Paul" surprised everyone by suddenly divorcing his wife and taking off with the Church organist! And the brother in whom we trusted the most has forsaken us, turned on us, and rent us to pieces, while the man we thought would never receive the message of the hour has been unexpectedly quickened by the spirit of revelation from God, finding a swift entrance into the things of the Spirit. Thank God, we are truly learning to "know no man after the flesh," from a human point of view, in terms of natural judgment, by what can be discerned by the seeing of the eye or by the hearing of the ear - but after the spirit. THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT!

Let all men know that this anointing does not consist of any physical demonstration or words. Across the land, especially in "Spirit-filled" circles, we have heard much of the anointing, and for the most part the anointing has been considered to be in operation when the subject displayed some kind of physical manifestation or fervor. Precious saint of God, let me say here and now that the anointing has ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to do with seeing a flash of light, feeling a tingling sensation running up and down the spinal column, emotional excitement, breaking out in "goose bumps", trembling, jerking, jumping, running, arm-slinging, loud and vociferous hand-clapping and singing peppy choruses. In fact, it is very easy for any of these things to be SUBSTITUTED FOR the anointing, literally being "anti-christos" - in place of the anointing - antichrist!

The anointing is given to make a man able to be a person he could not naturally be and to do a work he could not naturally do. It is impossible for a natural man to love his enemies, to bless them that curse him, to do good to them that hate him, or to pray for them which despitefully use him and persecute him. But the ANOINTING will do that! It is my earnest prayer to God that our eyes may be enlightened and our understanding made keen by the Spirit of God so that we may grasp the truth that all the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount REQUIRE THE ANOINTING TO MAKE THEM WORK. Only the anointing will cause us to go the second mile. Only the anointing will turn the other cheek. Only the anointing can or will forgive. Only the anointing will pray, fast, and give without pretense or outward show or secret hope of personal gain. Only the anointing can make us the salt of the earth or the light of the world. Only the anointing can transform us into Sons of God. BUT THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT!

The means by which God separates people unto Himself and for His purposes is called in the Bible "the anointing". Let us look at this "anointing" and meditate deeply upon its origin and use in the Scriptures. The term anointing first appears in the book of Exodus in connection with the consecration of the Priesthood and the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. When they built the Tabernacle, God commanded that they should apply the "holy anointing oil" to the Tabernacle and all the articles within it (Ex. 29:7,21; 40:9-16; Lev.

8:10-12,30). All the Priests who served and the High Priest also had to be anointed with the anointing oil. Once the Priests and the articles were anointed, they BECAME SEPARATED AND SANCTIFIED UNTO GOD. Later, Kings and Prophets were anointed by God for His service. The purpose for which God anoints people is that the anointed ones may be separated unto Him to fulfill His will and purposes. The holy anointing oil in the Old Testament symbolized the Holy Spirit, and today it is the moving of the Holy Spirit in us that constitutes the anointing of God. I Jn. 2:27 says, "The anointing which you have received of Him ABIDES IN YOU, and you need not that any man should teach you: but ... the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth..."

Let us look even deeper into what this anointing means. The anointing of I Jn. 2:27 in the Greek is not a noun, but a verb pertaining to a certain kind of motion. It does not bespeak an oil in a motionless state, inactive, standing still, but an oil in a state of motion and activity. If you only have the oil in a vessel it is not "the anointing". But when the oil is poured out and applied it then becomes "the anointing". In the vessel it is merely oil; poured out it is anointing and separates and sanctifies and changes the proprietorship and function of that upon which it is poured! Thus, in this day of reality, the anointing is not the Holy Spirit, but the MOVEMENT AND ACTION of the Holy Spirit WITHIN US! You say, "I have the Holy Spirit, therefore I have the anointing." Not so! The Holy Spirit in the vessel IS NOT THE ANOINTING, only as the Spirit MOVES AND ACTS WITHIN YOU do you have the anointing. The Spirit must not be motionless within us, He must be active and energizing - speaking, stirring, dealing, quickening, changing, transforming, acting, manifesting the glory of God in our lives!

After the firstborn Son had received the Holy Spirit at His baptism, He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Lk. 4:18). From that moment the Spirit MOVED IN AND THROUGH HIM and His whole life became the revelation of His Father as the nature, mind, wisdom, will, words, power, and glory of God were manifested through Him, climaxing in His triumphant resurrection from the dead!

And now - a vast company of "many brethren" are receiving of that same anointing, that MANY SONS may be brought to the same glory in which Christ now dwells. Yes, beloved, we also are called to be ANOINTED ONES, that the name of the Father may be called upon us, creating this bond of union between the Son and the Sons of God, transforming us into His image, that as He is, so are we in this world! We are discovering what it means to be ONE WITH HIM, and He ONE WITH US in the absoluteness of a divine immanence, dwelling in us, even as the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father. 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!

The anointing will lift all who abide in it into the proper spiritual standing and state before God. In the presence of the anointing nothing needs be PRAYED DOWN or WORKED UP. I must assure you, dear ones, that anything that can be either PRAYED DOWN or WORKED UP IS N-O-T F-R-O-M T-H-E A-N-O-I-N-T-I-N-G, for "the anointing which you have received of Him ABIDES IN YOU." Beloved, if the anointing abides in you, and you abide IN HIM, what, under all God's heavens, could be added to you FROM WITHOUT? Stop seeking anything at all from or through the myriad SUBSTITUTES pawned by the countless modern day antichrists. Man with all his religion, his Church

membership, his organization, his preachers and priests, his bishops, cardinals, popes, and his programs and ritual has NOT FOUND GOD, nor been conformed to His image.

What good, O man, will these things do if after a lifetime of trusting in them and looking to them for help you find yourself at the end of your earthly sojourn without having been transformed into the likeness of God's Christ, and with no hope of sonship? These external observances will not suffice in that hour. BUT THE ANOINTING IS SUFFICIENT! In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, divorce yourself completely and forever from all the substitutes, the realm of the INSTEAD OF. You will find absolutely nothing in it that will satisfy the deepest cravings of your heart after God. The anointing IS ALL YOU NEED.

If the early Church had been organized after the manner of the harlot church systems of today, the records would have been quite different from what they are. We would have had some reference to our Lord's installation of the apostleship with great ceremony, Himself sitting somewhere in state as a Pope, receiving the apostles in scarlet robes as cardinals, etc. etc. We would have had strict laws and regulations respecting Friday, abstaining from meat, etc. - and specific instructions about the observance of Christmas as His birthday. There would be something respecting "holy water" sprinkled upon the apostles or upon the multitude, and something about making the sign of the cross. Mary, our Lord's mother, would not have been forgotten. An account would have been given of her claimed miraculous conception and she would have been announced as "the mother of God," and Jesus Himself would have been represented as doing her some special homage, and as instructing the apostles to approach Him through her. Some injunction would have been given respecting "holy candles," when and how and where they should be used; some instruction respecting the invocation of saints; some instruction about the "mass," and how Peter, meeting with the other disciples, was recognized as the Pope; how they prostrated themselves before him, and how he performed mass for them all, declaring that he had power to re-create Christ in the bread and to sacrifice Him afresh for personal transgressions.

We would have some account of Stephen's burial; how Peter or the others "consecrated" a grave for him, so that he might lie in "consecrated ground," and that they put in his hand a "holy candle" while they said certain prayers over him. We would have had rules and regulations respecting the observance of Lent and Easter, and respecting various orders of the clergy, higher and lower, Reverend, Right Reverend, Most Reverend, Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, and Popes; and particular directions how each and all were to attain their positions, seeking honor one from another, and who should be greatest. We would have some statement about how Paul set in "the Pastor" over each Church, how Paul later returned to visit the Churches and met with "the Pastor" of each, and how the sick should call for the Pastor of the Church, and let him pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.

We would have some reference to the need for the Church to be recognized by and chartered by the State so its ministers can legally marry the young and bury the dead; we would have some specific examples of how Paul conducted funerals, how Peter performed weddings, and how the Pastors performed dedications. There would be instructions on how to organize a Church, the formation of the "board," how to conduct business meetings, and what percent of the members present constitute a ruling voice. We would be informed how to "call" a preacher, how to hire and fire ministries, and told of the importance of the choir. We would be instructed about the work of the Sunday

School, how to select the Sunday School Superintendent, and the necessity of Sunday School "Quarterlies". And there should be multiplied other recommendations about rituals, altar calls, mourner's benches, special numbers, revivals, concerts, Christmas programs, Easter sunrise services, festivals, ceremonies, sacraments, communions, counselors, Church buildings, spires, building funds, drives, campaigns, crusades, invasions, Bible Schools, non-profit corporations, etc. etc. etc. The fact that these matters are in no sense of the word even hinted at by the Lord or by His holy apostles and prophets is evidence that the whole Church world has gone far afield, the whole system is literally antichrist, instead of Christ, IN PLACE OF THE ANOINTING! But T-H-E A-N-O-I-N-T-I-N-G I-S S-U-F-F-I-C-I-E-N-T.

You will probably ask me the question, "Do you not believe in meetings, the assembling of the saints, and the ministries in the body of Christ?" I answer with assurance, "Most certainly I do!" But THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE BASIS FOR ASSEMBLING OURSELVES. Our Saviour gave us this basis when He said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mat. 18:20). The vast majority assemble not in the name of the Lord but because of tradition. All their lives they have assembled at certain times and to them it would be sacrilege not to do so. Others assemble for social and business purposes, and others for the sake of making proselytes, and still others for the sake of furthering their particular denominational program. Praise God, the consuming fire of HIS dealings and processings in our lives are being used to THOROUGHLY PURGE AND CLEANSE OUR HEARTS of Babylon's spirit and ways until once and for all we shall forsake all the traditions, giving ourselves over to true oneness with Christ, that He may teach us how to gather IN THE NAME OF THE LORD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH. When our minds are one with Him and all earthly program and tradition has vanished away and He takes His royal seat upon the throne of our hearts, then we are truly able to assemble IN HIS NAME. Then we are LED BY HIS SPIRIT, and then there is a freshness for those who gather, and a flow of His life, light, and love, and confirmation to be received from each member.

Antichrist ministries carry in them the nature of this world's bestial system, and they do everything patterned after the world and the harlot systems - to build a name for themselves, and a kingdom, to gain, to usurp control over other men's lives, to establish a creed or a movement, to solidify a power base under them, and for financial gain. The true ministries in the body of Christ carry in them the nature of Christ, taking the way of the cross, being stripped of all fame and earthly glory, going without the camp to bear reproach and shame because of what GOD has spoken into their heart. They seek no power over other men's lives, no control, nothing for themselves. They are maligned because they have "no works" that the flesh can boast in, they are scorned because they have no name, no title, no identification the world recognizes. These build no kingdoms about them, establish no hierarchies, but are LIVING EPISTLES OF CHRIST, "examples to the flock" (I Pet. 5:3), and "servants of all" (Mat. 20:25-28).

FALSE "ANOINTED ONES"

This is the day of false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ, and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great wonder if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works (II Cor. 11:13-15). Men have vainly tried to satisfy their minds as to who the antichrist will be and from whence he shall come. Reverent meditation upon the above quoted passages of Scripture should make it

abundantly clear that he does not arise in Jerusalem or Rome, or from Berlin, Moscow, Cairo or Washington, D. C., but IN THE VERY MIDST OF THE BODY OF CHRIST! How patiently, painstakingly, and accurately the apostle John details this truth for us in these inspired words: "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from US, but they were not of US; for if they had been of US, they would no doubt have continued with US: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of US. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn. 2:18-19; 4:1). I have emphasized the "US" in these verses so as to make it clear that the antichrist is from among the professed saints - NOT an atheist or a European dictator or an apostate Jew!

The impressive words of wisdom penned almost a decade ago by a man of revelation and keen spiritual discernment, are quoted here for our edification: "Our Lord warned us that 'there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many' (Mat. 24:5, 24). Now when Jesus said many, then there must certainly be many. If, however, you are expecting to see men stand on a platform saying, 'I am Christ,' you will wait a long time, for few men will ever openly manifest their error in such a way; but yet, if they did, you may be sure they would find plenty of followers.

"Now the word CHRIST means ANOINTED, and you have only to cast your eyes about you to find MANY MEN and MANY WOMEN who are claiming to have a SPECIAL ANOINTING from God for this particular hour. These are saying, 'I am the anointed, or I am Christ.' THE MEANING IS THE SAME. The literal translation of Mat. 24:23, 24 from the Emphatic Diaglott brings this out with great clarity thus: 'Then if any to you should say, Lo, here the anointed, or there, believe not, for MANY FALSE ANOINTED ONES shall be raised... and shall give signs and great wonders, so as to deceive if possible even the chosen.' This passage of Scripture is of enormous importance, and it should be applied without hesitation, discrimination, or fear to all men and women who make great claims for their ministry. It should also be applied to all sects and denominations, for they ALL CLAIM to possess the one true way. Every informed person must be aware that at this very moment there are MANY who claim they are THE ANOINTED for this hour. They are God's man or God's woman, or God's prophet or God's denomination. Without difficulty I can think of a dozen such men over the country at the moment. One claims to have a golden altar powerful enough to stop an invading horde of two hundred million Chinese. Another claims he is Elijah the prophet and goes to great lengths to prove it. A dozen men claim to be God's man of the hour. Many women are claiming to be SPECIALLY ANOINTED to bring new revelation for this last day. And then there is that arch deceiver who throughout successive generations has blasphemously claimed to be Christ's representative on earth.

"All these and many more claim to be ANOINTED OF GOD, and every one of them have hundreds of followers, while some of them count their followers in millions and hundreds of millions. These are false prophets and false Christs, false anointed ones, deceiving many by their crafty claim to be anointed of God. Full well did Peter say, 'There were false prophets also among the people as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall

they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not' (II Pet. 2:1-3).

“Notice that Peter gives a GLARING CLUE that unmistakably identifies a false ministry. THROUGH COVETOUSNESS SHALL THEY WITH FEIGNED WORDS MAKE MERCHANDISE OF YOU. THEIR need of YOUR money is always evident in every meeting they hold, every article or letter they write. They need money for this, money for that, money for missions, money for the destitute, money for their broadcast, money for their new tent, money for their buildings, and with a thousand other plausible lies they make merchandise of the gullible people who blindly follow them. You will hear them tell how God revealed to them that a certain number of people in the meeting have a certain amount of money that they are to give, and they usually get it. This is not God's doing, but these are FEIGNED WORDS by which they make merchandise of you. From all such turn away.”

If a “false anointed one” is not an “anti-christos” then I fail to even imagine what further credentials might be required for an antichrist! These false ones, pseudo-Christos, the Greek would give, make their own claims about themselves, and “he that speaks of himself seeks his own glory” (Jn. 7:18). And yet it is true that HE IS ANOINTING HIS OWN WITH THE SAME SPIRIT OF WHICH HE IS, for “You have an unction from the Holy One... the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you.” The false anointed ones, the antichrists exalt self, the other EXALTS CHRIST.

CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH

The inspired writer continues in I Jn. 2:22-23 saying, “Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father: but he that acknowledges the Son has the Father also.” But what does he mean here when he speaks of denying the Father and the Son? Let us make no mistake about this. Fortunately, a little further on John himself enlarges on this statement so that we need not be left in the dark. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know you the Spirit of God: EVERY SPIRIT THAT CONFESSES THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH IS OF GOD: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and THIS IS THAT SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world” (I Jn. 4:1-3).

Now let us get these statements clear in our minds. John declares an antichrist to be one who denies that Jesus is the Christ, which is denying the Father and the Son. But how does he do this? BY NOT CONFESSING JESUS CHRIST HAVING COME IN THE FLESH! But what does this mean? It states that we know the Spirit of God by His confessing Jesus Christ having come in the flesh. Does this mean that Roman Catholicism is the Spirit of God? It confesses that Jesus Christ was a man, born of a virgin. It confesses that He came in the flesh as a babe in Bethlehem. They even parade Him before the world hanging on a cross, crucified. Millions of others around the world, representing every kind of religion and false cult existing, including the Moslem, admit the same historical facts. Do all of these represent the Spirit of God?

These verses must have a deeper meaning! It is not considering the fact of Jesus Christ having lived on earth as a man. Anyone will admit that. But the profound truth which all of

popular religion has missed, is the fact of the Christ actually coming into this flesh, my flesh, your flesh, and becoming an eternal and inseparable part of us! "And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ IS (now) COME in the flesh is not of God: and THIS is that spirit of antichrist... you are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is HE THAT IS IN Y-O-U, than he that IS IN the world" (I Jn. 4:3-4). Every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ I-S come in the flesh - is antichrist! Why? BECAUSE: Greater is He that IS IN YOU (your flesh), than he (the spirit of antichrist) that IS IN the world!

"Christ lives IN ME," Paul wrote in Gal. 2:20. Again in Col. 1:27 he wrote, "Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory." THIS is the Christ Who has come in the flesh: He that IS IN YOU, and will never leave nor forsake you (Heb. 13:5). And this is eternal life: being joined eternally and inseparably to God by means of the Christ within. This is the Christ from Whose love no power nor creature in heaven or under heaven can separate us (Rom. 8:35-39). John declares, "Beloved, now are we the Sons of God" (I Jn. 3:2). And Paul adds, "And because you are Sons, God has SENT FORTH THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO YOUR HEARTS. Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a Son" (Gal. 4:6-7). THIS is the Christ that IS come in the flesh!

Paul preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. After stating this himself, he follows on to say, "But this treasure (Christ) WE HAVE IN EARTHEN VESSELS" (II Cor. 4:7). On another occasion Paul writes to the Galatians and calls them his little children "...of whom I travail in birth again until CHRIST be formed IN YOU" (Gal. 4:19).

It is only the formation of the Christ of God within us that will ever bring us into our true stature and relationship to our Father. Sonship is the actual birth of the Christ creature who becomes the new man within, the new me, the new you. He is both ageless and deathless, the actual Son of the God of heaven. He abides eternally in this human frame, even as He abides eternally in Jesus to perform His mighty works. And it is a union which is becoming a glorious and eternal reality in God's Sons in this hour. But - "many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ IS come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (II Jn. 7). These deceivers acknowledge the historical Jesus of 1900 years ago, but they recognize Him not as having returned in mighty spirit within a people. These deceivers speak much of Jesus in some far off heaven somewhere, but they reject the manifestation of Him through the members of His body upon earth.

By personal application, if my spirit does not confess that Christ has come in my flesh, I am antichrist. The confession of my SPIRIT is a much stronger confession than might be made by just my mouth. The confession of one's SPIRIT bespeaks an expression arising from an INNER STATE OF BEING, not merely a belief of the mind. If my SPIRIT is confessing that Christ has come in my flesh, it is confessing it by a LIVING MANIFESTATION. Now if I am living out Christ in the nitty-gritty of every day life, under the pressure of all the daily circumstances and life situations, I am confessing with my SPIRIT that Christ is come in my flesh! Ah, I might say with my mouth that Christ is come in my flesh, but my spirit speak just the opposite, as the fountain of my life sends forth polluted waters. Many have a mouth confession of the presence of Christ within whose "spirit confesses not that He is come" in their flesh. Oh! that men might believe it! The Christ within, the anointing within is our only hope of glory!

But antichrist will hear of no such hope of glory. His hope does not rest wholly in the Christ within, but partially in his own works, or faithfulness, or endurance. He is cluttered about with laws, regulations, creeds, ordinances, observances, traditions, religious exercises of this order and that, all of which are designed to assure his right standing with God. He is thus denying the Father and the Son, for God's order is, "You are kept by the POWER OF GOD, through FAITH" (I Pet. 1:5). Anything that purports to ADD SOMETHING to the anointing within, or to fill some place or function in our lives not fulfilled BY THE ANOINTING ALONE - is antichrist!

The notable English mystic, William Law, writing in about the year 1750, made the following statement, to which we all must give sincere and earnest heed lest we, like those who 1900 years ago rejected Christ and the truth He brought, should refuse Him that now dwells and speaks and works within His temple of living stones, accepting in His place the cheap and worthless substitutes of man's invention. Thus writes William Law: "Consider how it is that the carnal Jew, the deep-read scribe, the learned rabbi, the religious Pharisee not only did not receive but crucified their Saviour. It was because they willed and desired no such Saviour as He was, no such inward salvation as He offered them. They desired no change in their nature, no inward destruction of their own natural tempers, no deliverance from the love of themselves and the enjoyments of their passions. They liked their state, the gratifications of their old man, their long robes, their broad phylacteries and greetings in the markets. They wanted not to have their pride and self love dethroned, their covetousness and sensuality to be subdued by a new nature from heaven derived into them. Their only desire was the success of Judaism, to have an outward Saviour, a temporal Prince that should establish their law and outward ceremonies over all the earth. And therefore they crucified their dear Redeemer and would have none of His salvation because it all consisted in a change of their nature, in a new birth from above, and a Kingdom of Heaven to be opened within them by the Spirit of God. O Christendom, look not only at the old Jews, but see thyself in this glass, for at this day (O sad truth to be told), at this day of Christ within us, an inward Saviour raising a birth of His own nature, life and Spirit within, is rejected as gross enthusiasm. The learned rabbis take counsel against it The propagation of popery, the propagation of Protestantism, the success of some particular Church is the salvation which priests and people are chiefly concerned about."

Suppose I were a pursued fugitive. Now, if I could get my pursuers sidetracked and get them to fire on a stuffed dummy made to represent myself, they would thus, by diverting their fire from me, aid in my escape. I do not hesitate to tell you, precious brother of mine, that Satan has a DUMMY ANTICHRIST set up, a horrible creature who will never appear. And the Christian Church is busily engaged in wasting their time and ammunition on this dummy. They are telling what a terrible creature he will be, all the while ignorant of the fact that THE TRUE CRIMINAL IS IN THEIR VERY MIDST!

Chapter 3

You have heard their names: Nero. Mohammed. Emperor Frederick II. Pope John XXII. Martin Luther. Napoleon. Kaiser Bill Wilhelm. Mussolini. Hitler. Stalin. Henry Kissinger. All these individuals have had one thing in common. In their days, they were all branded with the odious, fear-inspiring title ANTICHRIST! Dozens of others throughout the past two millennia have equally shared this dubious distinction. Obviously they can not all be the antichrist. Why do so many preachers and people today warn of the antichrist, yet misunderstand who or what this personage is?

Without any desire to treat lightly the opinions of others, we nevertheless feel it necessary to point out to the reader a few of the absurdities connected with the common view concerning antichrist, that thereby the dignity of the truth on this subject may be properly estimated, in contrast with the narrow claim that all which the Scriptures predict concerning this character will be accomplished by some one literal MAN. This man, it is claimed, will so charm the whole world that in a few short years he will secure to himself the homage and WORSHIP of all men, who will be so easily imposed upon as to suppose this man to be GOD, and, in a rebuilt Jewish temple, to worship him as the Almighty Jehovah. All this is to be done at lightning speed, three and a half years, say they, misinterpreting the symbolic time, even as they misinterpret the symbolic "man".

Tales of fiction and the most absurd imaginations of childhood furnish no parallel to the extreme notions of some of God's dear children who are stumbling over a CARNAL interpretation of John's language, and thereby blinding themselves and others to many precious truths, which, because of error on this subject, they are unprepared to see in an unprejudiced light. No matter how much we may sympathize with them, their "blind faith" forces a smile, as they seriously relate the various symbols of the prophetic Scriptures which they do not understand, misapplying them literally to their WONDERFUL MAN. In this, the most skeptical age the world has ever known, he will, they claim, in the short space of three and a half years, have the whole world at his feet, worshipping him as God, while the Caesars, Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Mohammed, and others sailed through bloody seas and spent many times three and a half years, without accomplishing the one thousandth part of what is claimed for THIS MAN.

Untold millions of Christians have lived in great fear waiting for the antichrist to take over. Their ministers have preached that a certain dictator or government leader might be the long expected "man of sin". Then, when that dictator or government leader died or passed from the scene, they chose someone else as the probable candidate. Without any hesitation whatever I must tell you that this type of literal interpretation and fear tactics HAS NOT ADDED ANYTHING TO OUR SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING, but has rather caused God's precious people to continue groping about in the dense darkness of spiritual ignorance and superstition.

THE LAST DAYS

Without doubt we are now at the end of a dispensation. It is the evening of this present age. It is the twilight of man's degenerate day. A church system that has rejected Christ as its head is entering into a black and dark night. "In the last days," the Holy Spirit said, "perilous times shall come." If we will carefully compare the moral and spiritual

atmosphere of the day in which we live with the prophecy given by Paul in II Tim. 3:1-5, our eyes will be opened to see that we are not only in the last days of this age, but in the last hours as well. Every word and every prediction of that prophecy is both fulfilled and being fulfilled before our eyes every day and every hour of the day. These are perilous days for many, many reasons. Our lives are in peril within the four walls of our own homes. Every passing day men, women, and children are being robbed, bludgeoned, raped, and murdered, not only by gangs on the street, but by molesters who enter their houses. In many cities it is unsafe to be on the street even in the day, and in most cities it is unsafe to be on the street at night. Mobs and gangs roam the streets and highways, burning, killing, looting, rioting, and senselessly destroying.

Bad as these things are in the natural realm, the greater perils of our day are the SPIRITUAL PERILS. This is a day of every imaginable spiritual deception. The feverish activity of all the religious systems of earth is immense, but it is neither an expression or the product of the Holy Spirit of God. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the nauseating vision John beheld on Patmos of the swaggering power and incredible filth of Mystery Babylon is even now a sobering reality in all its fullness. Truly we are living in "the last days".

But let me hasten to point out that the "end time" we are speaking of is a definite time span BEGINNING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT DAYS AND CONTINUING UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. John says in I Jn. 2:18, "Little children, IT IS THE LAST TIME: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; wherefore we know that it IS THE LAST TIME." That quotation is not taken from some work of fiction or fairy tale. It is no statement of merely John's "opinion." It is a part of a work that Christians today profess to venerate as the fully inspired Word of God. I wonder why so few believe it!

I recommend this verse to the solemn consideration of all who profess the name of Christ. God's penman, 1900 years ago wrote, that as the coming of the antichrist heralds the last time, therefore, since there were at that time "many antichrists," this fact proved that he himself was living then in the "last time". So we see that the "last days" or the "last time" had already begun in the days of the apostle John. On the day of Pentecost, Peter implied the same when he quoted Joel, saying, "It shall come to pass in THE LAST DAYS ... I will pour out of My Spirit..." and applied it to that very time. The writer to the Hebrews declared "God... has in these LAST DAYS spoken unto US by His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). Peter wrote of Christ, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in THESE LAST TIMES for you" (I Pet. 1:20).

II Pet. 3:18 reminds us that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. If we understand that rightly, it means that just a little under TWO DAYS have elapsed from the day of Pentecost until now! That makes it easier to understand that the people in the book of Acts were already in the last days, or the last time, and that we still are in the last time today.

The "last time" and "antichrist" are inseparably linked together by the Holy Spirit. The term "antichrist" appears only five times in the whole Bible and we shall now quote all the verses that surround this mysterious character. "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have no doubt continued with us: but they went out, that they

might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But you have an unction from the Holy One, and you know all things. Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son. Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (I Jn. 2:18-22; 4:2-3; II Jn. 7).

Antichrist is spoken of in four distinct forms. I Jn. 2:18 says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that ANTICHRIST shall come..." The absence of the definite article shows that the term here embraces the WHOLE REALM OF ANTICHRIST, bespeaking a SYSTEM, including both the actors and the program(s) they initiate. In addition to the ANTICHRIST SYSTEM we read in vs. 22, "Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is ANTICHRIST..." In the Greek, however, the definite article is used, so that the Greek text reads, "Who is THE LIAR, if not the one denying that Jesus not is the Anointed one? this is THE ANTICHRIST, the one denying the Father and the Son." Here antichrist is the title of a specific personage. Then it says, "Even now are there MANY ANTICHRISTS." In addition to the singular person who is the antichrist, there are many antichrists. Then, in addition to antichrist as a person, and many antichrists or many persons, and antichrist as the system spawned by these, there is the SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST which operates in all the antichrists and in their system. "And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, whereof you have heard that it should come."

Let us summarize these four distinct forms of antichrist and list them in the order in which I am impressed by the Spirit to deal with them: (1) the spirit of antichrist (2) many antichrists (3) the antichrist (4) the antichrist system.

THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

The first astounding fact to which I would draw your attention in respect to the spirit of antichrist is that, in John's day, it was ALREADY IN THE WORLD. The spirit of antichrist was nothing new, not something recently emerging upon the scene, but this spirit was ALREADY IN THE WORLD, the very spirit energizing and motivating everything under the sun that usurped the place of the Spirit of God in the lives of men. This spirit was of old!

"Anti" is a Greek word meaning "instead of". Therefore we find that the word "anti-christ" properly signifies one who opposes, or one who sets himself up in the place of Christ. Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, or instead of the anointing, is literally antichrist. The SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST is that spirit, attitude, and nature which opposes Christ by usurping that place that rightly belongs to Christ alone! This spirit was in the world in John's day, and it still is in the world today. It is everywhere. It is in the government and in the courts of law. It is in the universities, colleges, and schools. It is in the media, on the television, in the newspapers, in magazines and books. It is in the homes, in the business establishments, labor unions, on the streets, and worst of all it is in the Church systems. It is in the pulpit and in the pew. It is in the hearts of the populace. The antichrist is very evident in the world, but few see him or recognize him.

The apostle Paul recognized him and spoke of this opposer of Christ in Rom. 7:20-23, saying, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight after the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." The spirit of antichrist has his seat in the carnal, sinful, rebellious nature of man which is not subject to Christ. The apostle spoke of a time in his own experience when he found two spirits waging warfare to be king of his life. This is the same Paul whom God used to bring to the Church the glorious revelation that THE SAINTS ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, composed of living stones, built up a spiritual house, an habitation of God through the Spirit. But the day came when Paul met TWO spirits in this temple which, because of the redeeming work of Jesus, was rightly the temple of God. The Christ life, the new man had been begotten within him. Of this new man, the inward man, Paul declares, "I DELIGHT in the law of God after the INWARD MAN." But he then found himself under the dominion of another! He tells us that this other is "SIN that dwells IN ME." TWO laws! TWO natures! TWO spirits! TWO kings! And what a warfare!

The spirit of antichrist is the old Adamic nature, the self-life ego of this old creation which has usurped the throne in our own temple. But, thank God! there is a NEW LIFE maturing within us which shall OVERTHROW THE OLD CREATION, and though it has been a long war "between the house of Saul (flesh) and the house of David (the new spirit-man): David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker" (II Sam. 3:1).

I must tell you today, beloved, that I am glad I did not know all the things that lay ahead when years ago I began this journey into the fullness of God. God in wonderful grace hid from my eyes pitfalls and severe testings that were to vex the path that He had prepared for my feet. Many years ago, in the midst of a most remarkable and sovereign move of the Spirit of God, heaven dropped into my heart with soul gripping force the blessed hope of SONSHIP to God. As the dawn of a new and hitherto unknown realm in God shed its first rays of light upon my quickened spirit, I lived daily in joyful expectancy of the greater and fuller manifestation of the glory of God and the stupendous, colossal, and awesome work He would perform through the Sons of God in these momentous days at the end of the age. I knew practically nothing then of my own appalling weaknesses and inherent sin. I set my face to be conformed to the image of God's Christ, but I did not know that of all the ANTICHRISTS I would meet the greatest and fiercest of them all was within me, even that carnal mind which is the eternal enemy of God!

I did not know that the spirit of antichrist was ALREADY IN THE WORLD, even within my own little world, deep-rooted in the heart of every man. One does not need to gaze through the telescope of history or divine the things of the future to discover this antichrist; you will find him in your heart if you look close enough! I understood nothing then of the deep purgings, the white-hot refinings, the pulverizing crushings, the embarrassing strippings, or, the repeated processings that the Father would need to faithfully and relentlessly bring into my life in order to slay that insidious MAN OF SIN, the SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST who sits stubbornly in my own temple showing that HE IS GOD!

The spirit of antichrist has been in the world ever since that fateful day in Eden when the serpent whispered from the branches of Eve's carnal mind, "God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and YOU SHALL BE AS GODS,

knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). The deceitfulness of the serpent did not rest in an untruth. Had not God revealed the majesty and glory of His eternal purpose in that hour when He proclaimed the wonderful fiat, “Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). In FORM, then, the serpent had a truth when he murmured, “You shall be as God,” but what the serpent failed to reveal was the ESSENCE of the form which is that INDEPENDENTLY OF GOD man can NEVER be a partaker of the divine nature!

This should have been a self-evident truth, but man failed to see it. He was deceived by the very form of truth - taking the Word of God which had promised to make him in the image of God, receiving it as a DOCTRINE rather than a revelation, as FORM rather than life, as SOMETHING HE COULD BY SOME E-X-T-E-R-N-A-L MEANS ACCOMPLISH FOR HIMSELF, rather than leaning in TOTAL DEPENDENCE upon the faithfulness of the God who had promised! By this spirit of SELF-ASPIRATION, SELF-REALIZATION, SELF- EXALTATION and SELF-PROMOTION man forsook the way of the cross and was, consequently, brought to ruin, cheated out of the very thing he sought. The promises of God became to him a FORMULA apart from the Person of God and allowed him, in his own mind, to justify his departure from the WAY OF THE SPIRIT, trusting in his own ability to fulfill the Word that he had heard. He failed to understand that truth is not some THING a person knows or does, but some ONE, and that truth is not a state of knowing, but a STATE OF B-E-I-N-G! Paul stated it, “They changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature (man himself) more than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25). The truth became a lie when it was separated from the anointing, which is the presence of the living God.

Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, or the anointing, is antichrist. How easy is it to be snared by this antichrist spirit! The carnal mind loves any kind of a “method” or “technique” or “short cut” by which to enter into some supposed realm of spirituality. The natural mind ever seeks for a simple “formula”, “ten easy steps” to a new experience in God. Ah, if the spirit of antichrist were to write a book, no doubt it would be titled “Sonship in Seven easy Lessons.” Just DO THIS or DO THAT, the preachers shout, and you will be blessed, be more spiritual, have more victory, receive a greater anointing or ministry, or become a Son of God!

Well do I remember the day when I was instructed that if only I would be rebaptized by a CERTAIN FORMULA, with just the right words called over me, the Lord would then be more real to me, my spiritual life would be greatly blessed and my ministry mightily increased. As the years passed, as I grew in grace and wisdom and in the knowledge of God I did, indeed, experience the Lord in deeper measures and my life was blessed with spiritual blessings beyond my wildest dreams. But as I look in retrospect I can plainly see that none of this glorious reality came as a result of a preacher dunking my physical frame in a tank of water, however correct the formula may have been, but because that the eternal Father had, in His infinite grace, called me and separated me from my mother’s womb to reveal His Son in me.

On another occasion I was told that if I would be re-baptized yet again for THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART, the sin-nature would, by that singular act, be completely eradicated from my life. These, dear ones, are subtle deceptions which lead men to believe that because they perform some EXTERNAL CEREMONY they are thus initiated into a new experience or deeper realm in God. It is amazing to find how many people are daily deceived by this enthusiastic line of PERFECTION BY FORMULA. Just

“name it and claim it” we are exhorted, for everything from a shiny new car to an instant entrance through the veil into the Holiest of All! Ah, the fall of man is more than an historical event. The past is meaningless unless it relates to the present. We see the fall repeated all around us, day after day, generation after generation, and move of God after move of God. We behold the same sin that brought about the initial fall, and in the repetition of that sin, there is also the dreadful repetition of the departure from the Reality of God and the loss of His glory and presence. Can we not see that the Garden of Eden is not so much a past event as a present and continuing event? It happened back there in the past, but it continues to happen in the present because the spirit of Adam, the spirit of antichrist is within every man! After starting out in the Spirit the crafty old serpent whispers from the branches of our own carnal minds, “DO THIS, CONFESS THAT, OBSERVE THIS RITUAL, REPEAT THESE WORDS, BE BAPTIZED THIS WAY, SUBMIT TO THIS MAN, JOIN THIS GROUP, USE THIS NAME - AND YOUR EYES WILL BE OPENED AND YOU WILL BE AS GOD!” Perfection by formula, Sonship in seven easy lessons! And men discern not that it is the SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, a subtle SUBSTITUTION for the true riches which come alone from intimacy of fellowship and vital union with HIM.

At present, among the Pentecostal and Charismatic crowd, there is much information coming forth in the way of books, pamphlets, cassette tapes and seminars concerning the “gifts of the Spirit” and “casting out devils” or “deliverance”. By reading these books, listening to the tapes, or attending a “training school” one can pick up the “HOW-TO’S” and quickly learn the techniques employed by those who are experienced in such sensational ministries. From such places one can learn in a relatively short period of time how to conduct a successful Faith Seminar or Deliverance Meeting, complete with prophecy, miracles, lengthening of legs, falling out in the Spirit and exorcism of demonic spirits. Though some may disbelieve it, I would be remiss as a minister of God if I did not tell you that if, by reading a series of lessons, or sitting through a seminar, a man can “learn” to prophesy, “learn” how to exorcise spirits, “learn” how to perform miracles, or be “taught” how to do any other sign or wonder, then he is THE DECEIVED who will be among the astonished Jesus spoke of in Mat. 7:22-23 when He said, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”

The mighty acts and manifestations of that LEARNED in seven easy lessons - are supernaturally bestowed by the lovely and wonderful Christ as a result of intimate fellowship and deep personal association WITH HIM. How to do the works of God is not contained in a formula or in any set of methods understood by the carnal mind - the understanding of such high and holy things comes by revelation born of an inner work, an inner relationship with GOD HIMSELF. The wonderful works of God are the result, not of repeating certain phrases, or the employment of certain techniques, but of the SOVEREIGN POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY.

After years of a ministry of transcending greatness the beloved Paul wrote of the true source of all spiritual ministry, saying, “For I neither received it of man, neither was I TAUGHT IT, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. But when it pleased God... to reveal His Son in me ... immediately I CONFERRED NOT with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia (a desert place), and returned again to Damascus. Then AFTER THREE YEARS I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I

none, save James the Lord's brother ... and they glorified God in me" (Gal. 1:12, 16-19, 24). Paul read no books on "Soul Winning Made Easy" or "How to Cast Out Devils". If, like Paul, we will take time in reverent meditation upon His Word, earnest prayer, adoring worship, and listen to HIS VOICE, we will become strangely acquainted with the secret of His will, not only for the ages to come, but for the present age and the things that concern our daily walk with Him. In the secret of His will we will walk in the Spirit. When we walk in the Spirit, we are led by the Spirit and, when we are led by the Spirit, we are the SONS OF GOD.

Many centuries ago the Lord Jesus said to a throng of religious men who stood before Him, "I have come in My Father's name and you didn't receive me. ANOTHER SHALL COME IN HIS OWN NAME; HIM YOU SHALL RECEIVE." Paul must have been mindful of this very truth when he wrote to the Corinthians in these words, "I fear unless by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that comes preaches ANOTHER Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive ANOTHER SPIRIT, which you have not received, or ANOTHER GOSPEL, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him" (II Cor. 11:3-4). ANOTHER Jesus, ANOTHER SPIRIT, ANOTHER GOSPEL, -- ANTICHRIST!

The ministers of popular religion preach another gospel. Indeed, they may use fine and polished sentences. Their sermons and ceremonies and programs may sound good to the people who, like Eve, have been beguiled by the serpent, but their gospel is not the gospel of the Kingdom and it is not the gospel of God. It is ANOTHER GOSPEL!

A German philosopher many years ago said something to the effect that the more a man has in his own heart the less he will require from the outside; excessive need for support FROM WITHOUT is proof of the bankruptcy of the INNER MAN. It saddens my heart to know that most Christians today have no central core of spiritual life, no spring from within their own breast, no inner strength of the Christ to place them above the need for repeated psychological shots to give them the courage to go on in God.

So today we have the astonishing spectacle of millions of dollars being poured into the unholy job of providing excitement and ENTERTAINMENT for the so-called sons of heaven! All across the land today religious entertainment is crowding out the deep and marvelous and serious things of God. Many Churches and television and radio channels these days have become little more than poor theatres where fifth-rate "producers" peddle their shoddy religious wares. And hardly a man dares raise his voice against it. The great god Entertainment, the OTHER JESUS, the OTHER SPIRIT, the OTHER GOSPEL, amuses his devotees mainly by singing them songs, telling them stories, and feeding them testimonies. The love of stories, which is a characteristic of childhood, has taken fast hold of the minds of the retarded saints of our day, so much so that not a few persons manage to make a comfortable living by spinning yarns and putting on shows for God's people. But what is natural and beautiful in a child is shocking when it persists year after year in those who long ago should have begun to GROW UP in Christ.

Instead of believers coming together to fellowship in spirit and in truth around the BREAD OF LIFE, without all the fleshly paraphernalia, and just feed on the LIVING CHRIST, we have an hour and a half of preliminaries, with singing of silly choruses and empty spirituals, and joking and laughing and horseplay. Entertainment has taken the place of worship; special singing instead of thanksgiving and praise; and then a short sermonette,

highly spiced and sensational, in order to keep the people awake after all the wearying entertainment. And then we wonder at the worldliness and shallowness of Christians today! Indeed, another SPIRIT, another JESUS!

Gospel music is BIG BUSINESS ... it creates a very, very effective facade to the audience. They hardly notice they are being spun the yarns of Babylon... lied to ... fed junk food... of no lasting flavor, substance or nourishment for the lean and difficult days ahead! I am meeting more and more starving people who are going constantly to Church meetings, gatherings, crusades, programs, concerts, etc., and are literally dying of starvation for solid, strengthening spiritual food. The music just doesn't do it; the stories and testimonies no longer help; it is all part of the gimmickry, commercial smoke-screen, and I assure you that if you could know what lies behind the scenes in the unsanctified lives of many of the performers, you would more easily understand the reason there is no real power or blessing in the midst. Satan is no dummy ... he is the craftiest of all the beasts of the field, and is a professional Public Relations man for selling another Jesus, another gospel, and another spirit!

A dear brother once said that if the Holy Spirit were to be withdrawn from the face of the earth, most of all Church activity would continue on without notice anyway. But God is preparing a people whose spirit is so at ONE with the spirit of Christ that they are indistinguishable. He is preparing a company of Sons to stand in the earth and say as Jesus said, "I can do nothing of myself, but as my Father has taught me, I speak those things and I do always those things that please Him."

There came a day in the ministry of Jesus when "As He spoke, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him: and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not FIRST WASHED before dinner. And the Lord said unto Him, Now do you Pharisees make clean the OUTSIDE of the cup and the platter; but your INWARD PART is full of ravening and wickedness. Fools! did not He, that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as you have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk. 11:37-42).

The Pharisee was finding fault with Him who is the True Light because He did not conform to one of their ceremonials of exterior holiness. This is not just a simple matter - this holiness in forms, ceremonials, symbols, and "that which is OUTSIDE." The whole world worships in that way! THINGS. OUTSIDE things! A worship of symbols. There can never be any deliverance of mankind from the power of the devil except as the HEART is opened up and exposed. And it is coming - has BEGUN - the uncovering of every hidden thing WITHIN. Ah, God's Kingdom has to come WITHIN. And every one who has experienced this can say NOW, "Jesus Christ I-S C-O-M-E I-N T-H-E F-L-E-S-H!"

The SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST seeks to forever chain you in the prison house of static creeds and empty religious observances, but the omnipotent Spirit of Jesus the Christ will cleanse and purify your heart from all sin, will make you holy and without blemish before Him in love, that you may be a Son of God and joint heir with Christ, a member of His body, of His flesh and His bones, and placed as a living stone in a living temple, the habitation of God through the Spirit, the holy and heavenly house not made with hands from which God in ages yet unborn will govern the entire universe in righteousness. The spirit of antichrist is that spirit which confesses not that Jesus Christ IS come in the flesh - this flesh, your flesh, my flesh. The spirit of antichrist is the spirit of SELF, the ego, which

delights to serve God outwardly with great pomp and show, but never abdicates the throne of the inner life that CHRIST MAY REIGN SUPREME.

The spirit of antichrist is the spirit of idolatry. Idolatry has been, in every age, the besetting sin of mankind. In some form or another, the unregenerate are all given to it; and the saints have a tendency towards it. In its grosser manifestations, idolatry is the desire of man to SEE GOD WITH HIS EYES - to have some outward representations of Him who cannot be represented, who is too great, too spiritual, ever to be described by human language - much less to be set forth by images of wood and stone, however elaborately carved and cunningly overlaid with gold. Aaron makes a calf - Israel forgets the Divine Jehovah's glory, and says of the ox that eats grass, "These are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"

We are apt to imagine it a very strange freak of human depravity when men are led to worship visible objects and signs. But it is not at all unusual or singular. It is the general sin of all mankind. I suppose no man has been entirely free from it and every man and woman called to Sonship has to contend against it in its subtle forms - for idolatry takes insinuating shapes, less gross in appearance than the worship of Dagon or Ashtaroth - but quite as sinful! Idolaters can only worship their god by objects which appeal to the senses. An outward altar, an outward ritual, outward rites - all these are nothing but another form of the old idolatry of Babel and Bethel. Man still turns from the unseen God. The unseen Priest, who has passed within the veil, man still ignores. The unseen Christ who dwells in the heart by faith, is counted as insufficient. The SPIRITUAL FEAST upon the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the eternal fountain of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE, is substituted by the outward emblems which are adored by some, held in great reverence by others, and sentimentally necessary for yet others. Bread and wine, which are but created and corruptible things are made into deities by the blind idolaters of this age. I believe that it is a self-evident truth that all the outward rituals of the religious systems are IDOLATRY - flat, groveling idolatry - and nothing less, which on every hand spreads its mantle of darkness under the pretense of reverent piety. Could Egypt or Assyria do worse?

May God give us grace to turn away from them! And you who are still held captive by these idolatries, may He deliver! May He save you from leaning upon the arm of flesh - from trusting in what may be seen or handled - and bring you to rely upon the INVISIBLE CHRIST WITHIN, to whom alone belongs power and strength, and to whom NOTHING need be added!

For centuries now Christians have been "taking communion" believing they were eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ. They were seeing the type, but missing the anti-type. The Scripture testifies, "And the WORD was MADE FLESH and dwelt among us, and we beheld HIS glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). The eternal, living, incorruptible WORD of God was made FLESH in the Person of Jesus Christ. The flesh of Christ is not the human body of Jesus, nor is it crackers or holy wafers; the flesh of Christ is the BREAD OF GOD, the TREE OF LIFE, the LIVING WORD OF GOD that came down from heaven, of which if a man partake HE SHALL LIVE FOREVER.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God. Just as the Word was made flesh, so His flesh IS THE WORD. The bread is His body. The breaking of the bread is the BREAKING OF His Word. When He broke that Word to the travelers on the road to Emmaus, their eyes were

opened and they KNEW HIM. When Christ breaks the bread, the Word of God, our eyes are opened and we BEHOLD HIM and transformation into His image begins. The wine, Jesus said, was His blood, shed for the remission of sins. His blood, beloved friend, is ETERNAL LIFE, the BLOOD OF GOD, and those who drink of His blood which is His Spirit drink deeply of eternal life.

The work of God today is not an outward work, but a deep, transforming inward work. As the Father unfolds this truth to our hearts we understand as never before the deep significance of these words of inspiration penned by the apostle Paul, "For he is not a Jew, which is one OUTWARDLY; neither is that circumcision, which is OUTWARD in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one INWARDLY; and circumcision is that of the HEART, IN THE SPIRIT, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:28-29).

In this present hour we hear much of the Jews who are outward in the flesh. A remnant of these outward Jews have returned to the land of Palestine over the past century and have carved out there the modern state of Israel. Many Christians speak ecstatically about the prophecies that are being fulfilled in relation to the Jewish nation. Many live in excited expectation of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the reinstatement of the temple worship with its sacrificial and ceremonial rituals of the law. Then follow the dire predictions of the rise of the antichrist who is supposed to make a covenant with the Jews, have the whole world at his feet, and sit AS GOD in that wonderful temple. Thousands of people are feverishly working day and night for the salvation of the Jews. But I must tell you, beloved, the return of the outward Jews, the formation of the state of Israel, the seizure of Jerusalem, the fervent prayers at the wailing wall all not withstanding, the counsel of the Holy Spirit stands sure, the truth is as absolute and incontrovertible as it was the day heaven breathed the revelation into the illumined mind of the apostle of Jesus Christ - HE IS N-O-T A J-E-W WHO IS ONE O-U-T-W-A-R-D-L-Y; BUT HE I-S A J-E-W WHO IS ONE I-N-W-A-R-D-L-Y!

Let us not have our understanding distorted. Many are loudly proclaiming that the ending of the Church age heralds the beginning of THE SUPREMACY OF THE JEWISH NATION as the instrument of God's Kingdom on earth during the age to come. This is a most serious ERROR! Thank God that He shall, indeed, save the Jews! Thank God that He shall also save ALL NATIONS as He pours out His Spirit upon ALL FLESH. And so shall be fulfilled that which is written: "Look unto Me, and be saved, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW, EVERY TONGUE SHALL SWEAR (allegiance)" (Isa. 45:22-23). And again, "ALL NATIONS whom You have made shall come and WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, O Lord; and shall glorify Your name" (Ps. 86:9). The apostle John adds his inspired testimony in these words, "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" (Rev. 21:24).

The salvation of the Jews DOES NOT MEAN, however, that THEY shall then occupy the favored position in the Kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, it is not given to the outward Jews to rule the world in righteousness or administer the affairs of God's Kingdom on earth. Jesus announced to the Jewish nation 1900 years ago, "Behold, your house (kingdom) is left unto you desolate. Therefore I say unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be TAKEN FROM YOU, and given to a NATION bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Mat.

23:38; 21:43). Let every man know the vast difference between being “saved” and “ruling” as a Son of God in the Kingdom. It is a blessed fact that salvation shall come to the Jews, yea, to ALL NATIONS. Salvation is by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. “The GIFT of God is ETERNAL LIFE through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). Salvation is a GIFT of free grace; but the HIGH CALLING of God in Christ Jesus is not a free gift - it is a PRIZE to be won! As great as was the experience and ministry of the apostle Paul, he testified, “Not as though I had ALREADY ATTAINED, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 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 P-R-I-Z-E OF THE H-I-G-H C-A-L-L-I-N-G of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:12-14).

Ah, dear ones, there are qualifications involved in winning the PRIZE! The Scripture never says, “To him that gets saved will I grant to sit with me IN MY THRONE.” And it certainly does not say, “When the Jews get saved THEY shall REIGN AS KINGS AND PRIESTS.” The qualification is, “Him that OVERCOMES will I grant to sit with Me IN MY THRONE” (Rev. 3:21). Again, “Him that OVERCOMES ... to HIM will I give POWER OVER THE NATIONS: and he shall RULE THEM with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:26-27). And Paul admonished Timothy, “I-F we SUFFER (with Him), we shall ALSO REIGN WITH HIM” (II Tim. 2:12). The Jews, through 1900 years of God’s judgment and displeasure have NEVER SUFFERED W-I-T-H HIM, although they have suffered untold shame, disgrace, and indignities because of their unbelief and rejection of HIM. They flunked every test, every opportunity given to them to qualify for WORLD RULE. Therefore, they won’t REIGN WITH HIM. In the glorious age to come they SHALL NOT REIGN OVER ANYTHING. To this very day they deny Him! “Whosoever shall DENY ME before men, him will I ALSO DENY before My Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 10:33). “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 (the lords and kings) that are with Him are CALLED, and CHOSEN, and FAITHFUL” (Rev. 17:14). The kingdom of Judah (Jews) was indeed CALLED and CHOSEN, but, alas! they were NEVER FAITHFUL. They shall not reign. This is given to the SONS OF GOD, through whom, Paul says, the whole creation shall be delivered. WHO shall REIGN? “He that OVERCOMES shall INHERIT ALL THINGS; and I will be his God, and he shall be MY SON” (Rev. 21:7).

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded FOR THE WITNESS OF JESUS ... and THEY lived and REIGNED WITH CHRIST a thousand years ... and THEY shall be PRIESTS OF GOD and of Christ, and shall REIGN WITH HIM” (Rev. 20:4,6). All that be Jews in spirit, inwardly, are to break down the imaginations of their hearts, and the evil of their carnal mind, and their earthly wisdom, and their knowledge, and understanding, and all the images and idols of their hearts, by the SPIRIT OF SONSHIP which God has given them, that they may offer to the Lord a sacrifice and an offering in His temple, which temple YOU ARE. The Jews in the spirit are beyond and higher than all the outward Jews in the flesh and their outward offerings in their outward temple, and the offerings of the Jews in spirit render base and negatory all the outward Jews’ offerings that be outward and carnal, to do that which is inward and spiritual.

The outward Jews ate of their natural offerings in the outward temple; and so the Jews in the spirit do eat of their offering, Christ, in their temple, and of their sacrifices, and then they praise God in their temple. The outward Jews’ lamps always did burn in their temple,

and never went out; and they were to dress their lamps in their temple; so likewise the Jews in the spirit - their lamps of divine illumination and spiritual revelation are never to go out, but always to burn in their temple; and they are to trim and dress them, and so they come to be a royal priesthood unto God, always attending to the service of the Lord in the temple, morning and evening, offering in the Spirit the nature of the Lamb without blemish in the temple: and so the Jews in the spirit are morning and evening offering in the Spirit the nature of the Lamb without blemish in the temple: and so the Jews in spirit are morning and evening offering in the Lamb's spirit, in their temple, which is their bodies, the life and glory and victory of the Lamb of God.

There were priests to eat of the showbread in the outward temple, and the showbread was always to be in the temple on the table; and so the Jews in the spirit are always to have their bread, the Word of God, in their temple, to eat of it; and you are a spiritual household, and a royal priesthood unto God. And the incense and the sweet odors were to burn in the outward temple; and so the Jews in spirit are to always have the incense and sweet odors of the fragrance of HIS PRESENCE to burn in their temple. And the Jews in the flesh were not to touch anything, nor eat anything that was unclean; no more are the Jews in spirit to touch or handle anything that is unclean; but to HANDLE CHRIST, and feed upon HIM, who is pure, and holy, and clean, and eternal, who is the BREAD OF LIFE.

In the time of the law they were not to touch the dead, if they did they were unclean; which is a figure to them that WALK IN THE SPIRIT, they are not to touch the dead ways, dead doctrines, dead methods, dead outward observances, nor the DEAD FLESH of the religious systems wherein is no life; but to touch CHRIST WITH THEIR SPIRIT and HIS LIVING FLESH. Therefore touch nothing that is unclean, but the living and the clean; for the earth is corrupted with the dead bodies of former moves of God from which His Spirit has fled, and His life departed, now become lifeless ministries; and the FLESH THEREOF makes it to stink, and the living smell it.

The Jews outward were not to follow and feed upon any offering but their own; and so the Jews in the spirit are to follow no offering but Christ, and feed upon Him who is their own. Christ is the altar that all offer upon that offer up to God: which altar is in the temple of the body. And all who quench the Spirit of the Christ in themselves, or substitute some OUTWARD THING for the inward anointing, and suffer not the life of the INDWELLING CHRIST to arise and become their all-in-all, are such as WATCH THE SEPULCHRE OF CHRIST, and are afraid that Christ should ARISE! This precious saint of God, is that SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST!

Almighty Father! purge away the vain traditions that have been handed down for years, the carnal interpretations that have changed into deceptive myths the deep spiritual truth that You have spoken, and turned the inward work of Your Christ into an outward mirage ever fleeting before our eyes! Truly the man of sin that concerns each of us today is not the man we have been told shall appear by-and-by in some dark and distant land; but the one who wars continually against the CHRIST-LIFE here and now within our very own bosoms. Arise within us in the power of the SPIRIT OF YOUR MOUTH, by the Word of God which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword - and slay this man of sin. Come! in the BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR APPEARING, as revealing light and consuming fire, until the words are wonderfully fulfilled in us:

What a burning, what a burning,
As all goes up in smoke and flame;
Everything of Adam's nature
Must bow the knee to Jesus' name!

Chapter 4

Suppose I were a pursued fugitive. Now, if I could get my pursuers sidetracked and get them to fire on a stuffed dummy made to represent myself, they would thus, by diverting their fire from me, aid in my escape. Satan has a dummy antichrist set up, a horrible creature who will never appear. And the Christian Church is busily engaged in wasting their time and ammunition on this dummy. They are telling what a terrible creature he will be, all the while ignorant of the fact that the true criminal is in their very midst! If the adversary can get the people of God to look for some imaginary man of sin yet to appear, some fictitious son of perdition to come, then he has won a victory, because then WE WILL NEVER DISCOVER THE MAN OF SIN WHERE HE ACTUALLY IS ABIDING.

The detrimental and deceiving effect of the notion of antichrist being some world leader yet to arise, is, that while people have their eyes focused on the future, they are not alert to discern his presence now - and that gives him opportunity to do a great deceptive work right in their midst. The old serpent is still very crafty, beloved, and if he can keep us peering out in the mists of the future for the events we have been warned about, we will overlook them in our own generation and time, and within our very own lives. "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (I Jn. 2:18). Ah, my brother and sister, the Christian Church, for the past nineteen hundred years, has been literally filled with antichrists. And the present-day crop are busily engaged in pointing the finger of accusation at some poor defenseless and fictitious person who is supposed to appear at some indefinite period in the future. That is Satan's trick to keep men's eyes off of the real culprit! Satan is the sole author of the doctrines which keep men looking ahead to some character who will never appear, thus aiding his present-day emissaries to carry on his work without interruption. It is high time for Christians to awake, and learn what they are playing with. There is poison in the pot!

Antichrist, in first and second John, is spoken of in four distinct forms. I Jn. 2:18 says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that ANTICHRIST shall come. . . " The absence of the definite article shows that the term here embraces the WHOLE REALM OF ANTICHRIST, bespeaking a SYSTEM, including both the actors and the program they initiate. In addition to the antichrist system we read in vs. 22, "Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is ANTICHRIST..." In the Greek, however, the definite article is used, so that the Greek text reads, "Who is THE LIAR, if not the one denying that Jesus not is the Anointed one? this is THE ANTICHRIST, the one denying the Father and the Son." Here antichrist is the title of a specific personage. Then it says, "Even now are there MANY ANTICHRISTS." In addition to the singular person who is the antichrist, there are many antichrists. Then, in addition to antichrist as a person, and many antichrists or many persons, and antichrist as the system spawned by these, there is the SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST which operates in all the antichrists and in their system. "And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, whereof you have heard that it should come."

Let us summarize these four distinct forms of antichrist: (1) the spirit of antichrist (2) many antichrists (3) the antichrist (4) the antichrist system.

THE BODY OF CHRIST - AND ANTICHRIST

Many people will seriously question the possibility of the antichrist being a multiplicity of persons. Have you considered the truth that lies hidden in this inspired sentence: "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST" (I Cor. 12:12). Christ, contrary to popular opinion, is not a Person, but a great body of persons. In fact the word "christ" is itself not a true translation of the original. It is not a proper name, but should be rendered "the anointed". And in I Cor. 12:12 we find just what "the anointed" really is. It tells us, that as our natural body is but one body composed of many members, "SO ALSO IS THE ANOINTED." Christ, or the anointed then, is a huge company composed of anointed Sons of God.

To further clarify this statement, Paul continues by saying, "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13). This is sonship: being baptized by the Spirit into the body WHICH IS CHRIST (Rom. 6:3-4). We, however, dare not confuse this baptism with that of being baptized by Jesus into the Spirit (Mat. 3:11; Jn. 1:33). Being baptized by the Spirit into Christ is being baptized into His very death and then resurrected a new heavenly being in the image and power and glory of the firstborn Son (Rom. 6:3-4). There is no other way to be a part of "the anointed". And those who thus die with their Lord and are resurrected new creatures through the new birth are "in Christ" (II Cor. 5:17). They are then members of this vast company, or body, composed of anointed Sons of God. And this body or company which IS CHRIST has a head, the chief Christ, the firstborn among many brothers, our Lord and Saviour!

All natural things have spiritual counterparts and spiritual meanings. Everything God does follows a distinct pattern and every natural pattern has a corresponding spiritual one. Thus we plainly observe that every man consists of two things in particular, a head and a body. If one had only a head, he would be incomplete and grotesque. If he had only a body and no head, he would be incomplete and useless. Now let us suppose that a man by the name of John Smith has his head severed from his body. Would any man, finding the head, exclaim, "There is John Smith!" Would he not say, "That is John Smith's head." On the other hand, if a person discovers the body, will he cry, "That is John Smith!" No, he would rather say, "There is the body of John Smith." But collect both head and body and reunite them and all who then behold them will say, "There is John Smith!"

Therefore, to make a complete man there must be both the head and the body and the two must be joined inseparably together into one glorious being. Now when a child is born, the head is born first. Then follows the body with all its many members, the shoulders, the arms, the torso, the legs, and finally the feet. The feet are born last, but there is neither fullness or completeness until the head and the body stand complete and entire as one. The HEAD of the anointed, which came forth from the womb nearly two thousand years ago, and the BODY, which has been in preparation ever since the day of Pentecost, is indeed but ONE CHRIST, as Paul has so beautifully explained, "God has put all things under His feet, and has appointed Him universal and SUPREME HEAD of the Church, WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE COMPLETENESS of Him who everywhere fills the universe with Himself" (Eph. 1:22-23, Weymouth).

The body of Christ is the COMPLETENESS OF GOD'S CHRIST. Two millenniums ago the revelation of the head was given, but the body of that same Christ has been developing throughout the entire Church age that God's glorious Christ may stand complete at the end of this age, Christ the head and Christ the body, the perfect Man, Jesus the head, with all His many brethren, the body, the joint heirs with Christ.

Men seem to be able to understand how a foot, a leg, a hand, a torso, and a head can, though separate and different, all be members of one and the same body. If physical members joined only by the weakness of flesh and blood can be one, how much more are those who are joined by the omnipotent, omnipresent, and eternal SPIRIT of the living God! An arm that is severed from the body no longer belongs to the body because the bonds of flesh are broken. A leg to which the flow of blood is cut off will develop gangrene and have to be amputated from the body. I have often been asked the question, "What is it that determines whether a person is in the body of Christ?" To which, with all emphasis I must answer, "All are members of the Christ who are vitally connected in LIVING UNION WITH THE HEAD." Someone says, "But I am joined to the other members of the body and that makes me a member of the Christ." Ah, that is true, IF the members to which you are joined are themselves VITALLY CONNECTED WITH THE HEAD! But if some MAN is their head, or some organization, denomination, or religious system, apart from the HEADSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST alone - there is no body of the Christ! Sons of God exist only because of their vital relationship to Jesus Christ, not because they have an intellectual understanding of the doctrine of sonship, or attend meetings, or belong to some "end time" movement or "New Testament Church".

Through much study of the Word of God and through many years of walking with God I have become thoroughly convinced that just as the Christ is a glorious body composed of many members, even so THE ANTICHRIST IS A BODY COMPOSED OF MANY MEMBERS. The company which is Christ is the true Church; the antichrist is the false, apostate Church, that which is "anti", or "opposed to", or "instead of" the true! Paul speaks of this false Church, the antichrist body in II Thes. 2:3-4. Let us now take special heed to Paul's teaching. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day (the day of Christ) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

The Greek word that is here translated "falling away" is "apostasia" Strong's Concordance defines this word as "defection from the truth". It is from this word that we get our English word "apostasy". Adam "apostatized" and "fell away" from the pure essence of God's truth in the beginning, but the apostasy of which Paul speaks was yet future in his day and was to be a corruption, a departure from the truth as it is in Jesus Christ - a departure that would develop right within the realm of the body of Christ. As one Greek scholar has pointed out, "This is apostasy. It is, therefore, to be sought IN the visible Church and not OUTSIDE the Church, not in the pagan world, in the general moral decline, in Judaism, in Mohammedanism, in the French Revolution, in the rise and spread of Masonry, in Communism, or in lesser phenomena" -Lenski.

Is the falling away from true Christianity yet to happen at some future time or has it already happened? Those who are acquainted with Church history KNOW THE ANSWER! The falling away to which Paul referred began many centuries ago and continues to this very hour. The only way the falling away could be future is if the Church had remained PURE in doctrine and spirit UNTIL NOW, This has obviously not been the case!

Originally the New Testament Church was filled with truth and spiritual power. The book of Acts gives an account of those glorious days. In the midst of those few holy years the apostle John, filled with divine wisdom and keen in spiritual discernment, 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 APOSTASY from Christ began to appear.

Even before the apostles had gone to their reward, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and many people were wearing the Babylonish garment. They were instituting rules and regulations, laying down laws, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and ordinances, elevating human government, becoming disciples of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, and of many others. The Babble had begun and the mysterious MAN OF SIN was raising his ugly head. Before too many years had passed men began to set themselves up as “bishops” and “lords” over God’s heritage in place of the Holy Spirit. Instead of conquering by the power of the Spirit and truth - as in the early days - men began to substitute THEIR ideas and THEIR methods. Soon the glory and power, 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. 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 reality. A “falling away” of a massive and dreadful nature arose until the religion of Christ became gradually the religion of antichrist. That which had been visibly known as the body of Christ BECAME THE BODY OF ANTICHRIST where carnal observances replaced spiritual reality, the ceremonial took the place of His indwelling life, human tradition obscured the Word of God, human authority usurped the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and idolatry replaced true and spiritual worship.

Paul calls those involved in this falling away “the man of lawlessness” and “the son of perdition”. Both phrases mean the same thing; Paul just uses two different ways of expressing his point. Without doubt he added “son of perdition” because it was Hebrew custom to give the name “son of” to anyone who possessed the character described by the word following the phrase “son of”. Since Paul is naming those involved in this falling away, and Satan is the father of rebellion, he uses these all-inclusive phrases “man of lawlessness” and “son of perdition”. This “man of sin” or “man of lawlessness” is the one who “opposes and exalts HIMSELF above all that is called God... so that HE AS GOD sits in the TEMPLE OF GOD, showing himself that HE is God.”

Many have applied the word “man” in II Thes. 2:3 to mean one individual on the basis that Paul spoke of “that man of sin” and that such wording must refer to ONE individual man, not a GROUP of men or a SUCCESSION of men. That meaning, however, does not fit Paul’s subject because he is discussing the falling way, and it is not just one man who falls away. The Greek word used here for man, “anthropes”, is used most often in the New Testament with reference to “many people”. To illustrate, II Tim. 3:17 includes the phrase “that the MAN of God may be perfect”. This refers to ALL men of God. Heb. 2:6 states, “What is MAN, that You art mindful of him?” referring again to MANKIND, or all men. This is the same Greek word used in phrase “son of man” in the same verse, which refers to all the sons of Adam’s race.

The Church - the long succession of believers through the centuries - is spoken of as "ONE new man" (Eph. 2:15), and all the mature Sons of God are called "A perfect man" (Eph. 4:13), and certainly no one would insist that the body of Christ is one individual man in a literal sense. The beloved John saw in vision a "woman" called "Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots" (Rev. 17), but this is not taken to mean ONE LITERAL WOMAN, nor is that glorious "woman clothed with the sun" (Rev. 12) thought of as a LITERAL woman! A single "beast" in prophecy often represents a whole empire or kingdom in all its changes and revolutions from beginning to end.

A friend has shared the following enlightening thought: "It is interesting, then, to read the words of Jeremiah who said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that 'the heart is deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS and desperately wicked. Who can know it?' (Jer. 17:9). The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE WORLD! When the Pharisees criticized the disciples of Jesus for eating with unwashed hands we hear Jesus say, "That which comes out of the man, that defiles the man. For FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come FROM WITHIN and defile the man" (Mk. 7:20-23). Every sin-category imaginable is contained in this discourse. Everything that a man could ever do or think that is evil is said by Jesus to come - not from outside himself, but from WITHIN!

"In our consideration of this passage, there is one all-important phrase that we must be careful to note. Jesus said, 'for from within, out of the HEART OF MEN...' It is imperative that we notice the grammatical number of the two words here. The word "heart" is singular being in the Greek in the genitive SINGULAR case. The word 'men', however, is plural being in the genitive plural case. We have then, ONE HEART - but MANY MEN! For want of a better word, I have called this one heart of all men the 'cosmic heart' - cosmic being from the Greek word 'kosmos' which relates to this world-system. This 'cosmic heart' or 'cosmic mind' is the common possession of all men -- one great subconscious mind shared by all the inhabitants of the world. It is the mind of Adam - shared with his many-membered body. Prodding, goading, tempting, whispering, the subconscious mind makes its subtle suggestions to the conscious mind and man's will bows before it. FROM WITHIN, out of the HEART OF MEN - the subconscious mind - proceed all these evil things!"

I am certain that all who read these lines understand how it is that Adam is not one man, but a whole race of men; and how it is that the Christ is not one Person, but a many-membered body; and how it is that the great harlot John beheld sitting on many waters is not a single woman, but a universal spirit and system that sits astride the whole earth. Can we not see, too, that "the man of sin" is not one individual man but a vast company, a many-membered man? It should be clear to every anointed mind that all who are part of the "falling away" are also part of this lawless "son of perdition".

The reason for the falling away is because this man exalts HIMSELF. HE, the SELF, the EGO, takes the seat of the true and living God in his own body which IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD. "Know not that YOU ARE the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple YOU ARE. What? know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" (I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19). Man takes the seat of the true and living God, the anointing, in the temple of God, becomes independent of the leadership of

the Holy Spirit, sets his own standards of spiritual life, establishes his own programs to do the work of God, and even while the flow of words from his lips speaks the things of Christ, his own bestial desires peep out from between the lines, and as you discern what lurks behind all the facade of spirituality you discover the inner motive of the flesh in its SELF-KINGDOM-BUILDING. Even the religious desire of seeing souls saved, sick healed, lives blessed, etc. etc., will be discovered as a SELF-DESIRE to build - gather around self for the furtherance of his own kingdom and glory and financial gain, so that while he appears as a servant of God he is in reality serving the false god of SELF as he resists the Holy Spirit and thus "opposes and exalts HIMSELF above all that is called God, so that HE AS GOD sits in the temple of God, showing HIMSELF that HE is God."

"Beloved, believe not EVERY SPIRIT, but TRY THE SPIRITS whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know we the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST ... but YOU have an UNCTION from the Holy One, and YOU KNOW ALL THINGS" (1 Jn. 4:2-3; 2:20). Every Christian has, or should have, an UNCTION from the Holy One. The word unction really means ANOINTING. As the kings and priests of old were anointed with oil upon their heads, the oil flowed down from the head to the body until the whole body was covered, including even the soles of the feet. So Jesus Christ, the head of His body, has anointed you with the Holy Spirit who is here likened to oil. This anointing is that you might KNOW ALL THINGS.

John did not mean that you would at all times have the conscious awareness of knowing everything in the world. I have a friend, a dear brother in Christ, who is an electronics teacher and used to teach at White Sands Missile Base in New Mexico. He is a teacher of teachers and has authored courses in his field for the U.S. government. Now, this brother has without doubt forgotten more about electronics than I will ever know! His mind is filled with thousands of bits of complex scientific information. Yet, there is no minute or hour of any day when he is CONSCIOUSLY AWARE of EVERY ONE of those pieces of knowledge! He KNOWS them all, but they are held, stored in the most complex and intricately designed computer in the world - the human brain! Every bit of information is there for instant recall at any time it is needed. He knows ALL THESE THINGS but is only aware of any of them when it is necessary to be so.

There is a world of wonderful spiritual truth here! The apostle says, "You have an unction from the Holy One, and YOU KNOW ALL THINGS." ALL knowledge is resident in the boundless, unlimited MIND OF CHRIST. The mind of the Christ Who dwells in your regenerated spirit KNOWS ALL THINGS, but the Holy Spirit shows you and makes you perceive only those things that are necessary for you to know moment by moment, and day by day. Frequently people write to me seeking answers to the problems in their lives, or asking for a word of the Lord in some situation. In the name of Jesus Christ the Son of the living God I exhort you, do not look to me for your answers for all the wisdom and knowledge and understanding you will ever need is as close to you as the very air you breathe, yea, as close as the blood coursing through your veins. "YOU have an UNCTION from the Holy One, and Y-O-U KNOW ALL THINGS!"

Jesus told us that false prophets would come and that their coming is to be a sign of the end of the age. If you will keep in union with the Holy Spirit, depending on Him for instruction, He will give you an inner witness as to whether the spirits are of Christ or antichrist. Do not go to your neighbor or some preacher to get a human opinion. You will

probably get the wrong answer. There is a much better way than this to know the will and way of God. Instead of seeking human opinions, go directly to your Father who dwells within you. He will make the truth known to you by THE ANOINTING which you have received from Him. While the Lord does indeed often CONFIRM the truth to our hearts by the testimony of others, the Holy Spirit must always be your teacher. You have no need that any man teach you, "but the anointing (unction) which you have received of Him ABIDES IN YOU, and you need not that any man should teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you ALL THINGS, and IS TRUTH, and IS NO LIE, and even as it has taught you, YOU SHALL ABIDE IN HIM" (I Jn. 2:27).

Do men ask, Who is the man of sin, the son of perdition? I answer most emphatically, Look not for him in Brussels, or in Jerusalem, or in Berlin, or in Moscow! He is the power of Satan, the root of the carnal mind organized into a kingdom of darkness, error, and superstition which MASQUERADES AS CHRIST'S KINGDOM. You will find him standing in the pulpits every Sunday and on week-nights. He is highly trained, highly thought of, and highly paid. He is in the pulpit, but he is also in the pew! He is in the hearts of the people and in the very system that holds them chained in spiritual blindness. He is within our very own hearts until the glad day when he is uncovered and revealed and consumed by the spirit of HIS MOUTH (Christ's) and destroyed with the brightness of HIS COMING. In these days it is of ever increasing importance that the elect should separate themselves from the antichrist church system. This many-membered body, this confused harlot, drunken with the blood of the saints, rich and increased with goods and having need of nothing, adorned with gold and silver and costly array, applauded by a careless, carnal, and ungodly society, lounging in plush pews and entertained by elegant choirs, eloquent orators and super-star entertainers is the greatest deceiver and false Christ in the world. If we are to be received as Sons of God, our very first command and obligation is to COME OUT OF HER!

John saw many antichrists in his day. The number has been increasing steadily, all through the years, until now we find ourselves surrounded by these men. And the chief reason for so many today preaching about a great coming antichrist is that most of the men who preach this ignorance are themselves a perfect fulfillment of the prophecy, and cannot be expected to reveal their own identities!

There is a day of revelation unfolding which shall soon stagger the world with its disclosure. There shall be a dual manifestation - the fullness of Christ in His body AND the fullness of the antichrist people. When Jesus gave the parable of the wheat and the tares He explained its meaning thus: "He that sows the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the sons of the Kingdom; but the tares are the sons of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age" (Mat. 13:37-39).

Every age ends with a harvest. Harvest is the time of maturity and fullness when each seed, having passed through all the various stages of growth, finally REPRODUCES ITSELF many fold - a vast harvest. Harvest is a time of reaping rather than sowing - a time of gathering fruit. The harvest of the kingdom of Judah serves as a type of the harvest of this age. Our Lord's words to His disciples as He sent them forth, during His ministry to that church-nation, should be carefully remembered, as giving proof that their special work then was REAPING, and NOT SOWING. He said to them, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest: and he that REAPS receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal" (Jn. 4:35-36). As the chief reaper in that harvest

(as He also is in this one), the Lord said to the under-reapers, "I sent you to reap that whereon you bestowed no labor: other men (the patriarchs and prophets and other holy men of old) labored, and you are entered into their labors" -to reap the fruits of those centuries of effort, and to test that people by the message, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," and the King is present - "Behold, your King comes unto you."

In the Jewish harvest, the Lord, rather than to make goats into sheep, sought the blinded and scattered sheep of Israel, calling for all who ALREADY WERE HIS SHEEP, that they might hear His voice and follow Him. These sheep were the FINAL PRODUCT of all God's dealings in that age. They constituted the FULLNESS that the revelation and life of that age could produce. They became the EMBODIMENT and PERSONIFICATION of all the truth God had planted in men's hearts from the days of Moses until Christ. These were the GRAIN, the FRUIT, the HARVEST at the end of that age!

Another and larger sowing took place at the dawn of our present age. Jesus declared, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth MUCH FRUIT" (Jn. 12:24). The "grain of wheat" that was sown in the earth was Jesus, the Son of the living God, the first of a new kind of God-men, and it is HIS LIFE that has been developing in the body of Christ throughout the past nineteen centuries. The "much fruit" will be a vast company of Sons in the time of harvest in whom the fullness of HIS LIFE has been formed. John, his soul aflame with inspiration wrote, "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we SHALL BE LIKE HIM, for we shall see Him as He is" (I in. 3:2). When He shall appear, we SHALL BE LIKE HIM! Wonderfully LIKE HIM! EXACTLY like Him! IN HIS IMAGE! In His likeness, in the omniscience of His wisdom, in the purity of His truth, in the omnipotence of His power, in the immutability of His love, in the faithfulness of His purpose, full of His grace, His kindness, and His unending mercy! The Sons shall be like Him for He shall be perfectly formed in them all.

Jesus testified, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, He purges (prunes) it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn. 15:1-2). The Church, the Vineyard of God! Surely this truth alone is sufficient to establish the fact that the Church's day must end in a harvest of many Sons conformed to the exact likeness of the firstborn Son. If we are the planting of the Lord, then NOTHING SHALL PREVENT THE GREAT HUSBANDMAN FROM BRINGING HIS CROP TO MATURITY!

But there is more than wheat in the harvest - there are also the tares! In the harvest the wheat and the tares are separated. But as the wheat, in the time of harvest, has reached maturity, the full expression and ultimate manifestation of its life, so also the tares! The wheat are the true Sons of the Kingdom, while the tares are the false ones who take on the outward appearance of being Christ's. In external appearance the two are so much alike as to require the close scrutiny of a trained eye to discern between them. The tares look like, and oft times pass for, the children of the Kingdom, but they are imitations - of another life. In this the end of the age both wheat and tares are coming to maturity and there shall be an awesome unfolding of the fullness of each.

The preparation is being made this very day and hour in the hearts of both classes of people. The entire antichrist system is now rising to its dizziest heights. The progress now being made in all quarters by the ecumenical movement in gathering together Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants into one drunken harlot system

under Rome is nothing short of phenomenal. The ecumenical spirit is not the spirit of the Lord, but the spirit of that wicked one whose desire of desires is to adulterate all that is sacred and holy and true with all that is corrupt, profane, and false. There is not one particle of doubt in my deepest heart that the ecumenical movement, however desirable it may appear in the eyes of natural men, is in itself the final rising of that antichrist system which will head up all so-called Christian denominations in one system with one head even one who opposes and exalts himself above God and all that is worshipped so that he, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is Vicarius filii Dei - that is, Vicar of Christ or instead of Christ - who is not recognized for what he is, but is lauded as the greatest religious leader of our day, by which even now many millions of Christians are being deceived.

After this has been accomplished all manner of signs and wonders will be present to deceive all the ends of the earth insomuch that the image of the beast will speak and call down fire from heaven in the sight of men. "FIRE FROM HEAVEN" has always been the singular sign of GOD'S BLESSING AND APPROVAL by the manifestation of Himself. It is certainly true that these ecumenical and charismatic people are even now "calling fire down from heaven" in the presence of the beastly system as they talk freely of signs and wonders and miracles, and speak loudly of salvation and of the baptism in the Spirit, but are not these the very things of which the faithful apostle Paul warned God's people when he spoke of him "whose coming is after the WORKING OF SATAN WITH ALL POWER AND SIGNS AND LYING WONDERS, and with all DECEIVABLENESS of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the LOVE OF THE TRUTH... and for this cause God shall send them STRONG DELUSION, that they all might be damned (judged)" (II Thes. 2:7-12). The spirit of antichrist, wherever it is found, is known by these unmistakable signs: LYING WONDERS, DECEIVABLENESS and UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

The specific event of the past decade (from 1982 - ed.) that concerns us is the advent of the "Catholic Charismatic" which has added even more fuel to the fire. The new "Catholic-Charismatic" is a sort of middle-of-the-roader, who really doesn't care so much about doctrine, but is more concerned with ecstatic experiences and specifically the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. We certainly believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit and in all the precious gifts and manifestations of the Spirit, but when men claim to be manifesting the Spirit we have the responsibility to TRY THE SPIRIT whether it be of God.

Among some Catholic Charismatics there is testimony that after being baptized in the Spirit they had a deeper appreciation of the Mass, a closer relationship with Mary, an ability to recite the rosary in tongues, etc. etc. Since these institutes of the Catholic Church are all pagan in origin and contrary to the Word of God, how can the Holy Spirit, who was sent to LEAD US INTO A-L-L T-R-U-T-H, be leading someone DEEPER INTO ERROR? "Fire from heaven" indeed! but I do not hesitate to tell you, beloved, that it is STRANGE FIRE and multitudes are today deceived by the lying signs and wonders!

Some have hinted that the Mother Church of Rome, the Mother of harlots, is changing, but I have seen no significant change. For a true change, the Vatican would have to close its doors, the sacrifice of the Mass would cease, the veneration of Mary would stop, the rosary would be discarded, prayers to the dead would be abandoned, the bodily assumption of Mary would be declared an invention and a lie, the images and idols would be thrown out, the empty rituals and ceremonies would be stopped, the confessionals

would be removed, etc. etc. What the “change” actually is, is a new tactic in deception. Rather than to remain as the Papal Church always has been, the Catholic Church is now sponsoring and promoting many Catholic-Protestant activities and events in order to merge the two together (i.e. Cursillo Movement, Jesus ‘78, Jesus ‘79 etc.). Today’s priests are being trained to use the vocabulary of the Protestant (born again, receiving Christ etc.) and are learning to copy the motions of true believers. The plan is working! We see Protestants going over to the other side, fellowshipping and receiving Mass together with Catholics. We see the emphasis on ecstatic experience accompanied by a derision of the truth and absolutely no desire to heed the call of the Spirit, “Come out of her, My people!”

Let all who read these pages be assured that the Lord does not require massive temples, religious ceremonies, beautiful and symbolic furnishings, nor priests adorned in decorative robes to demonstrate His life and power. All these outward evidences may be taken away, but God will yet have His witness IN HIS PEOPLE who are the living, righteous PERSONIFICATION of His glory and power. It is in fact, imperative to all who are called to Sonship that these earthly trappings be completely taken away that we may discover HIM ALONE who is the INNER SOURCE of power and life unto His apprehended ones. When the Lord takes these literal, physical THINGS away from His people, it is then evident that He intends to manifest HIS GREATER SPIRIT-LIFE through His chosen ones.

Babylon shall fall, shall so finally, totally, and irrevocably fall until the words of the prophet are fully fulfilled: “And the ten horns (political power) which you saw upon the beast, these shall HATE THE WHORE (Babylon Church system), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and BURN HER WITH FIRE ... thus WITH VIOLENCE shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found NO MORE AT ALL” (Rev. 17:16; 18:21). As God raised up Nebuchadnezzar to bring swift and certain judgment upon the faithless and backslidden House of Judah, and, when the judgment was complete, He in turn raised up the Medes and the Persians to destroy the kingdom of Babylon, His instrument of judgment upon Judah, so has the Almighty in this hour raised up the sinister power of WORLD COMMUNISM to inflict His judgments upon the apostate Church system, and, when the Communists, arrogant and vain and deluded, have finished their work of judgment, and Babylon the Great has received double for her sins, God shall in turn destroy communism, the instrument of that judgment. This awesome judgment has already begun in many lands where the power and pride of the apostate Church has been broken, where the great cathedrals of former years stand empty and in a state of disrepair, and their ministers are classified as “non-productive citizens” and have been placed in secular work or sit rotting in some horrible prison.

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 and prepares the glorious New Jerusalem to fill the whole earth with His glory. The holy Mount Zion is A PEOPLE and the beautiful New Jerusalem is A PEOPLE, and through these LIVING WITNESSES who PERSONIFY the righteousness, truth, glory, and might of HIS KINGDOM the Lord will arise to subdue all the kingdoms of men, filling the whole earth with His glory and dominion. It will, at long last, be the hour of the exaltation and ministry of those humble followers of the Lamb who are found to have PUT ON CHRIST and to whom shall be committed the rule and reign of the Kingdom of God under all the unbounded heavens! “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to

the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and A-L-L DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE HIM" (Dan. 7:27).

Ah, let the Communists destroy all the modern Church buildings, temples, and fellowship halls; let them make it impossible for religious organizations to present their message, either through radio, television, or the printed page; let them search out and burn and ban all the Bibles in the whole world; by the Word of the Lord I say to you that God will then have ready A LIVING WITNESS IN HIS PEOPLE. Communism shall thoroughly judge the wanton, swaggering harlot who has deceived all nations and with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication. What the darkened minds of the Communist leaders do not know is that in the hour that lies before us the Sons of God shall not minister through the limited and carnal means of traditional religion, for they themselves shall have BECOME THE LIVING WITNESS of the nature and glory and power of the mighty God.

In these perilous times such as the world has never known may the Spirit of God impress upon you, beloved brother, precious sister, the absolute necessity of purging from your life all the INSTEAD OF'S of religion until no place is found for them, that Christ may become ALL-IN-ALL within. The precious Holy Spirit now gently woos you, bidding you to separate yourself completely UNTO THE LORD. God shall exalt His Kingdom THROUGH THE LIVES OF HIS CHOSEN ONES and will take His throne over all the earth. How, precious saint of God, would YOU MINISTER if you could use absolutely NOTHING in your ministry but YOUR LIFE - no Bible, no building, no meetings, no hymn books, no Sunday School Quarterlies, no baptismal tank, no literature, no radio programs, no communion table, no instruments of music - NOTHING BUT YOUR L-I-F-E! That is all Jesus had. That is all Jesus used. That, beloved, is Christianity reduced to its simplest form. THAT is Sonship!

There is judgment in the land and the day may come when, even in this fair land, the Church buildings will be closed, the gospel removed from the air-waves, and it will no longer be possible to raise millions of dollars for Christian television stations or massive Church programs. Put away all lightness and foolishness that with heads bowed low and hearts lifted in worship God's Holy Spirit may reveal how our wise and gracious and omnipotent Father has been preparing in secret in the lowest parts of the earth an ANOINTED COMPANY, a MANCHILD, a vast FAMILY OF SONS that IN and THROUGH THEM He may, in the darkest hour of earth's history, be fully and gloriously revealed!

This is not the hour to be looking for the devil to take over the world or for Jesus to come to "evacuate" His saints away to heaven. The devil has had the world for six thousand long years, since that fateful day way back there in Eden. The night has been long and dark. But, thank God! the first rays of light of a NEW DAY are even now painting the eastern sky! Thank God, a few of His chosen ones are, even now, arising to behold the glories of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn. The night is almost over. The day of the great antichrist IS ALMOST OVER! And what we are now ready to enter is not his day, but rather, the fullness of the DAY OF THE LORD!

How truly the whole creation groans, and travails in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God! Oh, the foul lives, the defiled consciences, the troubled minds, the broken hearts, the crying oppressions, the multiplied miseries of our race! What a world of sin and woe is contained in that one word, WAR! What famines and pestilences, and revolutions and massacres arise from MISGOVERNMENT! The deepest

and truest compassion for the sufferings of humanity must prompt the cry, How long, O Lord? And apart altogether from the joy and glory that is to be brought to THE SONS by the revelation of Jesus Christ, the saints must long for His unveiling THAT THE CREATION ITSELF MAY BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION, AND BROUGHT INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD.

While we thus stand, as it were on Pisgah's heights, and view the grand prospect just before us, our hearts rejoice in the Lord's great plan, with unspeakable joy; and though we realize that God's true Church is still in the wilderness of her humiliation and testing, and that the hour of her actual triumph has not yet fully come, yet, seeing the indications of its rapid approach, and by faith already discerning the dawn of the New Day, we lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draws nigh. Oh, what fullness of blessing and cause for joy and thanksgiving the truth contains! Truly, the Lord has put a new song into our mouths. It is the grand anthem, the first note of which was sung by the angelic choir, at the birth of the infant Jesus- "Behold, I bring you GOOD TIDINGS, OF GREAT JOY, which shall be unto ALL PEOPLE, FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY A SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST THE LORD." Thank God, the harmonious strains of this song will ere long fill heaven and earth with eternal melody as A WHOLE FAMILY OF SONS IN HIS EXACT IMAGE AND LIKENESS AND FORM ARE BORN - SAVIOURS ON MOUNT ZION - and the work of salvation - the restitution of all things - which they come to accomplish progresses toward its GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION!

What glories lie beyond this, we cannot yet know. Of this we may be sure: we who are redeemed have entered a progressive institution, a Kingdom in which stagnation will never enter. We will ever go on "from glory to glory", for "of the increase of His government THERE SHALL BE NO END". We will never come to the place where we may sit down with folded hands and say, "This is the end." We, who have been born into the heavenly realm, have entered a stage of action, we have become active agents in the greatest development program ever conceived. A whole universe awaits our touch and guiding hand. "What is man, that You art mindful of him? You have put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left N-O-T-H-I-N-G that is not put under him. But we see NOT YET all things put under him. But we SEE JESUS" (Heb. 2:6-9).

Away out there in the blue is a Kingdom of life and light and love for every Son of God to explore and develop and perfect. And if ever, in all the countless ages to come, that Kingdom should become too small or overcrowded for its citizens, let us remember that we, being as He is, are therefore, one and all, the very same kind of Beings as He Who simply spoke the Word, and lo! the present worlds appeared. Being like Him, we will also be creators, one and all, and not destroyers, as in our human state. "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM." Ah, the tares, the antichrist system shall be gathered and cast into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. THEN SHALL THE RIGHTEOUS SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN IN THE KINGDOM OF THEIR FATHER. Who has ears to hear, let him hear (Mat. 13:40-43).

Chapter 5

There passes across the pages of Scripture a character who is awesome and appalling. This menacing figure is mysterious; he is hazy and he is enigmatical. Sometimes he is the shady character of a man. Again, he is an evil influence. Then again, he is an angel of light. There is actually no crystal-clear, cameo-cut presentation of him. He moves on the borderline of the natural and the supernatural. John calls him by the name "antichrist". This does not mean, of course, that only John refers to him. He has many names in Scripture, and, as most crooks have aliases, antichrist has more aliases than any person I know of. Also many figures of speech are used in Scripture to speak of him, to set him before us, and they occur again and again. One of these is found in II Thes. 2:1-10 where he is called "the man of sin" .

THE MAN OF SIN

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that lie is God. For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (II Thes. 2:3-4,7-8).

In these verses it is interesting to note that the "falling away" and the "man of sin" should be so LINKED TOGETHER! Indeed, these two realities have been with us a long, long time. The first person in recorded history to "fall away" from a place in God was Adam, we have all heard of the "fall" of Adam. Of him it is written, by one MAN SIN entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ... for by ONE MAN'S disobedience M-A-N-Y WERE MADE S-I-N-N-E-R-S" (Rom. 5:12,19). Can we not see by this that Adam was himself a MAN OF SIN. The natural mind is very dark and without understanding. Only the Holy Spirit can give men light. My earnest prayer is that the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God shall shine as a beacon light to guide our footsteps and illumine our pathway as we now go back to the shadowy mists of man's beginning on earth and trace the dilemma, mysterious and sinister, that has bedeviled his path from the dazzling glory of Eden on down to this present time.

"How you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how you are cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High. Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa. 14:12-17).

It should be obvious to every sincere student of God's Word that all truth has applications on different levels. It is my conviction that the inspired statements in the above quoted verses have applications in the spiritual realm and on the historic and prophetic planes as

well. The spiritual applications are found in the fall of man from his original position of glory and eminence and, personally, in our own lives as we repeat the very same sin that Adam committed. The historical application refers to the literal king of Babylon in the days of Isaiah who though mighty in political power and an exalted ruler among nations - would fall even as other kings of the past. The prophetic application points to the king of MYSTICAL BABYLON, the chief antichrist of the world's apostate church systems who is not recognized for what he is, but is lauded as the greatest religious leader of our day, by whom even now untold millions of Christians are being deceived. We shall not at this time pursue the historical and prophetic aspects of Isaiah's prophecy, but do want to share briefly concerning the spiritual applications.

I am well aware that the vast majority of Christians, parroting the doctrines of the religious systems, believe and teach that these verses refer to the fall of Satan from heaven away back before human history began. It should not seem strange to the man walking in the Spirit to discover that truth is always as far removed from tradition as the heavens are higher than the earth! The subject of Isaiah's prophecy is "a MAN" - NOT an angelic spirit-being! "Are you the MAN that made the earth to tremble ..."

In the beginning the Father said, "Let us make MAN in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). As we compare Scripture to Scripture we learn that there are two Adams, the first was made "in the image and likeness of God" and of the second it is written, "Who is the image of the invisible God ... the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). Kenneth Wuest gives us the meaning of the Greek for this word "brightness" as being "out-ricing". The sense of the Greek here, he writes, is that there are "rays of light coming out from the original body and forming a similar light-body themselves." What it means, literally, is that "the Son is the out-ricing of the divine glory, exhibiting IN HIMSELF the glory and the majesty of the divine Being." The Amplified Bible eloquently renders it thus: "He is the sole expression of the glory of God - the Light being, the outricing of the divine - and He is the perfect imprint and the very image of God's nature..."

When the writer of Hebrews, therefore, stated that the Son is the "brightness of the Father's glory" he meant that the Son is so indwelt by the Father that the glory of the Father's nature SHINES FORTH from within Him to the extent that the Son is the express image of His person. The evidence of this "forth shining" was manifested on the mount of transfiguration, where Jesus was transformed before His disciples, which was literally the Father shining forth from within Him. Saul of Tarsus met this same glorious One on the road to Damascus and witnessed, "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me ... and when we were fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And I said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I AM JESUS, Whom you persecute" (Acts 26:13-15). The beloved John beheld Him in spirit on Patmos and stated that His countenance was "as the sun shines in its strength." Daniel in corroboration of this statement, said, "His face was as the appearance of lightning." The prophet Ezekiel said, "The earth shined with His glory" (Eze. 43:2).

If this be the glory of the second Adam who fell not, what, O man, was the glory of that first Adam, created in the image and likeness of God, BEFORE HE FELL? Of him it is written, "How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! (How you have fallen from the heavenly realm, Adam!) How you have cut down to the ground, which did

weaken the nations! (How you have lowered into the realm of the flesh, which did sell all men into the bondage of sin and corruption and death!)”

The Bible nowhere states that Lucifer was a name of Satan. This is certain, for Isa. 14:12 is the ONLY place where the word appears in the whole Bible! That whole argument is based entirely upon unfounded assumptions and speculations. The Hebrew word for Lucifer in Isa. 14:12 is “heylel”, a word which carries the idea of BRIGHTNESS, LIGHT-BRINGER, LIGHT-BEARER, SHINING ONE, or THE MORNING STAR. It is doubtful if any scholar would insist that the word “Lucifer” is an exact translation of the Hebrew “heylel”. Indeed, notice the way it has been translated in the following: “shining star” (Moffat), “shining one” (New World), “day star” (Amplified), “star of the morning” (American Standard), “day star” (Jerusalem Bible), “day star” (RV), etc. How, then, did the name “Lucifer” come to be associated with a term meaning a star, specifically the star of the day, that is, morning?

(For more on the origin of Satan, please see:

THE SERPENT - Where Did the Devil Come From?)

“Lucifer”, instead of being the name of an angel who became the Devil, WAS THE NAME THE ANCIENTS GAVE TO THE MORNING STAR. Pliny, a noted historian of antiquity, says, “Before the sun revolves, a very large star ... when in advance and rising before dawn receives the name Lucifer, being another sun and bringing the dawn...” Lucifer, the light-bringer, is the Latin equivalent of the Greek word “phosphoros”, which is used as a title of CHRIST in II Pet. 1:19. Peter had been discussing the glorious experience that he, along with James and John, had had with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. Speaking of the voice that spoke to them there, he said, “we have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto you do well to take heed ... until the day dawn and the DAY STAR (Gr: phosphoros; L: lucifer) arise in your hearts.”

I do not have the ability to make this truth any plainer than Jesus Himself made it when He called Himself the “Phosphoros” or the “Lucifer” in Rev. 22:16, saying, “I AM the BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.” Malachi speaks of the rising of this DAY STAR when he says, “The SUN of righteousness shall ARISE with healing in His wings” (Mal. 4:2). In the messages of Christ to the Churches in the book of Revelation a special promise was always given TO HIM THAT OVERCOMES, but to the Church at Thyatira He gave a promise that is worthy to fill every page of this article. May our Lord give us the spirit of revelation to understand what He said, “And he that overcomes...I will give him THE MORNING STAR” (Rev. 2:26,28). Just think of that! Beloved reader, ponder if you will - whether we call it “Day Star”, “Morning Star”, “Sun”, or “Lucifer” - it is all the same. This “rising of the Day Star” in our hearts is the OUT-RAYING of the Christ within, for you see, HE is the Day Star!

If the One called “Day Star” is Satan, we may well ask ourselves why Peter showed such enthusiasm for its rising in our hearts! No, dear ones, the Day Star cannot be Satan at all, but is, rather, “Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27), as Paul affirmed in another place, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined IN OUR HEARTS, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But this treasure we have in earthen vessels...” (II Cor. 4:6-7). It should be obvious to every spiritual mind that what is RECOVERED through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ is WHAT ADAM HAD IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. Adam in

the image and likeness of God was so indwelt by the life and light and presence of God, so a partaker of the Christ-life, that he was himself a "Day Star" for he was a member of the Perfect Man, which IS CHRIST.

"Lucifer" means "shining one" and Daniel penned these bright words of promise: "And they that be wise SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; and they that turn many to righteousness AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER" (Dan. 12:3). It is not possible to explain these truths to human satisfaction. The things that eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man MUST BE REVEALED to us by the Spirit. You see God is light and when that God-light works its way out into our outer-man we begin to shine as the firmament. The Day Star is the OUTRAYING of the Father, the FORTHSHINING of the Son; it is being "filled with all the fullness of God", it is "Christ formed in you" and it is "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness".

No, Lucifer is not Satan. Lucifer is the Perfect Man, in truth the very image of God, the out-ricing of His life and nature. Lucifer is Christ in His fullness, the Alpha and the Omega together, the First and the Last in one, Jesus of Nazareth the Head, one body with a vast family of Sons in one glorious manifestation of Sonship. My spirit sings, Amen! Jesus declared, "You are the LIGHT of the world!" In the light of this glorious revelation of what the Day Star really is, I do not wonder that, when John saw the glory of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, he especially noted that the city had "the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious...and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 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... there shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:11, 23-25).

The day is coming when the Day Star shall have so arisen in our hearts, when the Son shall so shine forth from all those many Sons who shall have been fully brought to HIS GLORY, that all we look upon shall be flooded with heavenly light! It is from such a realm of glory and eminence and blessing that Adam fell! Since the transgression in Eden long ago, men's spirits have been fallen. They have no power but to receive light and reflections from without, but in the beginning the spirit of man was intended, not only to RECEIVE light, but to BE light and to GIVE light. This is even now a wonderful reality in Christ, for "you were sometimes darkness, but now YOU ARE LIGHT in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph.5:8). Ah, we are now light in the Lord, but the measure of light we now are is small indeed, in comparison with the light that shall be revealed at the manifestation of the Sons of God. For the sight of this glorious unveiling the whole creation stands on tip-toe, and it shall come to pass that all that is looked upon by the Sons of God will be FLOODED WITH THE LIGHT OF LIFE, for the creation shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption (Rom. 8:19-21).

Yes, the world is filled with darkness - the darkness of sin and death - but hear, O child of God, what the Lord has spoken of this great and terrible darkness in which men now grope about: "Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon you, and HIS GLORY SHALL BE SEEN UPON YOU. And the NATIONS SHALL COME TO YOUR LIGHT, and KINGS TO THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR RISING" (Isa. 60:1-3).

How great the tragedy, then, that we see in these words: "How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" Adam, walking in perfection, reflecting the glory of God, the express image of the Father, filling the earth with light and glory and righteous dominion, fell from that place in the heavenlies because of the sin of SELF, and the Day Star no longer shone from within. Adam could no longer be called the "shining one" for the light of God had departed from him, and he knew "that he was naked" (Gen. 3:7). I have stated that it was the sin of SELF that brought about the fall of Adam (who, because of the fall could no longer be called Lucifer) and we see this evidenced in the "I WILL" of Isa. 13-14: "I WILL ascend into heaven, I WILL exalt my throne above the STARS of God ... I WILL ascend ABOVE the height of the clouds; I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH." When, you ask, did Adam say these things? This was his response, in the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to the serpent's temptation: "YOU shall be as gods!" You see, Adam was not content to have God manifested THROUGH him. He desired to be a god in his own right. He was not content to be the outshining of the Father, he wanted to BE the Father! He was not content to allow the authority of God to rule and operate THROUGH him. He wanted to take the dominion himself. The temptation that the serpent offered was merely the articulation of the secret desires Of Adam's SELF NATURE: "I will be like the Most High." And the punishment portrayed in Isa. 14:15 is just another way of saying, "In the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die." Hear it! "You shall be brought down to hell (the whole dread realm of sorrow and death), to the sides of the pit (darkness, limitation)."

As we meditate upon these sobering words of judgment, we cannot imagine words that more exactly describe the tragic picture of the fall of man from his exalted position in God. Driven from the Garden, no more could Adam hear the voice of God walking in the cool of the day - he no longer possessed spiritual ears. No more could Adam eat of the blessed fruit of the tree of life - he no longer possessed a spiritual mind. No more could Adam behold the glories of that heavenly realm - he no longer possessed spiritual eyes. He who had never known anything but the rest of God was to labor and toil in the earth. The heavens were closed, the communion with the Spirit was broken, and Adam found himself stripped of the life and light and dominion that had been his - he no longer possessed a spiritual nature. What a loss! What an unspeakable loss!

When Adam fell we all fell with him. Because one man sinned, we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Can we not see by this that in the Adam-nature lies the very root of the MAN OF SIN? Truly, ADAM IS THE MAN who made the earth to tremble that shook kingdoms, and made the earth a wilderness, for it was to him and to him alone that these terrible words were spoken: "Cursed is the ground (earth realm) for your sake" (Gen. 3:17). When God formed man He placed him in Eden, a kingdom of peace and righteousness and power; but when Adam sinned, he and all his descendants were cast out into a wilderness of sin, suffering, and death. Now poor, sin-laden mankind, darkened in mind and impoverished in spirit, is forever spending money for that which is not bread and laboring for that which satisfies not. Vainly they imagine that their thirst can be satisfied by partaking of the stagnant waters of earth's fleshly cisterns. Like lost sheep they wander through the wilderness of life seeking satisfaction and finding none. Place after place they roam in their pitiful search for the fountain that satisfies, but find it they never can until at last they come to Christ. They fill the bars and nightclubs to buy wine and strong drink that can do no more than dull their senses, unleashing their passions and rage. They throng the places of pleasure in their unending longing to satisfy the thirst that is within them. They fill their lives with the vanity of things and more things, only to find that all they have attained rises to mock them in the end. In the past few years (from

1982) we have beheld the specter of the Shah of Iran - a man in possession of billions of this world's wealth, but sick unto death, homeless, without a country and hated by all except those few who thought his presence might add somewhat to their own storehouse - now dead and buried in a strange land. This is the way of the world. No satisfaction can be gained from its fountains, for all its potions are libations of death.

Yes, beloved, within the Adam-nature lies the root of the "man of sin" who brought this dread condition and we are all too aware of the inbred power of sin. "I am SOLD under sin," Paul lamented, "for by MAN came SIN," he said again. We know the meaning of this bondage and slavery, and our hearts cry out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). As it has been stated, "We literally weep these words from hearts that are weary of sin!" The spirit of Adam, the man of sin, is within every man. The unvarnished truth is that he dwells within the saved man as well as in the unconverted. Is not this what Paul meant when he wrote, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling way first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposes and exalts HIMSELF above all that is called God; so that he AS GOD sits in the temple of God, showing HIMSELF that he IS God" (II Thes. 2:3-4). This is precisely why, after the first few holy years of the early Church, there arose an apostasy, a FALLING AWAY of such a dark and dreadful nature that that Church, once glorious, actually BECAME the swaggering, filthy harlot, rich and increased with goods and having need of nothing, drunken with the blood of saints, riding in pomp and arrogance upon the back of the bestial system of this evil world.

The principle never changes! Adam "fell away" from his pure walk in the Spirit to become the "man of sin" in that dawning day. The hearts of God's people in the early Church "fell away" from the love of the truth and the simplicity that is in Christ, so that the "man of sin" became revealed in the temple of God. This has been the course in dealing after dealing, revival after revival, move of God after move of God. It sounds strange, but it is true ... and it is true in our day. God brings a people out of religious Babylon, they desire the liberty of the Spirit in their midst, they profess that they want Christ to have His Lordship in their lives, and for a while they so walk, but, err long, the unsanctified MAN OF SIN arises in their hearts, and pursuing the vision of God, following the Lamb wheresoever He goes becomes burdensome to their flesh, and someone cries out, "Give us a leader, someone who will tell us what we are supposed to do, someone who can organize this thing, and get every one involved in some kind of activity, and make the Church 'grow', someone who can make us like the other Churches around us!" And after every new moving of the Spirit of God in the earth, as the sovereign presence of the Spirit begins to ebb away, sooner or later SELF exalts HIMSELF in the temple of God, men set up a pattern of Church life and ritual very much like the old ways they were accustomed to in their former bondage, and there is a reoccurrence of THE FALL once again!

That MAN OF SIN of whom Paul spoke is none other than the old Adamic-nature, the self-life ego of this old creation sitting on the throne of a man's life, usurping the throne of HIS LORDSHIP in our own temple, setting himself up in self-will against the Father's will, making himself to be, instead of the Spirit, the owner and master and captain of our lives. We are, one and all, partakers of the same ADAMIC MIND which caused the first man to fall into the power of sin and death, and that is why, too, that even for the saint of God "there has no temptation taken you but such as is COMMON TO MAN" (I Cor. 10:13).

IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Tales of fiction and the most absurd imaginations of childhood furnish no parallel to the extreme notions of some of God's dear children who have naively swallowed the carnal interpretations of natural minded theologians of the religious systems. Untold millions of Christians have lived in great fear of the arising of the dreadful MAN OF SIN. He is supposed to be a world political leader, sinister and tyrannical, the incarnation of Evil, the very offspring of the Devil, and the ruthless enemy of the Jews. He is to be revealed after what they call the "rapture", and will make his headquarters in Jerusalem. His manifestation marks the beginning of Daniel's 70th week, according to their teaching. The Scofield Reference Bible, Blackstone and other authorities(?) in general, subscribe to this view although there is almost unlimited speculation on the details.

There are many basic fallacies in the popular interpretation of this Scripture. First of all, Paul is addressing the "brethren" rather than the Jews. The "brethren" would not be affected since they are to be "raptured", and no warning is intimated to the Jews who are supposed to be the victims of the man of sin. In II Thes. 2:7, Paul said that the mystery of iniquity "does ALREADY WORK." This statement cannot fit in with something that is to start some two thousand years later, after the "rapture". After Paul warned the brethren about the man of sin he exhorted them to STAND FAST and hold the teachings they had received (vs. 15). This would be nonsensical advice if it was not meant to be headed for two thousand years!

Oh! may God give us spiritual minds to discern Paul's SPIRITUAL MEANING as he identifies the roots of this man of sin and declares, "For the mystery of iniquity does already work" (II Thes. 2:7). Iniquity - the Greek word here means LAWLESSNESS - without law. And while it is true that we are no longer bound by the old ceremonial laws, the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which has been taken out of the way, nailed to His cross (Col. 2:14), we are not now lawless, for in the heavenly realm we have been brought into relationship with THE L-A-W OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS (Rom. 8:2). The laws of Moses were natural laws designed for natural men, but God would now bring His elect into complete harmony with HIS SPIRITUAL LAWS, so that as heavenly men we are ordered aright in His ways. Jesus touched on these higher laws of the Kingdom when He said, "Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but HE THAT DOES THE WILL of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work INIQUITY" (Mat. 7:21-23).

There are two classes of people which immediately stand out in this passage of Scripture, THOSE WHO DO THE WILL OF THE FATHER, and THOSE WHO WORK INIQUITY. I think we know, at least in a measure, what Jesus means when He speaks of those who do the will of the Father, for these are they who have been so dealt with by God's hand that they have surrendered their own will into HIS WILL. They have been taught His laws, commandments, precepts, ways, etc. by the Spirit and they delight to do them. These would say with Christ, "I am able to do nothing from Myself independently, of My own accord; but as I am taught by God and as I get His orders - because I do not seek or consult My own will I have no desire to do what is pleasing to Myself, My own aim, My own purpose but ONLY THE WILL AND THE PLEASURE OF THE FATHER" (Jn. 5:30, Amplified).

It is this other group, the “WORKERS OF INIQUITY”, that we would briefly consider. These are not the ungodly who aren’t even aware that there is a Kingdom to be received, for such, being dead in trespasses and sins, must first be awakened into spiritual life, and then they can hear the gospel of the Kingdom, and be led therein. But these are religious folk who do cry, “Lord, Lord,…” They know that HE is supposed to be LORD in their life, the message of HIS LORDSHIP has reached them, but they still continue to take their own way, rather than God’s, and try to operate in the Kingdom on their own terms. “Workers of iniquity” without law. These would work according to their own designs and programs, their own plans and objectives, and forget, forsake, cast aside, disannul the laws of God, the ways of His Spirit, the principles of His Kingdom. They boast in their works, for they have prophesied, cast out devils, held large meetings, touched many lives, and done mighty things - BUT NOT ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF GOD.

Rather than ministering by the law of the Spirit of life, much of their ministry, teaching, prophesying, praying, healings, etc. are but a cloak to conceal a servitude to the same old flesh and ego of the carnal nature as they seek a following, to build a name for themselves, and a kingdom, to usurp control over other men’s lives, and to fleece the people of their hard earned money to support their many schemes to save the nation or convert the world. They would prophesy or lay hands on anyone they think will follow after them, or fill their coffers with money, and forget the admonition to “lay hands suddenly on no man” (I Tim. 5:22). The point is clear, all our so-called spiritual works, if done outside the law of God, if done out of our own zeal and initiative, and not under the leadership and control of HIS SPIRIT, become a manifestation of lawlessness. Such can never be partakers of the Kingdom which God has held in reserve for those who become ONE IN HIS WILL.

Have you noticed, precious saint of God, that Paul does not say of the man of sin, or the man of lawlessness, that he is BORN - but that he is REVEALED. It does not say that he suddenly emerges upon the world scene, nor that he seizes political power, nor that he marshals vast armies - but simply that he is REVEALED! The whole world has been waiting for the man of sin to be revealed, and now by the grace of the Holy Spirit HE IS BEING REVEALED as the Lord makes known to His apprehended ones the awful depth of our own carnal minds, self-will, and inherent sin faithfully and relentlessly purging, refining, crushing, and stripping us of all that pertains to the self-ego of Adam’s nature.

The moment you understand this truth, you will also be able to grasp the fact that the destruction of the man of sin comes AT THE TIME HE IS REVEALED. “And THEN shall that Wicked be REVEALED, whom the Lord shall CONSUME with the spirit of His mouth, and shall DESTROY with the brightness of His coming” (II Thes. 2:8). This man of sin within will do everything in his power to conceal his identity, for his discovery is his undoing! He is hidden, not to God and Christ, but to the man who is not walking in the Spirit. As our lives become exposed to the life and light of Christ the man of sin IS REVEALED, uncovered, exposed - then to be dealt with, destroyed, consumed by the bright-burning of the arising of the Day Star within our hearts. If the cunning, craftiness, subtleness, deceitfulness, treachery, and wickedness of your own carnal mind is being uncovered, revealed, exposed by the Spirit’s dealings, then know, beloved, that THE HOUR OF HIS DESTRUCTION IS AT HAND! The order is: REVEALED ... DESTROYED! Glory!

The Psalmist alluded to this process when he penned these inspired words, “HE WEAKENED M-Y STRENGTH IN THE WAY; He shortened my days” (Ps. 102:23). It is in

bringing us to the end of ourselves, that we are prepared to rise up solely in HIS STRENGTH. It is the subduing of our will that brings us to the place where we fervently pray, "not my will, but Yours, be done." In ways which HE knows best, He strips His Sons of every prop of the flesh, removes their self-made reputations, demolishes their personal kingdoms, dries up the fountains of their own soulish activities, and tenderly and carefully draws them aside into a separated walk where He unfolds truth and works it deep into their very being. God has endured with much longsuffering all the self-seeking of carnal men, who have presumed to speak and work in His name, and while they have usurped their positions and made their claims, He has secretly and silently prepared HIS OWN LITTLE FLOCK of disciplined ones to whom He shall GIVE the Kingdom!

Call to remembrance here that the man of sin "exalts himself above all...so that he AS GOD sits IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD" (II Thes. 2:4). It is quite important that we understand just what Paul meant by his use of the term "temple of God". The popular teaching is that Paul was speaking of a future rebuilt JEWISH TEMPLE in Jerusalem. But a careful study of every reference that Paul made to the "temple of God" reveals that he NEVER applied this term to the Jewish temple! When the Bible speaks of the complete, literal temple, the word "hieron" is used. This word is used 71 times in the New Testament in reference to the temple at Jerusalem. On the other hand, the word that Paul used for temple is "naos" which refers not to the complete, literal temple, but to the Holy Place, the dwelling of God. And the dwelling place of God is now THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY.

Would God that all the saints might see that God's purpose from the foundation of the world has been the building a spiritual house, a holy temple, an eternal abiding place in which He can be at home, and in which place He and His creation can meet. It is a temple made up of living stones. Every stone is a redeemed person and every stone is a person upon whom the mighty hand of God has been laid in dealing. More than three thousand years ago Solomon built a magnificent temple of stone and precious materials. He overlaid it with gold and adorned it with silver. So wonderful was it that the Queen of Sheba stood transfixed at the sight. But the temple built by Solomon was only an ephemeral foreshadow of the living temple which Christ would build by the Spirit - a temple not made with hands.

The beautiful temple in Jerusalem was a type and shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:16-17). Praise God, we are living in the days of those good things to come, a full realization of which causes us to bow our heads in awe and wonderment. These fulfillments are so astounding that to many they will seem fantastic. As with the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, so the temple of old was made according to the pattern of the true tabernacle which Moses saw in the mount, and in spite of all teachings to the contrary, there will never be another temple built to take the place of or to serve the same ends as that which passed away with the destruction of Jerusalem. That temple was only the shadow of better things to come: merely the natural type of the spiritual reality which Moses saw in the mount and after which he patterned that shadow. So wherever we see reference to a temple of the present or future, it MUST refer to "the true sanctuary, and the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2).

Furthermore, there is only one such tabernacle, or temple. The Word nowhere tells of two, or three, or one hundred, one away off somewhere in space where Jesus is ministering, another in Jerusalem built by the Jews, and another spiritual one composed of living stones. There is but ONE temple, ONE great High Priest, and ONE royal

priesthood. So when the priests of old served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly things” (Heb. 8:5), those heavenly things were the same that Moses saw in the mount, and the same heavenly things to which we have now come. We “are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22). Let us never forget that fact!

Listen to the words of Peter as he presses this golden truth home to the understanding hearts of the saints. “If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, Who came as unto a LIVING STONE, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, YOU ALSO, as LIVELY STONES, are built up a SPIRITUAL HOUSE, AN HOLY PRIESTHOOD, TO OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 2:3-5). This superb gem of revelation vividly reveals just what the temple of God really is. Not a temple of dead stones, but of living stones, each stone a spiritually living person. Not covered with glittering gold, but overshadowed by God, Not adorned with silver, but founded on redemption. Not fashioned with glittering, precious stones, but with the eternal jewels of His own nature, glory, and power!

It cannot be temporal or transient as were the temples of Israel which were all destroyed in turn. The temple which is Christ’s body is eternal in the heavenlies. It is not earthly nor does it belong to the earthly realm, but to an heavenly. It is not of corruption, but of incorruption. Paul wrote of it thus: “The temple o God is holy, which temple YOU ARE” (I Cor. 3:17). “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?” (I Cor. 6:19). “For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them” (II Cor. 6:16).

Sometimes I have tried to get it clear in my soul that God is in me. I have meditated upon the indwelling influence and power of that pure, sweet, living Spirit of the eternal God. I have come to continually live in the conscious awareness of His presence in my spirit, in my soul, in my hands, in my body, in my person, in my being - the habitation of God, God preparing me to minister to the world, equipping my spirit, soul, and body to live forever in harmony with the mind of God. All the God-like qualities of your life are due to the fact that God by His Spirit dwells in you. You are the temple of God! That is the wonder of the indwelling Spirit. It is not a work of grace; it is God possessing you. Oh, your heart may have been as sinful as the heart of man was ever sinful. But Christ comes to your spirit. That spirit of darkness that possessed you goes and in its stead, a new spirit comes to your spirit, your spirit is quickened by HIS SPIRIT, and Christ LIVES IN YOU! The knowledge of this sublime truth will make you holy. No one can ever thus see his place in God and yet remain in carnality. Should one claim to see these truths and yet remain as he was before, then he has not seen by the Spirit, but by the natural mind only. Away with all sin and pride! Away with all self-seeking, self-indulgence, and self-promotion! Away with the MAN OF SIN who usurps the place of Christ in His temple!

If you are one of the many who believe that the temple of God is the harlot Church where the Pope reigns, or a future Jewish temple in Jerusalem, I must tell you that neither qualifies as THE TEMPLE OF GOD. That swaggering, drunken, idolatrous harlot called MYSTERY BABYLON is not the temple of God, rather, it is the great antichrist system that supplants the true temple. In the book of Revelation it is clear that the temple of God is not Mystery Babylon, neither is it the Jew’s temple, but an eternal, holy abiding place which our God is building for Himself. And let us not forget that God will never vacate this temple. God will never vacate this heavenly temple to return to a temple made with hands. To do so would be to set aside and deny the Christ of Calvary, and to render that

sacrifice of Calvary impotent and of no avail. There will never be another sacrifice for sin offered (Heb. 10:10-14). There will never again be a temple for the offering of such sacrifices!

More than 1900 years ago Jesus spoke to the Jews, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Mat. 23:38). This, if you can receive it, was a pronouncement of doom upon a city which had not received its King. He is saying that the PRESENCE, and the GLORY OF GOD had departed from Judah. God took His presence even from the Holy of Holies in the temple, leaving their house desolate to them. It seems to me that when Jesus the Christ was born that the PRESENCE of God left the dwelling place in the Holy of Holies and came upon and into the child Jesus, taking up His abiding place in flesh. All of those years the priests had been offering sacrifices to God who was not in His accustomed dwelling place, though they did not know. He had left His centuries old habitation and had moved into a body of flesh, the body of His Son. All of the world was ignorant of this for we read in Jn.1:10, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

At the crucifying of Jesus, God drew a curtain of darkness over the earth and blotted out everything from sight. Beneath the cover of that dense darkness God tore the temple veil from top to bottom so that ANY mortal man or woman could enter the Holy of Holies, the former abode of God, and plainly see and know that HE WAS NOT THERE. This Holy of Holies was empty. God was establishing something entirely new and different. Beneath the cover of darkness God ripped open that veil and let the whole world see that He had departed, leaving that room empty. It was desolate, and now this was the beginning of the end for Jerusalem. And I want to say again, in spite of what many tell us, WE WILL NEVER SEE ANOTHER TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM. Are we so foolish to even entertain the blasphemous thought that God would allow the unbelieving Jews to go back to Jerusalem to build another temple? To again institute animal sacrifices AFTER CHRIST HAS BEEN OFFERED ONCE FOR ALL? That would be the height of mockery! To think that God would again ordain Israel to shed the blood of bulls and goats, after having slain the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL can be nothing short of ludicrous.

Ah, what must have been the thoughts of the priesthood as they returned to the temple! What must have been the feelings of the priests who had remained in the temple! When the darkness was lifted and the desolation seen and they discovered they could enter into the Holy of Holies and not suffer death! Then they must have known that something catastrophic had taken place. Surely a deep, inward fear seized them. They would not dare breathe a hint of this to the people! They must hide the facts and continue on with the form of the sacrifices as though nothing had happened.

We read in Mat. 24:1-2, "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." In A.D. 70 Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple just as the Lord Jesus said, and not one stone was left upon another. History records (see Jewish Talmud & Maimonides) that Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, did with a ploughshare tear up the foundations of the temple. Josephus, the Jewish historian, states that all the rest of the city was so demolished and leveled with the ground, that they who came to see it, could not believe that it was ever inhabited. If you doubt that, look at the wailing wall in Jerusalem today. A brother who has made numerous trips to Jerusalem states that the thing that amazes him

about the wailing wall IS THE KINDS OF STONES THAT ARE IN IT. There are stones from Solomon's temple, from the temple of the days of Ezra and Haggai, and from every other period. The wall existing today is not the remains of any ONE temple, just a re-laying of rubble from them all. One stone was literally not left upon another, and the prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled!

Several years ago I read an account about plans that were under way to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, that stones had already been cut in Indiana and shipped to Israel! Here is the story as it appeared in one magazine in August, 1967: "Israeli government representatives have ordered 60,000 tons of the finest Bedford stone from Bedford, Indiana, to be used in the erection of the Jerusalem temple. Five hundred railcar loads of stone from Bedford, considered to be among the finest building stone in the world, is being freighted pre-cut to exact specifications, and one consignment has already been dispatched to Israel. Shipments are being handled by Pier 26 in New York. This report, received from authoritative sources in Sellersburg, Indiana, said that cornerstones for the Third Temple are already in Israel. Materials for this temple have been in secret preparation for seven years, and it is believed American Jews are mainly responsible for financially undergirding the whole project..."

Those who hold the rapture-seven-year-tribulation theory became quite excited! The story was carried in religious papers and magazines. A few weeks later, however, it was discovered that the story had no basis in fact. It was a hoax. A minister in New York inquired at the New York harbor about the matter. He found there was no such pier as that named, no such shipment of stone, that there was not a word of truth in the whole fabrication! The paper from which the above was taken was honest enough to admit the error and included the following letter from the Jewish Ambassador in London: "Allow me to refer to a story in a recent issue of your publication concerning the shipping of stones from the U.S.A. for the alleged purpose of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. I would like to point out that this story is an absolute and complete fabrication in all its aspects. There are no such plans for the rebuilding of the Temple, no shipments for such a purpose have been made from the U.S.A. or elsewhere, and the matter has not been considered either in secrecy (as the report alleges) or openly. In view of the fact that the Temple area is now occupied by shrines of other faiths, both Christian and Moslem, and we would never touch these, the entire story must be considered an invention."

God is not looking for a temple of stone in which to dwell. GOD HAS A TEMPLE! A temple that the hands of men did not build or plan. He not only WILL dwell in this temple, BUT HE IS NOW IN IT. Every stone of this temple is living. Every stone is speaking. Every stone is breathing the breath of eternal, incorruptible life. The living stones in this temple are the members of the body of Christ. They are Sons of God and members of HIS FAMILY. By adding them to Himself God is expanding Himself, as a man by fathering many sons expands his family and himself. By God's family of Sons the holy temple of the Lord will fill the universe with HIMSELF, for the saints are the fullness of Him who fills all in all. From this temple of Sons our God will reconcile all things unto Himself and rule the universe in righteousness for evermore.

For two thousand years it has been rising on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and the flaming words of the prophet Malachi are even now being fulfilled: "THE LORD, WHOM YOU SEEK, SHALL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE. Behold, He shall come, says the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appears? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and He shall

sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall PURIFY the sons of Levi (the royal priesthood), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Mal. 3:1-3). Praise God! He is reigning within His own, to dethrone the man of sin (self-ego, Adamic mind) which sits in the very temple of God, proclaiming HIMSELF as god, and striving for his own will and way. That SELF is being dethroned is evident as more and more of God’s elect come to that place of experience where we pray, in spirit and in truth, “not my will, but YOURS, be done.”

Chapter 6

“And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive A MARK in their right hand, or in their foreheads...” (Rev. 13:16). “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive HIS MARK in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God” (Rev. 14:9-10).

For many decades and centuries God’s people have been speculating about the strange phenomenon the Scripture calls the “mark of the beast”. There has been an immense increase in such speculation over the past decade as mankind has moved swiftly into the computer age. One recent book points out the increased international use of the number 666 in the following areas:

(1) World Bank code number is “666”. (2) Australia’s national bank cards have on them “666”. (3) New credit cards in U.S. are now being assigned the prefix “666”. (4) Central computers for Sears, Belks, Penneys, and Wards around the world have all their transactions prefixed with “666”. (5) Shoes made in European Common Market countries have stamped on inside label “666”. (6) Computers made by Lear Siegler have a seal on the side on which is stamped the number “666”. (7) IRS Instructions for Non-profit Corporation Employee 1979, W-2 Form requires the prefix “666”. (8) IRS began to require the prefix “666” on some forms; for example, W-2P, disability is 666.3; death is 666.4 etc., as early as 1977. (9) Tanks built by Chrysler Corporation ... have on their sides “666”. (10) South Central Bell’s new Telco Credit Union cards require the prefix “666”, then the person’s social security number. (11) Metric rulers distributed in 1979 throughout the U.S. have in the center the number “666”. (12) ID tags on 1979 GM cars produced in Flint, Michigan contain the number “666”. (13) United States Selective Cards have on them “666”. (14) Overseas telephone operator number from Israel is “666”. (15) Arab-owned vehicles in Jerusalem have license plates prefixed with “666”. (16) Record album released by a rock group, Black Sabbath, is named “666”. (16) The films, OMEN I and II concern themselves with a world dictator and the number “666”. (17) Some IBM supermarket equipment is prefixed with the number 3 - “666”. (18) JC Penney began prefixing account numbers in August, 1980, with “666”. (19) Master Card began using on their August, 1980, statements “66”. (20) Formula for NCR Model 304 Supermarket Computer System is 6 60 6, 11666”.

You have probably read or heard the story printed some time ago in THE SCROLL, published by Darrell Dunn Ministries, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and then picked up by numerous other papers across the country. The article stated that during the months of July and August, 1980, the Internal Revenue Service made a mistake that it wishes could be reversed. Several states such as Kentucky, Indiana, Maryland and Virginia confirmed the startling news item. It seems that scores of Social Security checks were accidentally mailed to recipients that required a special and unusual process for cashing. The process was so unusual that the banks refused to even try to cash them. Now here is what made them different: on the back of government checks is printed a paragraph with instructions and requirements for cashing. It normally states that proper identification must be shown, with the check being endorsed at the time of cashing. The instructional paragraph on these particular checks was changed to read that the party cashing the check must have the proper identification “mark in the right hand or forehead”. Without it, the check could not be cashed. The banks as well as the receivers of the checks were surprised,

confused and frustrated. In spite of all demands the banks refused to cash any of the checks. The IRS was contacted in each case. After much confusion, denials and arguing the IRS admitted the mistakes, according to the article. The checks were said to be valid Social Security checks. However, they were not usable at this time. In fact, the only problem with them, was that they were sent out too soon. The government checks, requiring a "mark" in a person's "right hand or forehead" are not to be put into use until 1984! (from 1982)

Similar experiences have allegedly been reported by various persons. One story states, "A friend of mine stopped overnight with a friend near Montgomery, Alabama. A neighbor of this friend recently received her Social Security check. The number of this check was prefaced by '666' printed in red. The authorities were contacted and informed that she did not want the check. She was informed that this was a mistake for now; but in 1982 all Social Security checks would bear this number. This is exactly in line with what our banker had told me here in Florida." Another report says, "Just recently I have received word from different sources that a lady who sent after a Visa card received one with her prefixed by the number '666'. She took the card to the bank. The banker apologized and told her that the card with that number was not supposed to be issued until the year 1982."

Naturally, most of these kinds of stories cannot be authenticated, they are generally based on "hearsay" evidence, the statements being attributed to "a neighbor of a friend of a friend" etc. etc. It should be obvious to all thinking persons, however, that with the vast increases in the use of numbers in the modern technological world of commerce, with untold millions of account numbers and computer billings and transactions monthly, someone, somewhere - in fact, a great number of someones, somewhere! - will automatically receive the number 666 as a part of their account, card, or identification numbers. This will happen as a matter of course in any numbering system. The fact is - the number 666 actually appears WITH NO GREATER FREQUENCY than the triple combination of any other number, i.e., 222, 333, 444, 555, 777, 888, or 999. In addition to this, at least some of the statements quoted on the preceding page concerning the current use of 666 simply ARE NOT TRUE. It is said, for instance, that J. C. Penney began prefixing account numbers in August, 1980, with "666". I have in my possession a copy of a bill from Sears, reproduced by the same author, showing the number 666 in their billing. It is inferred that Sears' billing system is based on the use of 666. But I maintain an account with both Sears and J. C. Penney, and upon examining recent bills from these companies, find NO SEQUENCE OF 6's ANYWHERE! It is my conviction that in many other cases the use of the number 666 has been greatly sensationalized and highly exaggerated.

It is with the prayer of the sweet singer of Israel as the earnest cry of my heart, that I share this message and challenge with God's precious apprehended ones: "Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth, and teach me" (Ps. 25:4-5).

There has been much confusion surrounding the "mark of the beast" as people cast apprehensive eyes toward various events that arise - Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, account numbers, identification numbers, "Bar Code" Marking Systems, etc. - wondering if these developments portend some future hour which shall climax with a fearful "beast" or "antichrist" demanding that they take a mark, without which they cannot buy or sell, which will forever seal their doom, or else cause them to give their life

in martyrdom as the price for remaining true to God. It is a shocking marvel to see how easily Christians are deceived by the DEAD LETTER OF THE WORD! There is nothing more carnal than the message men have preached about the antichrist and the mark of the beast. I say that it is carnal because it genders fear, not perfection. It has created a whole world full of Christians who are cowards waiting to be “raptured” off to some far-off heaven somewhere instead of becoming overcomers right here upon the earth. Above all, it stresses a natural, physical concept rather than a SPIRITUAL REALITY. There have been multitudes of people who have lived their entire lives in fear of the mark of the beast. They died believing and fearing that some day this would come. I ask, my dear brother, precious sister, what good did it do them to believe that? it did not bring life, peace, joy, love, victory, overcoming power, nor any of the things men so desperately need. Without any hesitation whatever I must reiterate that this kind of literal interpretation and fear tactics HAS NOT ADDED ANYTHING TO OUR SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING, but has rather caused God’s people to continue groping about in the dense darkness of spiritual ignorance and superstition.

It seems to me that the key to the thirteenth chapter of Revelation is found in verse nine, “If any man have an ear to hear, let him hear.” Throughout the Scriptures these words always accompany statements of profound SPIRITUAL significance. They are found first in the words of Jesus Himself when declaring the mission of His forerunner, John the Baptist: “And if you will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. HE THAT HAS EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR” (Mat. 11:14-15). If some of our writers of prophetic books had had “ears to hear” the revelatory words of Jesus, they would not have been so ready to tell us that the actual Elijah must in fact come again to the earth and be one of the Two Witnesses of Rev. 11. What the Lord is saying is that Elijah has ALREADY COME, and the prophecy in Mal. 4:5 is fulfilled in John the Baptist who came in the SPIRIT AND POWER of Elijah. The Jews did not recognize the fulfillment of the prophecy in John the Baptist because they did not have “ears to hear”. They were unable, by reason of the hardness of their hearts, and their literal letter-of-the-Word mentality, to perceive the spiritual in the external.

These words abound in the ministry of Christ who again and again warned the Jews that they could not understand because they did not have ears to hear! In Mat. 13:9 Jesus warns that the parable of the sower (and all other Kingdom Parables) could not be understood except by those with ears to hear - spiritual ears. “Why speaks He in parables?” asked the disciples. “Because,” replied the Lord, “it is GIVEN UNTO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, but to them it is NOT GIVEN.” Can we not see by this that the beloved John is telling us in chapter thirteen of Revelation that the astonishing visions described there are the unfolding of deep SPIRITUAL MYSTERIES? Few of those who write sensational books about a coming world government with its superman dictator, the new money system, lasered numbers on the forehead and hand, etc. heed this principle! My sincere prayer is that the spirit of wisdom and revelation from on High shall so quicken our pure minds until we see clearly and unmistakably that what is here disclosed is not to be understood in any carnal or earthly sense, but has a deep spiritual meaning ascertainable only to those who wait upon the Lord and walk in the Spirit.

If the beast and his mark are to be fulfilled LITERALLY then one has but to read the words with natural eyes, understand them with a natural mind, interpret them with natural reason, and watch the panorama of world events to see the natural fulfillment. But if the message is deeply SPIRITUAL, it will be understood only by “He that has an ear to hear”!

And so it is with this truth in mind that we have sought the Lord for an understanding of the SPIRITUAL NATURE of the MARK, and would share with you that which has now been quickened to us. May the Spirit make it personally real to every heart.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MARK

The mark of the beast made its first appearance in the Garden of Eden. Our eyes behold its presence with the understanding of these words: "Now the serpent was more subtle than ANY BEAST of the field which the Lord God had made" (Gen. 3:1). The picture here goes beyond a slithering snake in the grass. Even the dullest and most unimaginative mind catches the thought that the true character involved here is "that old serpent, the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole earth" (Rev. 12:9). This problem of a mark by the beast is something man has been faced with ever since that fateful day in Eden. In Gen. 2:15 we read how "the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to KEEP (guard) it." These words tell us that there was not only a beast (the serpent) in the earth in that hour, but there was a beastly spirit and a bestial system already waiting to place its mark upon Adam and his Garden. Of all the bestial kingdom "the serpent was more subtle than any BEAST of the field which the Lord God had made."

The serpent was called a BEAST, and was not dwelling alone, but was the most subtle of the whole bestial realm, the great dictator of the bestial kingdom, and the mind of the serpent IS THE MIND OF THE BESTIAL SYSTEM. In the fall of man the mind was involved, for there was an appeal made to the mind, to be as gods KNOWING good and evil. Likewise the hand was involved, for it speaks of the outer action of participation as they reached forth and TOOK of the forbidden fruit. In Revelation, again, the hand and the mind are brought under the mark of the beast - under the influence that brings forth an expression of the bestial character, the image of the bestial system. Adam, made in the image and likeness of God, exchanged that blessed realm for that which pertains to the bestial kingdom. And man in the natural today is most bestial except when he is controlled by the Spirit of God. Man, in his imagery, is corrupted into the similitude of beasts, believes he evolved as such, therefore the manifestation of his character is rooted in the nature of the bestial realm.

The thing of greatest importance here is the awful fact that, before ever man's HAND was extended and the transgression committed, that old serpent, the king of the bestial system, the devil, had IMPARTED HIS MIND TO THEM. The MARK OF THE BEAST was in their hearts, in their MINDS, and in their FOREHEADS, and what they did afterward was the MARK OF THE BEAST in their HANDS. It is not difficult to see that the things which men are doing today and have done in ages past are but the MANIFESTATION of that which is in their minds, for, "As a man THINKS in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7) and "a good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things" (Mat. 12:34-35). The mark of the beast that appears IN THE HAND (outward actions) is the direct result of the mark of the beast IN THE FOREHEAD (mind, nature). This is the mind that inspires the ever increasing confusion and violence that is running rampant among all nations.

From the day of the fall in Eden even unto this hour man has borne the imprint of the satanic mind, the nature of the serpent, the MARK OF THE BEAST. That mark IN HIS MIND has been manifested in everything he has set HIS HAND to do. The whole bestial

system is one that has filled the world with wars and rumors of wars, greed, hatred, bloodshed, and oppression. Out from this bestial nature has emerged every imaginable devilish perversion. And as a result of the bestial system the mind of Christ has been replaced with the carnal mind to bring about a form of godliness devoid of power or reality, but filled with empty ritual and ceremony, static creeds and doctrines, and a confusion of human ideas and methods that stagger the imagination.

Revelation, chapters thirteen and fourteen belong to each other and should be read and studied together. The neglect of this principle has caused much mischief in modern times. If many present day writers and preachers had set THE MARK OF THE BEAST of chapter thirteen against THE MARK OF THE FATHER'S NAME on the foreheads of the saints described in chapter fourteen, we would have had less of frightful and ghastly events so confidently foretold in books and pamphlets so readily devoured by precious Christians highly susceptible to prophetic sensationalism.

It must be obvious to every spiritual mind that the writing of the Father's name in the foreheads of those standing on mount Zion is a SPIRITUAL WORK. Zion represents the very highest position attainable in the Kingdom of God. From the literal mount Zion David and the kings of Israel reigned gloriously, and the Ark of God rested there all through the reign of David and for several years afterward until the temple was completed by Solomon. Mount Zion, the hill of David the king, was the highest pinnacle of glory attainable in Israel. But that Zion was only a faint shadow of THE ZION TO WHICH WE ARE COME (Heb. 12:18-22). David was king over natural Israel. Christ is King over spiritual Israel. David dwelt on the natural mount Zion. Therefore Christ dwells upon the spiritual mount Zion, and this spiritual mount Zion is composed of those who reach the very highest pinnacle attainable in the Kingdom of God: those who, like king David of old are "a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfill ALL MY WILL" (Acts 13:22). This Mount Zion Company is the ruling class, the overcomers of whom it is written: "To him that overcomes 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). These are the Kings and Priests unto God, after the order of Melchizedek, those who have attained to the highest position of honor and might and true greatness in the Kingdom of God. It comprises those who are such as have gone all the way with their Lord and shall now rule with Christ upon His throne over God's infinite realm for evermore.

These are they of whom it is written, "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having HIS FATHER'S NAME WRITTEN IN THEIR FOREHEADS," in distinction to those who, in Rev. 13:16 take "the mark of the beast". The mark of the beast denotes that those who bear it have been filled with the nature, spirit, ways, doctrines and idolatry of the bestial system. Therefore the mark which these 144,000 bear denotes that they are not defiled with the bestial spirit and shame and are in every respect cleansed, perfected, and made partakers of the Father's nature. I have no ability to believe that the Father's name in the forehead is anything more or less than the MIND OF CHRIST. Though we read many explanations of the mark of the beast, it is my conviction that it would be safe to lay them all aside in the understanding that the MARK OF THE BEAST is nothing more or less than the mind of the serpent in man. The carnal mind, which is everywhere evident in the religious systems, as in government, commerce, and every other institution spawned by man, is the enemy of God and had its beginning with the serpent in Eden. Neither the divine mark nor the devil's mark can be a visible thing. Both are symbols bespeaking a nature

POSSESSING THE MIND and in turn MANIFESTING THROUGH THE OUTWARD ACTIONS of men.

SEALED IN THE FOREHEAD

Another wonderful picture of the working of God in His elect is found in Rev. 7:1-4. "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 GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS."

A seal is defined to be an instrument of sealing, that which "is used by individuals, corporate bodies, and states, for making impressions on wax, upon instruments of writing, as an evidence of their authenticity." The original word in this text is defined, "A seal, i.e., a signet ring; a mark, stamp, badge; a token, a pledge." The verb signifies: "To secure to any one, to make sure; to set a seal or mark upon anything in token of its being genuine or approved; to attest, to confirm, to establish, to distinguish by a mark." With these definitions as a basis, we compare Gen. 17:11 with Rom. 4:11, and Rev. 7:3 with Eze. 9:4, and find that the words "token", "sign", "seal", and "mark" ARE USED IN THE BIBLE AS SYNONYMOUS TERMS. Thus, the "SEAL of God in the forehead", the "Father's NAME in the forehead", and the "MARK of the beast in the forehead" all indicate the same principle at work. In this case it is not some literal mark to be made in the flesh, but a state of being in mind and nature which serves as a "mark of distinction" between those who are HIS and those who are of the beastly system of the world.

The symbolism of the sealing is taken from Ezekiel, chapter nine. Six "men", agents of God's judgment against the rebellious city of Jerusalem, are seen with slaughter weapons in their hands, but amongst them there appears a seventh figure, clothed with linen, having a writer's inkhorn at his side. This man is ordered to go through the doomed city first, and set a MARK ON THE FOREHEAD of all who SIGH AND CRY for the abominations done in Jerusalem. History records that when, shortly after this vision, Jerusalem was in fact destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, men like Jeremiah and Baruch (Jer. 45) and Ebed-melech the Ethiopian (the king's servant) were preserved (Jer. 39:15-18). Indeed, in the case of Jeremiah himself, special charge was given concerning him that he was not to be molested in any way, but was to have liberty to go or to come as he pleased (Jer. 39:11-14). Many of the poor of the land, nameless people whose poverty was the mark of their election, were likewise spared in the overthrow.

As the man with the inkhorn symbolized the care of God for His elect, and as the mark he made on the foreheads of these faithful ones WAS AS SYMBOLIC AS HIS OWN INKHORN, so the sealing of the elect in their foreheads in Revelation, chapter seven is symbolic and spiritual, and not literal and physical. How we praise God that there is a remnant, a handful of men and women in the earth today who are aware of the dreadful sham and idolatry of the modern Church systems, and these are not, as some suppose, just critics, but these are SIGHING AND CRYING CONTINUALLY BEFORE GOD because of the conditions they see. Those who are sighing and crying are giving themselves to EARNEST PRAYER because of the situation in the Church systems and these will be found to be the people who have the MIND OF CHRIST in the end. The faithful cry of these is, "YOUR Kingdom come, YOUR WILL be done in earth, as it is in

heaven!" A separation has already been made in mind and heart, separation UNTO GOD, AND THESE UNDERSTAND THAT ANY EFFORT TO BUILD UP, STRENGTHEN, REJUVENATE, RENEW, OR PRESERVE THE PRESENT SYSTEM is to wander further into spiritual Babylon.

Ah, the sealed ones know that this is not the time to be singing, "It is a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle," rather this is a time for sighing and crying for all the abominations about us. The man with the inkhorn was to put a mark ON THE FOREHEAD of the men who sighed and cried for the abominations that prevailed in the temple of that day. And come the day of judgment, everything was destroyed utterly EXCEPT THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAD THE MARK OF GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS. The whole system was demolished! Oh, how dreadful it is that so few today have any thought for the mind of Christ or the perfect will of God or conformation to the image of God! Christians now as always would willingly do GOD'S WILL if they did not have to give up their OWN, and they would willingly put on the mind of Christ if it did not mean that their own carnal mind with all its fleshly purposes would have to be crucified! But praise God, HE has a people, those marked by HIS SPIRIT, a little flock, for those who sit with Christ to reign in the Kingdom of God are to be a very small company, but be very sure of this, they will ALL have died to the carnal mind and will have partaken of the MIND OF CHRIST.

THE SEAL OF OWNERSHIP

The term SEAL is used both of the engraved instrument which serves as a mold to form the impression, as well as of the image or mark left upon the clay or other material receiving the impress. Some of the most ancient seals were small cylinders through which a hole was drilled the entire length so that a ligament or cord might be passed through. This cord was then knotted to form a loop to be worn about the neck or arm for safekeeping. When the seal was put to use, the cord was held firmly at either end of the cylinder as it was pressed into wet clay or wax and rolled like a tiny rolling pin. In His amazing conversation with Job, God speaks of the movement of the earth upon its axis, using the example of the rolling of a cylindrical seal on clay to describe it. He says of the earth, "It is turned like clay to the seal" (Job. 38:14).

The seal was used throughout the Near East to secure goods against any tampering. Such a seal not only secured one's property against tampering, but DECLARED ONE'S OWNERSHIP. Considerable light can be thrown upon the subject of the sealing of God's elect and of the mark of the beast by consulting Roman history for the origin of such expressions. The many conquests of the Roman armies furnished so many prisoners that they became a glut in the slave-markets of the world, and were so numerous that in many places they outnumbered the Roman citizens ten to one. In the first century before Christ it is said that some Sicilian estates were worked by as many as twenty thousand slaves. That each owner might know his own, the poor creatures were BRANDED LIKE CATTLE.

It was customary among the ancients for servants to receive the mark of their masters, and soldiers of their general, and those who were devoted to any particular deity, of the particular deity to whom they were devoted. These marks were usually impressed on their right hand or on their foreheads and consisted of some hieroglyphic characters, or of the name expressed in letters, or of the name disguised in numerical letters according to the fancy of the imposer. Even today, if you have a title to an automobile or to a piece of

real estate, you want a seal on the document to assure you that the property is actually yours and that you may rely on receiving its benefits.

Ah, precious friend of mine, have you wondered if you are truly HIS, if He will really keep and preserve you, whether He will perfect that which concerns you, or whether He shall bring you all the way in to the fullness of Sonship to God? See with what holy assurance the heart is filled when it casts its anchor in such a certain rock as this: "Grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of God whereby YOU ARE SEALED unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). Again, "Now He which established us with you in Christ, and has anointed us IS GOD; who has also SEALED US, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:21-22). The time this sealing of the elect of God takes place is thus described: "AFTER that you believed, you were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13).

God's seal is none other than the Holy Spirit, declaring that we BELONG TO GOD, and sealing up our lives UNTO HIS PURPOSES. And I dare say, while we may not understand just what are all God's plans and purposes for us, whatever GOD has in mind, that is what we desire. Not just what some preacher says it is, nor what some theology teaches about it, but what God has marked out for us - we would have an eye that is SINGLE UNTO HIM. Those who actively yield to HIS SPIRIT, thus submit to HIS SEAL, and by continual surrender to HIS WILL are guaranteed that all He has chosen them for SHALL SURELY BE FULFILLED!

THE SEAL OF SAFE DELIVERY

As previously pointed out, very often the ancients would place their seals upon their possessions to guarantee correct and safe delivery. A man might purchase jugs, pitchers, and plates of clay in the house of a potter on a custom-design basis. The potter would be entrusted with the particular seal designed for embossing soft clay. As each item was finished, while the clay was still wet, the seal of the owner was impressed into its handle or base. The seal was the guarantee that proper delivery would be made. This, then, is the seal of SAFE DELIVERY!

How beautifully this corresponds with the thought expressed by Paul in Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby Y-O-U A-R-E S-E-A-L-E-D UNTO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION." Sealed - unto redemption! Oh yes, it is true that we have been redeemed, but, like salvation, redemption is no single act or experience, as one has stated, it is "a crisis leading to a process" as we are progressively "loosed away" from one realm to another, from one mind to another, from one nature to another, from one state of being to another. Truly we are being freed from the dominion of the carnal mind, from a world of self-assertive religious activities, and from the power of sin and death, first in spirit, working outward into the emotions and will of the soul life, and finally in body by the mighty working of Him who is even able to change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body (Phil. 3:21).

The prefix "re" in "re-deem" means "again" (as in re-copy, re-wash, re-write). The main part of the word is from a root that means "to purchase, to buy". So an article that is left in a pawn shop can be redeemed by paying the money that was borrowed, plus the interest charges. The word is also used when a company finds it possible to call some of its indebtedness, pay the borrower and cancel the obligation: this is the redemption of bond issues. Spiritually, it means a RETURN to that place, wisdom, life, glory and dominion

which we once had in God before the ages were framed and this present cosmos, world arrangement began.

The English word “redeem” translates three Greek words, each of which has a rich meaning in connection with our salvation. One Greek word, “apolutro”, means “to loose, untie, deliver”. Another Greek word used in the Scriptures and translated by our word “redemption” is “agorazo”, the common Greek word for marketing. The noun “agora” means the market place, and the verb “agorazo” means to buy. In the New Testament the word is applied to souls. This would be readily understood in the ancient world, since there was a slave market that operated almost every day, and the traffic in slaves was very great. That Christ should have walked into the slave market and purchased, or redeemed, men who were slaves of the realm of carnality, sin, and death, would have been easily comprehended.

There is another Greek word which gives additional light on the thought of redemption. The word is “exagorazo”, (“agorazo” with the prefix “ex”) and carries the idea of buying something OUT of the market. There is a difference between a purchase that is for resale and a purchase that is made in order to take an article out of commerce. For example, a dealer in rare books and works of art might purchase an item at a London or New York sale, and hold it for resale to a customer. Some pictures, books, manuscripts, and other art objects are bought and sold again and again. But finally, when a great work of art is bought by a museum, it is thus TAKEN OUT OF CIRCULATION PERMANENTLY. An example of this is a Shakespeare folio which was bought and sold in several sales until it came to rest in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Under the terms of the trust it is to remain there permanently, and can never be put on the market again. Praise God, the Lord bought us in order that He might forever TAKE US OUT OF THE MARKET OF THE BESTIAL SYSTEM OF THIS WORLD!

This can mean nothing less than a total transformation of being. And a full and complete provision has been made! “According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME before Him in love ... in whom we have REDEMPTION” (Eph. 1:4,7). The apostle Paul, speaking of redemption, declares that the elect were chosen in eternity past in Christ Jesus, and then states some reasons for the divine choosing. The first is that the elect should be “holy”. The Greek word translated “holy” is “hagios” meaning “that which is SET APART, SEPARATED UNTO”. Therefore Paul is saying that the saints were “chosen” by the Father that they should be “set apart, separated UNTO HIMSELF and for His purposes”. God’s elect are never separated unto their own purposes nor for their own benefit, but for the purposes of God and for the benefit of His creation. God told Jacob why he was being separated in these words: “And in you, and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 28:14). Separated to BE A BLESSING! The Lord later made this covenant with the children of Israel: “If you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a PECULIAR TREASURE UNTO ME above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and you shall be unto Me A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, and an holy nation” (Ex. 19:5-6). Separated - to BE A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS! Because “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1), God has purposed to raise up a royal priesthood, the FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS REDEMPTION, unto whom is committed the ministry of reconciliation that all the peoples of earth may be reconciled unto God and blessed.

Holy and without blame! Not only did the Father choose which persons He would make holy, separated as a firstfruit of redemption, but He also chose whom He would cause to be “without blame before Him”. A better translation of the Greek word here rendered “without blame” (amomos) is “without blemish”. Utterly amazing! Vile sinners such as we - assured that it is the unfailing purpose of God in election that we should be WITHOUT BLEMISH before the Father! Such a condition is first stated to be true in Christ Himself who “through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot (blemish) to God” (Heb. 9:14), and we are thus redeemed by “the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish” (1 Pet. 1:19).

In Eph. 5:25-27 Paul uses this term again, and shows how Christ ministers to the chosen ones to bring about this condition in them. “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.” There is much difference between a spot and a wrinkle. A spot is “a stain coming from defilement,” indicating an eruption of corruption in one’s life. A wrinkle is “a fold, a drawing together”. A wrinkle is a blemish, as much as a spot, though there may be no defilement with it. A garment may be spotlessly white with no stain upon it, but if it is wrinkled, its beauty and usefulness are marred. A wrinkle is a blemish revealed UNDER PRESSURE, bespeaking a weakness, such as discouragement, distraction, confusion, immaturity etc. - not defilement, no sin or wickedness involved, but marring the beauty and usefulness, nonetheless. God’s firstfruit company shall not have even a wrinkle! Our precious Lord is going to cleanse the members of His body with the washing of water by the Word and make them whiter than snow. The hand of the Father will smooth out every wrinkle BY THE HEAT AND PRESSURE OF HIS DEALING HAND, until the body of Christ appears in all the beauty and glory of CHRIST’S COMELINESS.

That our Father shall bring this work to its final consummation is certain! Ah, under the searchlight of His holy presence, have you beheld your own weakness and unworthiness, despairing that your life could ever be conformed to the image of God’s dear Son? True, in your own strength such a feat can never be performed, but praise God! the word is sure: “HE HAS CHOSEN US ... THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM!” Chosen - to be without blemish! Wonder of wonders! that there should be a people, a firstfruit, a royal priesthood, a seed of blessing, many Sons who are AS FREE OF BLEMISH as is the precious Lamb of God Himself! Dear chosen one of God, dare you believe it? claim it? Ah! If this were not the case, WHY would God be dealing so severely in your life? How sure is the Father’s purpose! How powerful the cleansing of the blood of Christ! How thorough the Father’s dealings! How faithful the Holy Spirit’s teaching! How mighty His inworkings! This is the guarantee that “He is able to keep you from falling, and to PRESENT YOU FAULTLESS before the presence of His glory” (Jude 24). Praise His wonderful name, HE I-S A-B-L-E, and He WILL DO IT! He who has called us to virtue and glory has also SEALED US with THE SEAL OF SAFE DELIVERY! Whatever it takes - HE will get us there! His seal is upon those who are His, and His hand will not be lifted from us until we are safely delivered from every vestige of the beastly nature, transformed into the likeness of the Master who has purchased us UNTO HIMSELF FOREVER.

CHRIST’S PERSONALITY IMPRESSED ON US

The further we go with this thought the clearer our understanding becomes. God has PUT A MARK UPON US, we belong to HIM, and as one friend once said, when God puts His great big hand upon us, we are never the same again! And the way God leads His marked ones is often very strange to those about them. It is indeed strange to the natural mind to see some of these marked ones following their God-ordained pathways. In our natural thinking we would have such to be high and holy, pure and perfect, wise and powerful, far above all other people, for they are the MARKED ONES OF GOD, marked out to know the secret of His will, and marked out to be the rulers in His Kingdom. But as these marked out ones receive the seal of God in their foreheads they enter into a time of testing, a time of dealing, a time of training, a time of trial, a time of refining, a time of proving. Therefore, immediately upon their sealing, the four angels standing on the four corners of the earth and HOLDING THE WINDS OF ADVERSITY are commissioned to release those winds, the same winds that bring judgment to the earth realm bring testing and proving to God's marked ones!

God is taking this people to mount Zion to be formed into His government, and through that government all things shall be restored into God. These, therefore, must experientially come to know HIS LORDSHIP in all things, for it is HIS LORDSHIP THROUGH THEM that constitutes the government of God for the ages to come.

The particular Greek word which has been translated "mark" in Rev. 13:16 is "charagma", translated eight times as MARK and once as GRAVEN. It is interesting to note that this Greek word for MARK is from the same root from which we get the Greek word CHARAKTER and our English word CHARACTER. In Heb. 1:3 this word is translated as "express image". "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the EXPRESS IMAGE of His person..." The EXPRESS IMAGE of God is, therefore, the manifestation of God as revealed through His and our CHARACTER. The MARK speaks of that handiwork and the inward thinking which brings forth an expression of character in line with the very source from which the mark comes. Either we will find ourselves expressing the CHARACTER OF GOD, or else the CHARACTER OF THE BEAST. It speaks not, dear ones, of a visible tattoo or brand, nor any outward form which could be pretended for a time, but it refers to that INNER QUALITY OF HIS CHARACTER WHICH IS BEING DEVELOPED IN US, and which in due time shall be revealed.

The MARK OF THE BEAST is the direct counterpart to the MARK OF GOD, being an expression, reproduction, yea, the very IMPRINT of the nature and character of the bestial system of this world, BABYLON IN ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS AND MEANINGS, be it political, economical, or religious. The mark of God signifies the mind, nature, and character of God established within and without by the Holy Spirit, the process daily taking place. But let me assure you, the members of Babylon are also indelibly marked! The character of that system is so deep-rooted and deep-seated, written right in the forehead of all Christendom, that they cannot even THINK, much less ACT, except in terms of this world's political systems and parties, established orders, denominations, non-profit corporations, boards, creeds, church buildings, programs, activities, seminaries, rituals, sacraments, etc. etc. Often you can discern what particular denomination or movement they belong to by the style of their church building, the way they dress, how they pronounce certain words, how they pray, preach, or worship, or even the way they carry their Bible! They bear the MARK!

I want to know Christ, not antichrist. I want to know not just about Him, I want to intimately and fully know HIM. I want the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and make

them real to me. Therefore I am more interested in the MARK OF GOD than I am in anything which belongs to the bestial system, since to bear the mark of God insures one against coming under the other (Rev. 13:8). Now Jesus came to IMPRINT OR IMPRESS H-I-M-S-E-L-F UPON MEN. Even from the time of His first appearance He sought to have HIS CHARACTER impressed upon those who followed Him. Jesus came not to just be a great teacher or prophet. He came not just to forgive sins and take men to heaven. He came to IMPRINT OR IMPRESS HIS CHARACTER upon us. On God's side He places His mark upon us, but on our side we are exhorted to "PUT ON the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 13:14).

Can we not see by this that God is acting to SUPERIMPOSE Himself upon us, completely covering us, by the instrumentality of Jesus Christ. God will completely cover us that only HE can be seen. It shall be God all-in-all in everything. Everywhere we look or go we will see, hear, and feel only God. Those around us will no longer be able to see us, but they shall see only God in us and upon us by the instrumentality of Jesus Christ.

Both the mark of God and the mark of the beast are SUPERIMPOSED upon men. The word superimpose carries with it the idea of the fusion of metals, or even unrelated elements. In some instances in this fusion, there is no definite line of demarcation left, for both the elements have completely mixed, while in other instances the fusion is there, but the elements do not mix. Today we have various alloys which are metals that have actually mixed together. But this does not always happen. We have an illustration of it in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. Different elements were brought together but there was no fusion. The planks in it were all covered with gold, as was the Ark of the Covenant etc. The gold was superimposed upon the wood until only gold could be seen. The wood was completely hidden but was not mixed with the gold.

This hiding is what we are being brought to by the seal of God, but in the end there will be the TOTAL FUSION OF GOD AND MAN. We are from both God and man, our spirit has come from the bosom of the Father, but body and soul from Adam. We are a combination of God and man. We are men with God superimposed upon us through Jesus Christ. We have not yet experienced this in its fullness, for when we do we shall have disappeared from sight and only God through Jesus Christ will ever be seen. "He that is JOINED TO THE LORD IS ONE SPIRIT" (I Cor. 6:17). All through the ages God will so combine Himself with us through Jesus Christ that we will be ONE with Him, but only HE shall be seen.

God superimposed Himself upon us by measure when He first sealed us with the "earnest", which is the "firstfruits" of the Spirit. "While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell ON all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44). Here the word ON denotes SUPERIMPOSITION, upon, over. While Peter spoke the word, the Holy Spirit SUPERIMPOSED THE CHRIST upon all which heard the word, and now we continue on from glory to glory. Praise God, to some degree God has STAMPED THE IMPRINT OF HIMSELF upon us! Daily growing in grace, knowledge, wisdom, love, peace, righteousness and power we are constantly being changed by the Spirit to bear in our lives the mark, the image, the character of God. The end of the work is that "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (I Jn. 3:2). The deep cry of our heart is so wonderfully expressed in the words of the hymn:

"Oh to be like You, Oh to be like You,
Precious Redeemer, Pure as You are;

Come in Your sweetness, Come in Your fullness,
STAMP Your own image deep on my heart!"

Chapter 7

“And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive A MARK in their right hand, or in their foreheads...” (Rev. 13:16). “-if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive HIS MARK in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God” (Rev. 14:9-10).

“And I saw another angel ... 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. 7:2-3).

For many decades and centuries God’s people have been speculating about the strange phenomenon the Scripture calls the “mark of the beast”. During the depression years when the NRA (National Recovery Administration) was formed, the ministers were preaching that the NRA was the mark of the beast. During World War II there was a myriad of ideas floating around about the “mark” including the notion that it was the swastika, all of which have proven false. There has been an immense increase in such speculation over the past decade as mankind has moved swiftly into the computer age.

The following article appeared in The Sunday Post, March 1981, Glasgow, Scotland: “Little black lines and numbers are now on over 4000 items in shops and supermarkets. It’s the beginning of a new method of shopping, which will soon be familiar to every housewife in the land. Here’s how the system works. The lines are known as ‘bar code’. When a customer reaches the cash register, the assistant will no longer ring up the price on the item’s label - for there won’t be a price on the label! Instead, she’ll draw a light-sensitive pen across the bar code. The code is automatically sent into a computer, which recognizes the pattern of bars, and identifies the purchase - a 4 oz. tin of beans, or whatever. The computer then flashes the price, which is stored in its memory, on to the cash register display, and the cash register gives a printed receipt, listing each item and its price, which the customer can still check. It means each item won’t be individually priced, though the price will be clearly displayed on the shelf. The numbers beside the bar code give the country of manufacture, maker’s name, and the particular item - e.g., and 8 oz. can of peas, a 1 liter bottle of squash, & etc. In short, the bar code clearly identifies each product for the computer - and the computer does the rest. Advantages are, it speeds up check-out queues, rules out mistakes at the check-out, tells a shop what it’s selling and what it’s running out of, and saves individual pricing. At the moment, only six shops in Britain are actually using the system, all in England. But within a few years it’s likely every large store in the country will have changed to the new system.”

The institution of the new Universal Product Code explained above (now in use here in Crystal River, Florida and throughout the U.S.) has given rise to a whole new rash of speculations about its probable connection with the long-awaited mark of the beast. Several years ago the following article appeared in Moody Magazine: “Dr. Handrick Eldeman, Chief Analyst of the Common Market Confederacy, announced today from Brussels that a computerized restoration plan is already under way in the aftermath of world chaos. In the Crises meeting which brought together the Scientists, Advisors and C.M.C. leaders, Dr. Eldeman unveiled the ‘Beast’. The ‘Beast’ is a gigantic computer that takes up three floors at the Administration Building of Market Headquarters. This

'monster' is a self-programming unit that has over one hundred sensing input sources. Computer experts have been working on a plan to computerize all world trade. This master plan involves a digital numbering system for every human being on earth. The computer would assign each citizen of the world a number to use for all buying and selling to avoid the problems of ordinary credit cards. The number would be invisibly 'laser-tattooed' on the forehead or back of the hand. It would provide a walking credit card system. The number would show up under infra-red scanners to be placed at all check-out counters and places of business. Dr. Eldeman suggested that, by using three six-digital units, the entire world could be assigned a working credit card number. Other Common Market officials believe that the present chaos and disorder ... points to the need of a world currency - perhaps an international mark that would do away with all currency and coin. Instead, credit notes would be exchanged through a World Bank clearing center. NO MEMBER COULD BUY OR SELL without having an assignment of a digital mark. Market directors are now convinced that world order depends on allegiance to an international program of peace and politics, as well as a new world trade and numbering system. One man could have at his finger tips the number of any man on earth. It could provide the most powerful lever known to mankind. He could have a solution bank for world problems. It could be a tool for peace, or a dictator's weapon. When one of the Market leaders was asked what would happen if any person objected to the system and refused to cooperate, he replied rather pointedly, 'We would have to use force to make him conform to requirements.' "

I do not need to tell you that all the "literalists" and all the so-called "fundamentalists" have had a hey-day with reports such as the one quoted above. It is interesting to note, however, that the computer named "the Beast", occupying three floors of the Common Market Administration Building in Brussels, Belgium, and so fervently believed by many to have a direct connection with the "beast" of Revelation chapter thirteen, has now been out-dated and superseded by the largest computer complex in the world in the Monet Building in LUXEMBOURG! And I do not hesitate to tell you, dear ones, that all who presume to predict or speculate about the mark of the beast on the basis of the ever changing systems, inventions, and institutions of men and governments are destined to be proven wrong almost before the ink is dry on their paper.

But what is the mark of the beast? Some thought it was the NRA, others that it was the swastika. Some claim that it is the social security number, others that it is the universal product code, still others that it is a yet future identification number to be assigned by the antichrist which will eventually be invisibly "laser-tattooed" on the forehead or hand and read by a "laser tattoo gun". I must speak plainly and tell you, beloved, that all these are mere GUESSES - and wrong ones, at that! There is really no limit to the credulity of the Christian public in its appetite for prophetic sensationalism. How fascinating to think of the mark of the beast being traced by laser beam on the foreheads of every living soul on the face of the earth! This is much more exciting, and far more likely to be believed by the carnal-minded and sensation-hungry evangelical world than the plain truth that the book of Revelation is a SPIRITUAL BOOK, a book of SYMBOLS - and the true mark of the beast, SYMBOLIZED by the number 666 on the forehead and hand, GOES MUCH DEEPER THAN SKIN AND FLESH and is a state of being - just as the 144,000 being stamped on their foreheads with the SEAL OF GOD and the FATHER'S NAME goes much deeper than a mere inscription of Hebrew characters upon the fleshly forehead, bespeaking rather their taking upon them the FATHER'S MIND AND NATURE.

For many generations Christians have been bottle-fed, spoon-fed, and stuffed and crammed from the cradle to the grave with the fantasy that a monstrous man is due to arise who will rule the earth and compel everyone under pain of losing their livelihood or their life to wear his distinctive mark branded, etched, or burned literally upon the flesh - so that even good men, Spirit-filled men, and gifted men, with the profuse and generous help of the respected but unenlightened "scholars" of the Babylonian church systems, are abjectly submitting to or belligerently defending what they consider is holy and established truth. No one can dispute what I now say when I declare that all these "literal" explanations of a one-man-super-deceiver-antichrist "literally" branding people with a "literal" mark on their "literal" foreheads and hands ORIGINATED IN THE CONFUSION WHICH IS BABYLON and are to this day propagated by Babylon, listened to by Babylon, cherished by Babylon and ardently believed in after the babylonish traditions. If you do not see that these carnal interpretations were spawned by, and are now fervently promoted by the harlot church systems, then it is certain that you have not read their books, listened to their sermons, nor tuned in to their radio and television programs. Men of confusion have tried to explain what only the Holy Spirit can reveal, and many of God's precious saints who have received the call to Sonship naively parrot the same line. This confusion has only caused more confusion becoming more confused, the speculations becoming wilder and more ridiculous as each world leader selected to be "the antichrist" passes from the scene and each new system purported to be "the mark of the beast" becomes antiquated by some new development which opens the door for even more absurd theories.

IN THE FOREHEAD AND ON THE HAND

A comparison of Gen. 17:11 with Rom. 4:11, and Rev. 7:3 with Eze. 9:4 (and numerous other passages) shows that the words "token", "sign", "seal", and "mark" are used in the Bible as synonymous terms. Thus, the "SEAL of God in the forehead", the "Father's NAME in the forehead", and the "MARK of the beast in the forehead" all indicate the same principle at work. In this case it is not some literal mark to be made in the flesh, but a state of being in mind and nature which serves as a "mark of distinction" between those who are HIS and those who are of the beastly system of the world.

The symbolism of the "mark in the forehead and hand" is taken from Ex. 13:9 in connection with the institution of the feast of the Passover. The first Passover was observed by the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, on the eve of their departure out of the house of bondage, and the beginning of their journey to the land of promise. It was the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month. God had raised up a deliverer for the people in the person of Moses, and had equipped him with such power and authority in the Spirit that he was to Pharaoh even as God. Many and dreadful and great were the signs and wonders which were wrought by his hand, so that Egypt became utterly wasted at the hands of a God of judgment. One by one the plagues fell upon the land; and time and again Pharaoh promised to let the people go, only to harden his heart when the plague was lifted. Finally God declared His judgment upon the firstborn of all the land of Egypt - and then Egypt was literally glad to see the people depart, so dreadful and devastating was the destruction of the Almighty.

"And the Lord spoke unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Ex. 12:1-2). From this date forward Israel was to have a new calendar. It was to be the first month instead of the second, because God was going to deliver them from Egyptian

bondage, and bring them into a new experience and into a new land. Israel's old associations were to be gone forever! They would now depart out of the world system to which they had for 400 years been slaves. No longer would they serve the Egyptian taskmaster under hard bondage, but they were to serve the Lord their God. No longer were they to eat the leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt, but they would feast upon the manna from heaven, and drink water out of the flinty rock. No longer would they abide in the houses of their little world in Egypt, but they would henceforth follow the cloud of glory from one place to another, from one experience to another, even from glory to glory. And so, to deliver Israel from the judgment of the firstborn, and to prepare them for a new life as a separated and holy nation, God instituted the Passover. And the faithful observance of the rites and ceremonies connected with this event would mean the preservation of Israel in the hour of God's judgments upon the land of Egypt, and the beginning of a new era for the people of God.

So it is that the cross of Christ and the blood of the Lamb become the beginning of a new era for the children of God. Old things begin to pass away, and all things begin to become new. The bondage of the world, the flesh, and the devil, gives way to a liberty in the Spirit, and a life of servitude to the God of our salvation. "Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). From the time we experience Christ as our Saviour, and really partake of the fountain of life opened at Calvary, from that very hour we begin a new life in the Kingdom of God. And whereas, we once served the flesh, and the bestial system of this world under cruel bondage, now we have become the bond slaves of Jesus Christ.

When God gave Moses the instructions for the keeping of the Passover feast, He said, "And you shall show your son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be FOR A SIGN UPON YOUR HAND, and FOR A MEMORIAL BETWEEN YOUR EYES, that the Lord's law may be in your mouth: for with a strong hand has the Lord brought you out of Egypt (the beastly world system)." The keeping of the Passover was like a sign on the hand and the forehead, a mark, a reminder that the law - the ways and nature of the Lord - should always be upon their lips and in their hearts and lived out in the conduct of their daily lives.

The deep and hidden mysteries of God are never discovered by the investigations or probings of the natural mind because they pertain to a realm beyond the reach of the natural. Only by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from on high can we perceive the depth of meaning contained in the counsel of the Lord to Moses as He continued to instruct him respecting the observance of the Passover. "And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, What is this? that you shall say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt ... and it shall be FOR A TOKEN UPON YOUR HAND, and FOR FRONTLETS BETWEEN YOUR EYES: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt" (Ex. 13:14-16). Again, the mark upon the hand and the forehead; not a little plastic card, or a brand or tattoo upon their flesh, but a taking into their MIND of the law of the Lord and a binding upon their hands - the OUTER ACTIONS - bespeaking the fulfilling of His law in all their doings.

Who among us would not willingly have our hand cut off or our forehead stripped of skin if anything so obvious and simple as that separated us from the glory of God? Thus, in the

book of Revelation two ways are revealed: the way of the SEAL OF GOD and the way of the MARK OF THE BEAST. In the Passover feast God designated a lamb for each house, a lamb without blemish, typifying the true "lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world" (I Jn. 1:29). The lamb must be killed, the blood must be applied to the house, for the Word was, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Ex. 12:13). The Lamb purchases us for God, for "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" and "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you... and YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN? For YOU ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE: therefore glorify God in your spirit, and in your body, which are God's" (I Pet. 1:18-19; I Cor. 6:19-20). The seal of God begins with the blood, the life-giving Spirit, and the blood upon the lintel and the doorpost answers to the LAW UPON THE FOREHEAD AND ON THE HAND, in the MIND and the OUTER ACTIONS AND WORKS. For our part we must apply the blood by faith to our lives. Our feet must be shod, and we must be ready to leave the old ways of the world's bestial system behind. We must participate in the Christ, and give evidence of the fact that we are bearers of HIS LIFE.

When we walk in the conscious awareness that Christ has purchased us, and set the SEAL OF HIS LIFE upon us, we begin to live to Him, not to ourselves, and we serve Him, and not ourselves, or the world, or our lusts and pleasures; but serve Him who is heavenly, in whom is righteousness, peace, and joy, and not the bestial system of this world. Common reason teaches this, that if a man buys a horse, or sheep, or other cattle, and pays a price for them, the horse and cattle are for his own use, and at his own service and command, who bought them, and are to be both ordered and fed by him. And he that has bought his cattle SETS HIS OWN MARK UPON THEM, and orders his own pastures for them, and employs them to fulfill his own high purposes. This the common reason of every business man understands.

But Christ, our spiritual heavenly Man, has purchased us with His blood, and paid a price for His sheep, and has SEALED US WITH HIS SPIRIT, and set HIS MARK upon us, so that we are His, and not our own, and are at His ordering and disposing by His heavenly power. And He orders us heavenly water and milk and wine and honey, and heavenly bread and meat, and the heavenly clothing, the fine linen of the righteousnesses of saints, and feeds us in His heavenly pastures of divine understanding, wisdom, and revelation. And so we are to live to Christ, the heavenly Man, and serve Him, and do all His will, and so know His doctrine; and so we come to know our Master's crib, and know our Owner, and His heavenly life that has purchased us, and His heavenly voice that speaks to us and directs all our doing, and are not like the common ox or ass, that know not their owner, nor their master's crib.

My deep and earnest prayer is that the Lord shall give all His elect understanding, that they may be flooded with His light, and in His light see their Owner, and His crib, and Him that has purchased them, even the heavenly Man, the firstborn Son, the forerunner who for us has entered in beyond the veil. And is it not fit, O man, that the heavenly Man should have them whom He purchases, and has paid a price for them, at His service, and to be at His ordering and rule, and to live unto Him, and do His will, and not at the command and order of the bestial system of this world, be it political, economic, or ecclesiastical? My ransomed spirit shouts, Amen!

Hear, O Sons of God! It is time for some astute delineations. If you have already been sealed by God in your forehead, and are His, bought and paid for, called and separated unto His high and holy purposes, taught and trained in the ways and principles of His Kingdom, there is no more room in your forehead for the mark of the beast! If the enemy can get Christians all bound up with dread and concern over such carnal things as using Visa and Master Charge cards, super market scanners, etc., fearful that they might be taking the mark of the beast, then he has successfully diverted their attention from the real issue of the mark, and immobilized them in the SPIRITUAL WARFARE. This doesn't mean that I am advocating the use of these cards in an improper manner, or going into debt. But there is nothing innately pernicious about credit cards or account, product, and identification numbers, as most institutions using these are simply employing technology to become more efficient. These are simply forms of making financial transactions. As long as we are in this world we have to make financial transactions. It matters not whether we use cash, checks with magnetic characters on the bottom, credit cards with magnetic strips, or any other system. These are simply different means of making financial transactions. And most usages of "666" in computer billing, account numbers etc. are merely designations of regions, billing cycles, or processing numbers. In the computer systems today there is a mass usage of ANY TRIO OF DIGITS - "111", "222", "333" etc., not just "666". Ah, beloved, don't allow some carnal-minded sensationalist to pick a few "666's" off of some invoices, serial numbers, credit cards, license plates, or bar codes and get your excitable soulish nature all involved in their exaggerated little NUMBERS GAME. And if you receive a product, bill, account number, or any other item bearing the number "666" in tomorrow's mail, I can assure you by the Word of the Lord that IT HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH THE MARK OF THE BEAST. Chances are, however, that you won't even receive anything with that number, for the vast majority who claim to have received such are the faceless "friend of a friend of a friend" of someone else!

The mark of God in the forehead of the blessed Sons of Zion is the mark of godliness in the MIND OF CHRIST within them as God delivers them from the rule of the flesh and the government of man into the heavenly government of His beloved Son. Thank God! we are truly being transformed by the "renewing of our minds" and have, in the measure that it has been inworked, the mind of Christ. As God's elect we are hearing the Spirit's call to repent of the works of OUR hands - the projects, programs, religious activities etc. by which we BUY AND SELL the holy things of God - that mark the very fall from God's total provision by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is of great importance that on at least three occasions God gave instructions to Israel concerning HIS MARK in the forehead and on the hand. In Deut. 6:7-8 we read, "And these words you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall bind them for a SIGN UPON YOUR HAND, and they shall be as FRONTLETS BETWEEN YOUR EYES." It is nothing short of amazing how many who say they have received the call to Sonship spend hours on end glued to the television screen as spectators of the incredible filth of the world ... GETTING THE IMAGES OF THIS WORLD'S BESTIAL SYSTEM INDELIBLY IMPRINTED ON THEIR MINDS AND VALUE SYSTEMS ... but not one hour for God, not one hour in His Word, nor one hour at His feet in intimate and sweet and blessed communion with Him. The flesh is king and has won the attention and allegiance of the entire earth and alas! of many of God's saints as well. They do homage before the beastly system of this evil age, they follow him, they unthinkingly do exactly as he commands to their minds, and they

don't know it or seem to even care. The fruit of this is seen as lives crumble, marriages crumble, families crumble, churches crumble, nations crumble, and now the whole world crumbles! Rather than binding the law of the Lord upon their hands and tying it as frontlets between their eyes, they have taken upon them the mark of the beastly system of the world.

That mark is first and foremost IN THE FOREHEAD, i.e., in the MIND. It is not difficult to see that the things which men are doing today and have done in ages past are but the MANIFESTATION of that which is in their minds, for "As a man THINKS in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7) and "a good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things" (Mat. 12:34-35). The mark of the beast that appears IN THE HAND (works, outer actions) is the direct result of the mark of the beast IN THE FOREHEAD (mind, nature). This is the mind that inspires the ever increasing confusion and violence that is running rampant among all nations. Can we not see by this that the honest person is first of all honest in his mind. The truthful person is first of all truthful in his own mind. The pure person is first of all pure in his own mind. The person of wholesome speech is first of all wholesome in his own way of thinking. The person thoughtful of others must be first of all thoughtful of others in his own mind. The godly person must be first of all godly in his own mind. The spiritual person must be first of all spiritually minded. All our words and actions ORIGINATE IN OUR MINDS, at either the moment of speaking or doing, or at a time previous to that.

The great work of the SEAL OF GOD IN THE FOREHEAD is the CHANGE of our mind, or more accurately the TAKING OF ANOTHER MIND. For the taking of a new mind brings about the existence of a new being and new beings bring about the existence of a new order. The present mind of man is POLLUTED and there is no denying the fact. All the appropriations of all the governments, all the laws and ordinances, all the rituals and programs of religion, and all the efforts of the so-called MORAL MAJORITY will do no good whatever in correcting the problem of pollution of any kind, until the MIND OF MAN is cleansed and renewed. The Sons of God, having the Father's name written in their foreheads, are the FIRSTFRUITS OF AN ENTIRELY NEW ORDER OF MEN TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY T-R-A-N-S-F-O-R-M-E-D BY THE RENEWING OF THEIR MINDS. What glorious hope this inspires in our hearts!

TAKING THE MARK OF GOD OR THE BEAST

I want to know the mark of God, not the mark of the beast. I want the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and make them real to me, impressing them deeply and indelibly upon mind, heart, and nature until Christ BECOMES MY STATE OF BEING. This is what it means to have the seal of God and the Father's name written in the forehead. On the other hand, the mark of the beast is more deep-seated than a visible tattoo, or even outward things like images, sects, and denominations. It is something that has become A PART OF THE MIND. This mark is IN THE FOREHEAD of those who worship (pay respect or homage to) the beastly system of the world, the very mind and nature of this mysterious system.

When a young woman goes to nursing school, she learns the things pertaining to the medical world, and after years of training and experience she becomes an RN. Long before this she has commenced to wear the nurses white uniform with white shoes, stockings, and cap so that she becomes an expression of that field. You see her walking

down the street and before you can even recognize her as Sue, or Helen, or whoever, you have already identified her as being a nurse, for the medical world has so absorbed her into its system, that she becomes an expression of that realm. She bears their MARK! Would to God that we would be so GIVEN, YIELDED to the spirit of wisdom and holiness and power of the Christ as to be absorbed therein that it becomes, without our human effort, that we reveal HIM, for HE becomes the manifestation, HE becomes the atmosphere of our living, the sphere of our existence, so that we express only HIM at all times and in all circumstances. The mark of GOD!

But how often have we, in both thinking and actions, borne the mark of the bestial system, be it economic, political, or religious. Have we not THOUGHT like the world, PLANNED like the world, and ACTED like the world? Have we not schemed in our business dealings how we might make the most money on some deal even if it meant trampling some one else's rights or leaving them at a disadvantage, for our own gain? Have we not classified ourselves as "conservative" or "liberal", as "Republican" or "Democrat", thus appropriating to ourselves the characteristics of the political aspects of the WORLD'S SYSTEM? And who would deny that in the religious realm the church system's whole vision, method, and attitude is in accordance with the world's system? Their planning and program is all in harmony with the "spirit of this age" as they constantly adapt themselves to WHATEVER THE WORLD IS DOING, be it rock music, showmanship, money raising schemes etc. etc., and the "mark of the beast" is clearly stamped upon all her works. The branding of the satanic character of this world's system is seen in all the financial operation, the political operation, as well as all the warped and perverted mixture of religion in the church systems. And the masses of the world's inhabitants live out their daily lives bearing in mind and character the MARK of that beastly system!

The particular Greek word which has been translated "mark" in Rev. 13:16 is "charagma", translated eight times as MARK and once as GRAVEN. It is interesting to note that this Greek word for MARK is from the same root from which we get the Greek word CHARAKTER and our English word CHARACTER. In Heb. 1:3 this word is translated as "express image". "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the EXPRESS IMAGE of His person..." The EXPRESS IMAGE of God is, therefore, the manifestation of God as revealed through His and our CHARACTER. The MARK speaks of that handiwork and the inward thinking which brings forth an expression of character in line with the very source from which the mark comes. Either we will find ourselves expressing the CHARACTER OF GOD, or else the CHARACTER OF THE BEAST. It speaks not, dear ones, of a visible tattoo or brand, nor any outward form which could be pretended for a time, but it refers to that INNER QUALITY OF HIS CHARACTER WHICH IS BEING DEVELOPED IN US, and which in due time shall be revealed.

Precious friend of mine, would you bear the mark of God, going on to perfection, conformed to the image of Christ? If a man is sick, he goes to the doctor. The doctor examines him, diagnoses his case, and writes out a prescription. The man rushes home to begin taking the medicine, the medicine works, and soon the symptoms disappear and he is himself once more. Ah, beloved, God has a DIVINE PRESCRIPTION for the imperfection, the carnality, the disease of sin and death in our lives - a process just as definite as the working of any medicine or any chemical experiment. This Divine Prescription is powerful and effective enough to conquer all that hinders HIS PERFECTION in our lives. Oh yes, God does have a METHOD! Is corn to grow by method, and divine character by chance? God's ways are precise if we cannot calculate

to a certainty that the power of the Holy Spirit will do its work, then our vision is vain. And if we cannot express the LAW of the Holy Spirit's working in simple words, then Sonship is a delusion.

Where, then, shall one look for the Divine Prescription? Where one would look for any kind of technical knowledge - among the text-books. And if we turn to the text-book of the School of God we shall find a Prescription for our problem of imperfection, carnality, and sin as clear and precise as any in the medical sciences. If this simple Prescription, moreover, be applied fearlessly, it will yield the result of a PERFECT DIVINE CHARACTER as surely as any result that is guaranteed by the laws of nature. The finest expression of this Prescription in Scripture is one drawn up and condensed into a single verse by Paul. You will find it in a letter - the second to the Corinthians - written by him to some saints who, in a city which was a byword for depravity and licentiousness, were seeking the higher life of the Kingdom. To see the point of the words we must take them from the Revised translation, for the King James version in this case greatly obscures the sense. They are these: "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18).

Now observe the simple passive "we are transformed." We ARE CHANGED, as the King James version has it - the complete contradiction of all our self-efforts, we are changed - we do not change ourselves! No man can change himself. Throughout the New Testament you will find that wherever these spiritual transformations are described the verbs are in the passive. What is implied for the child of God here is no more than is everywhere claimed for the physical body and all living things on the natural plane. In physiology the verbs describing the processes of growth are in the passive. Growth is not voluntary; it takes place, it happens, it is wrought upon matter. So here. "You must be born again," Jesus said, - and we cannot BORN ourselves! "Be not conformed to this world, but BE TRANSFORMED" we are subjects to a transforming influence, we do not transform ourselves. As certain as it is that it is something outside the thermometer that produces a change in the thermometer, just that certain is it that it is something outside the soul of man that produces a change upon him. That he must be susceptible to that change, that he must be a party to it, goes without saying; but that neither his own ability nor his will can produce it, is equally certain.

Obvious as it ought to be, this may be to some an almost startling revelation. The change we have been striving after as Sons of God is not to be produced by any more striving after. It is to be wrought upon us by the molding of hands beyond our own. As the branch ascends, and the bud bursts, and the fruit reddens under the cooperation of influences from the atmosphere, so man rises to the higher stature of God's Christ under invisible influences BEYOND HIMSELF. There is a scientific law called the First Law of Motion which states: "Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, except in so far as it may be compelled BY IMPRESSED FORCES to change that state." In conformity with this law, a ball thrown in the air would continue going in the same direction except for the IMPRESSED FORCE OF GRAVITY which compels it to fall back to the earth. This is also the First Law of Sonship! Every man's character remains as it is, or continues in the direction which it is going, until it is compelled BY IMPRESSED FORCES to change that state. Our only failure has been the failure to put ourselves in the way of the impressed forces. There is a clay, and there is a potter; how often we have tried to get the clay to mold the clay!

Whence, then, these pressures, and where this Potter? The answer of the Divine Prescription is "By reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, we are changed." But this is not very clear. What is the "glory" of the Lord, and how can a man reflect it, and how can that act as an "impressed force" in changing him to a higher form? The word "glory" - the word which has to bear the weight of holding those "impressed forces" - is an ambiguous term in many minds, so we must seek out its equivalent in working English. It suggests at first a radiance of some kind, something dazzling or glittering, some halo such as the artists love to paint around the heads of holy men or angels. But that is paint, mere matter, the visible symbol of some unseen thing. What is that unseen thing? It is that of all unseen things the most radiant, the most beautiful, the most divine, and that is CHARACTER. On earth, in heaven, there is nothing so great, so glorious as this!

The word character has many meanings; in the Kingdom of God it can have but one. Glory is character and nothing less, and it can be nothing more. The earth is "full of the glory of the Lord," because it is full of His character. The "beauty of the Lord," spoken of by the Psalmist is character. "The effulgence of His glory" is character. "The glory of the only begotten" is character, the character which is "fullness of grace and truth." And when God spoke to His people HIS NAME He simply gave them HIS CHARACTER, His character which was Himself: "And the Lord proclaimed the Name of the Lord... the Lord, the Lord God, MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, LONG-SUFFERING AND ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS AND TRUTH" (Ex. 34:5-6).

The idea of God's glory is often associated with the advent of Jesus. Isaiah promised that "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed" in the day of the Messiah. Angels chorused, "Glory to God in the highest," at Christ's birth. The literal meaning of the Hebrew word for glory is "weight" or "substance". In the eyes of men this literal meaning frequently lent itself to the idea that a person possessing glory was laden (heavy) with the substances of this world. Thus, Jacob's flock was his "glory" (Gen. 31:1). The Assyrian's power was their "glory" (Isa. 8:7). Joseph's high position was his "glory" (Gen. 45:13). But when the word was applied to God it was meant to bring out the weightiness of HIS ATTRIBUTES - His love, justice, righteousness, mercy, power - His CHARACTER. For all that God possesses is simply WHAT HE IS. His "glory" is not what He HAS, but what HE IS. When the glory of the Lord is revealed, the LORD HIMSELF is revealed in all His wonderful nature and character of being. Glory then is not something intangible, or ghostly, or transcendental. If it were this how could Paul ask men to reflect it? Stripped of its physical connotation it is BEAUTY, moral and spiritual beauty, beauty infinitely real, infinitely exalted, yet infinitely near and infinitely communicable.

With this explanation, read over the sentence once more in paraphrase: "We all reflecting as a mirror the character of Christ are transformed into the same Image from character to character - from a poor character to a better one, from a better one to one a little better still, from that to one still more complete, until by slow degrees HIS PERFECT IMAGE is attained." Here the solution of the problem of "going on to perfection" is compressed into one simple but divine prescription: REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST AND YOU WILL BECOME LIKE CHRIST.

How to get the character: Stand in Christ's presence and mirror His character, and you will be changed in spite of yourself, and unknown to yourself, into the same image from character to character. Every man is a reflector. That is the principle upon which this is based. In your face you reflect your nationality. I ask a man a question, and I find out in ten seconds whether he is a Mississippian or a Bostonian, or an Englishman or a

Mexican. He has reflected in his very voice his country. I ask him another question, and another, and another, and I see reflections flit over the mirror from all points of the compass. I find out in five minutes that he had a Christian mother. I see reflected in a mirror that he is a member of the Baptist denomination and has regularly attended their meetings and has readily absorbed their teachings. As I go on watching him as he stands and talks to me, his whole life is reflected back from it. I see the kind of background he has been living in - the kind of companions he has had. He cannot help reflecting. He cannot prevent himself showing the environment in which he has lived - the influences that have played around him. The law is simple: We become like those we habitually reflect.

There was a savor of Jonathan about David, and a savor of David about Jonathan. Elisha received of the very anointing of Elijah because of his association with him. And of the disciples of Jesus it is written, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John... they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). You sometimes see husband and wife, after a half century of intimate relationship, changed entirely into the same image. They have gone on reflecting one another so often - without trying - that they have become largely made up of the same attitudes, convictions, and mannerisms.

By far the most impressive truth which underlies the Divine Prescription for perfection is the truth that men are not only mirrors, but that these mirrors, so far from being mere reflectors of the fleeting things they see, transform into their own inmost substance, and hold there in permanent preservation, the things they reflect, for these are not cold, hard mirrors of glass or bronze, but warm, living, impressionable mirrors of spirit, soul, and body. No one knows how the soul can assimilate the things it reflects. But, think of it! the past is not only focused there, in a man's soul, it IS there. How could it be reflected from there if it were not? All things that he has ever seen, known, felt and believed of the surrounding world are now WITHIN HIM, have become part of him, and ARE HIM - he has been changed into their image. He may deny it, he may resent it, but they are there. They do not adhere to him, they are transfused through him. He cannot alter or rub them out. They are not simply in his memory - they are in HIM. His soul is as they have filled it, made it, left it. These things, these books, these events, these people, these experiences, these influences are his makers. In their hands are his destiny. When once the image or likeness of any of these is truly presented to the soul, no power on earth can hinder two things happening: it must be absorbed into the soul, and forever reflected back again FROM CHARACTER.

Upon these astounding yet perfectly obvious psychological facts, Paul bases his statement of how men are changed into the image of Christ. "Make Christ your most constant companion" - this is what it practically means for all who treasure the hope of Sonship to God. Live out all your days in intimacy of fellowship and in vital union with HIM. Be more under His influence than under any other influence. Every character has an inward spring, let Christ be it. Every action has a key-note, let Christ set it. Begin every day with the mirror placed at the right angle, turn it towards HIM, and even to your enemy the fashion of your countenance will be changed. Cultivate His friendship. Live after Christ, in His Spirit and in His Word, as in His Presence, and it is difficult to think what more you can do.

The Law will work, naturally. The Divine Prescription will do its blessed work, faithfully. This is God's way - subject yourself continually to His presence and glory and He will place HIS MARK upon you! You will take on a NEW NAME, a NEW NATURE, to become

a part of the revelation of God in the earth. It is unavoidable. It is the law of being. It cannot and will not fail! Conversely, if we subject ourselves constantly to the influences of the beastly systems of this world, seeking its fellowship, following after its ways, adapting to its standards, we will most certainly become stamped in our inner nature with the mark of the beast! It is unavoidable. It is the law of being. It cannot and will not fail!

Beloved, there is no one single step out from the beast's mark to the mark of God. As HE is birthed into us and we are birthed into HIM, there is no instantaneous cessation of mistake and error, no abrupt eradication of sin, the flesh, or the carnal mind, for the journey is not over until it is over and the ways of man, the mark of the beast, Satan upon him from the very beginning ... upon his mind as becomes a human mind ... and upon his hand as the works of all human hands ... is fully dealt with by the cross. How shall this be accomplished? "As a beast goes down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so did You lead Your people, to make Thyself a glorious name," the prophet wrote in Isa. 63:14. All the beastly nature is being led down into the valley of HIS DEATH, dealt with by HIS CROSS, effective only in and by HIS LIFE, and that which emerges, ascending out of the valley is a NEW MAN, even HIS GLORIOUS NAME, the nature and character of the Lord God Almighty. May God make it real to everyone who reads these lines!

As I was in meditation concerning the truth I have presented here, the following lines penned by another were brought to my attention: "As a garment plucked from a perfumed closet bears in its fibres the sweet aroma, so they who dwell in THE PRESENCE of Christ radiate the glory, the beauty, and the power of His attributes. 'All Your garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made You glad,' wrote David. The ointment Mary poured with prodigality upon the head of the Saviour filled all the house where He sat with its fragrance, and we would be right in believing that all who came forth from that room carried in their garments the sweetness of that aromatic balm. "To dwell in HIS PRESENCE is to be LIKE HIM. To abide in His presence is to be changed into HIS IMAGE. Man can never hope to attain the likeness of the Lord by any outward regulation or command to his carnal mind, such as, touch not, taste not, handle not. It is when saints become conscious of HIS PRESENCE that men say they have been with Jesus. It is not what God commands that changes the heart; it is He Himself. It is not the recitation of God's divine laws that transforms our lives, but our relationship to Him who made them. Our abiding in the presence of Jesus Christ will cure our every ill and transform our spirit, soul, and body into the image of Jesus Christ."

To which I would add these anointed words by Martha Wing Robinson: "You do not realize that you would have broken down under the weight of your cares but for the renewing time with Me. It is not what I say; it is Myself. It is not the hearing Me so much as being IN MY PRESENCE. The strengthening and curative powers of this you cannot know. Such knowledge is beyond human reckoning. This would cure the poor world if every day each soul or group of souls waited before Me. Remember that you must never fail to keep this time apart with Me. Gradually you will be TRANSFORMED, physically, mentally, spiritually, into My likeness. All who see you or contact with you will be by this intercourse with you brought near to Me, and gradually the influence will spread."

Chapter 8

The Bible is the only book in the world that gives a view of human history as a whole, that carries us from the lost Paradise of Eden, to the restored Paradise of the Apocalypse, traces the course of the human race through every stage of its intermediate existence on earth, and on beyond the limits of time, into the boundless regions of eternity. The entire story of mankind as presented in Scripture is composed of two parts, the historic and the prophetic. The histories of Scripture reach back to the farthest past, and its prophecies extend to the most distant future; taken together the two afford a panoramic view of the whole course of events, from the creation and fall of man, through all the corrective judgments and mighty movings of the Holy Spirit throughout long ages, to that gladsome day when God becomes in very reality “all-in-all” - everything to everyone everywhere!

The Bible is therefore the chart of all history, and it gives us, not events only, but their MORAL AND SPIRITUAL CHARACTER. Events are shown in connection with their causes and effects, and the judgment of God as to their character is revealed, and His overruling purpose in it all. Without the blazing revelation of God’s grand and glorious purpose being wrought out in the earth, history would be a spectacle of “rivers flowing from unknown sources, to unknown seas;” but under the searchlight of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God we can trace the complex currents to their springs, and see the end, from the beginning.

The vast majority of the prophecies of the Scriptures are couched in symbolic terms, hiding much of the “mysteries” of God in figurative language. This is done quite purposely by the Lord that the non-elect while “seeing” actually “see not” and “hearing” actually “hear not” (Mat. 13:10-17). The careful study of the key Semitic symbols, in which so much of the Word of God is given, is vitally important to the one who would “rightly divide the Word of truth”. Since the book of Revelation is a “signified” or “sign-language” book, we should not be surprised to find that it abounds in Semitic symbols which convey the truth in figurative language.

A person who speaks only the English language can take a book, written in French, and while he may not be able to read it, except with much hesitation and mispronunciation, still he can struggle through it, after a fashion. Occasionally he will come to a word which closely resembles the English, with which he is familiar. But, because he knows nothing of the meaning of French words, no matter how well he can read the text, it means nothing to him until he learns what each individual French word means.

Even so, Christians who read Bible prophecy, if they do not understand prophetic language, are confronted with a similar problem. Prophecy is invariably written in spiritual and prophetic terms, and unless one understands the meaning of each individual term, though he may be able to read the text fluently, yet he has no understanding of what he reads. So, before one can understand prophecy, he first must receive a revelation of the prophetic language. Fortunately, the Word furnishes us with KEYS to prophetic terms by which we may, through consistent study, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, become proficient in the prophetic language.

In Rev. 13:1-10 (please read this in your Bible) John the Revelator sets forth several prophetic terms. Some of these are: SEA, BEAST, HORNS, CROWNS, DRAGON,

EARTH, HEAVEN, LAMB. To gain a better understanding of these symbolical terms, it is necessary to elaborate in some detail upon a few of them. Three terms used repeatedly throughout the book of Revelation are SEA, EARTH, and HEAVEN. Most of the events in the whole book take place in one of these three realms - in the sea, in the earth, or in heaven.

THE SEA

“And I stood upon the sand of the SEA, and saw a beast rise up out of the SEA, having seven heads and ten horns...” (Rev. 13:1). The LOWEST of the three realms mentioned above is the sea. A number of things happen in the sea. “I saw a beast rise up out of the SEA;” “...and the SEA gave up the dead that were in it;” “Woe to the inhabitants of the SEA, for the devil is come down unto you;” “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the SEA; and it became as the blood of a dead man,” etc. etc. Throughout the Scriptures the SEA is a type of the raging, restless, surging masses of unregenerate humanity, tossed to and fro by the inner storms of the turbulent nature of old Adam. The prophet Isaiah penned these inspired words, “The wicked are like THE TROUBLED SEA, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked” (Isa. 57:20-21). Jude also described wicked men when he said, “These are RAGING WAVES OF THE SEA, foaming out their own shame” (Jude 13). John, on the Isle of Patmos, had a vision of a great whore sitting on many waters. The angel revealed the meaning of the “many waters”, saying, “the waters which you saw, where the whore sits, ARE PEOPLES, AND MULTITUDES, AND NATIONS, AND TONGUES.”

The natural sea is a great deep, an abyss (Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2; Deut. 8:7; 33:13). The Psalmist wrote of this abyss of wicked men, “They SEARCH out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent SEARCH: both the INWARD THOUGHT of every one of them, and the HEART is D-E-E-P (an abyss)” (Ps. 64:6). To the enlightened mind of David the depth of iniquity of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of man to comprehend. The heart of man is an UNFATHOMABLE DEPTH, or, as Jeremiah observed, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: WHO CAN KNOW IT?” (Jer. 17:9). While John the Revelator saw a beast rising out of the sea (abyss, depth) of humanity (the carnal mind), Jesus expressed the same truth thus, “For from WITHIN, O-U-T O-F THE HEART OF MEN, proceed all these evil things!”

No one can dispute the fact that it is this restless, turbulent, raging, wicked heart of unregenerate men that inspires every imaginable evil and devilish perversion, and has filled the world with ever increasing confusion, immorality, faithlessness, falsehood, fraud, hatred, violence, greed, cruelty, wars and rumors of wars, bloodshed and oppression. Ah, the SEA is the LOWEST REALM on earth, and this vast sea of degenerate humanity represents mankind at his lowest point - as bad off as man can be!

HEAVEN

The HIGHEST realm known to man is called HEAVEN. The interpretations of poor human beings are always childish in the extreme, for we know nothing yet as we ought to know. We have tried to picture heaven as a far-off place of many mansions, full of splendid temples and exquisite lawns, fountains and flowers, where idle inhabitants while away an endless eternity flitting about in white night gowns over golden streets and shouting hallelujah.

The Greek word for "heaven" is "ouranous". The meaning of "ouranous" is ELEVATION, HEIGHT, EXALTATION, EMINENCE. It has both natural and spiritual applications. In its spiritual application it bespeaks the eternal and omnipresent REALM OF THE SPIRIT in which God and all celestial beings dwell - FAR ABOVE the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. It is not a geographical or astral location. It is not a place. It is A DIMENSION OF LIFE AND REALITY, A STATE OF BEING, A SPHERE OF EXISTENCE. Every spirit life-form lives on a plane of spiritual awareness and being. Each of these planes constitutes a "heaven", a spiritual realm ABOVE THE PHYSICAL.

Christ had left His heavenly glory. He had humbled Himself, had taken upon Himself the form of sinful man; and becoming a man, was despised and rejected. He was of no reputation. And yet, while in humility and reproach, a Man among men, He made this statement: "No man has ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man WHICH I-S IN HEAVEN" (Jn. 3:13). The Son of God left His glory, and descended to the depths of shame and reproach. He came and took our place of disgrace in order that we might be raised and exalted and honored and, under Him, be given a name above every name. He, the Christ, Who was made in all things like unto His brethren, yet, while a man on earth, in humility, Himself said, "The Son of man WHICH IS IN HEAVEN!"

Jesus the Christ, when a man on earth, was at the same time, in heaven. Our Lord was in heaven; He came down from heaven, and still was in heaven. It is something a person can be in, can descend from, and still possess. Our Lord was the Mighty God. But He descended from that state. But, nevertheless, in His humility He was still the Mighty God, God manifest in the flesh, Emmanuel, God with us! Yes, even while in the flesh, by the eternal Spirit within He was ONE with the invisible, infinite REALM OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD. His outer man was conscious of the earthly realm and one with it, but the inner man was conscious of the eternal realm and one with it. The heavens were open to Him, He dwelt and lived and walked and manifested out of the divine sphere of life.

And yet Christians in ignorance sing, "When we all get to heaven, What a day of rejoicing that will be!" Heaven for those who have been born from above is not a future hope. It is a present reality. Jesus, in His spiritual body of resurrection, ascended up "F-A-R A-B-O-V-E A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED." He was made to sit at the right hand of God, FAR ABOVE the realms of all the other forms of spiritual life that inhabit God's vast universe; not above them geographically, but above them in RANK, in QUALITY OF LIFE, in EMINENCE and POWER and NATURE and GLORY! Christ is enthroned in the highest heaven. All those elect Sons whom the Father chose "in Him" in eternity past are now "IN the Beloved", and therefore enthroned WITH CHRIST in the highest heaven. "If you then BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, seek those things which are ABOVE, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things ABOVE, not on things on the earth, for you are dead, and your (new) life is hid WITH CHRIST IN GOD" (Col. 3:1-3). Ah, it is really true that God has "quickened us together with Christ; and has raised us up together, and made us SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS!" (Eph. 2:5-6). Our bodies may still be tied to earth, but the Sons of God are discovering the glorious and eternal reality of HEAVEN N-O-W! "As is the heavenly, such are they also that ARE HEAVENLY" (I Cor. 15:48).

Heaven is naught but the Biblical name of the REALM OF GOD'S SPIRIT, the invisible and omnipresent realm of Spiritual Reality. And it is all around us. It is as near to us as

the very air we breathe, yea, closer to us even than the blood coursing its way through our veins. We are one with it by virtue of our spiritual life. We touch heaven as we touch God. We behold heavenly things as we fasten mind and heart upon spiritual realities. We walk in heaven as we walk in the Spirit. Heaven is, furthermore, the realm of God's government - His infinite power and almighty Kingship. "Thus says the Lord, the HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, and the earth is My footstool" (Isa. 66:1). We do well to remember that heaven is not a place away off somewhere in the ethereal blue, millions of miles distant; but "heaven I-S M-Y T-H-R-O-N-E." God's heaven is His throne, the sphere of His OMNIPOTENT POWER, from which He reigns over the earth and all things! And now the One who has received ALL POWER says, "But YOU shall receive POWER after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and YOU shall be witnesses unto Me..." (Acts 1:8). All who receive this power become AMBASSADORS of the Kingdom of God. Ah, Sons of God, let us arise and live the heavenly life!

When the day of Pentecost came, Peter stood up with the eleven. Let us consider the situation on that day. There was Peter, a fisherman, an ignorant and unlearned man, an uncouth and apparently worthless man. But on that day when he rose with the eleven to testify and proclaim that Jesus was resurrected and ascended into the heavens, this little man was in a position of eminence and authority much higher than the highest rank of this earth. What a transformation the Holy Ghost wrought! The greatest and most exalted on this earth could not compare with Peter and those standing with him. Why were they so high? How could such as them be so exalted? It was because at the very moment their spirits were quickened by God's Spirit, they were IN THE ASCENDED CHRIST. They were not men on this earth; they were men in the heavens. By reading the first few chapters of Acts, you will realize that Peter, John and the others with them were resurrected people, new creation people, ascended people, people dwelling in the heavens. They transcended everything on this earth. The high priest, the kings and rulers of the people, the Caesar in Rome were all under their feet. They surpassed the highest rank of man because of the ascended Christ. They were walking in Him. They were living life on the highest plane in this high realm of the Spirit.

Dear ones, how can we live in the heavens? Just by being in Christ. Christ has ascended. Christ is now the highest heaven in this universe. I believe most of my readers understand now what it means to experience the ascended Christ, to daily live out our lives in the victory and triumph of the Son of God, far above the sorrows, strife, sin, problems, limitation, struggles, fears, disappointments, and death of the carnal realm. THIS is Sonship! Sometimes I hear people say, "Oh, I am so worried," or "My, I am quite depressed!" Do you know what that means? It means that they are under the power of death. Whenever you feel depressed, it means that you are under the threatening of death, you are under the power of darkness. You must learn how to appropriate Christ, the ascended Christ, to your circumstances and life situation. You must acknowledge your standing in Christ immediately. You must say, "I do not agree to be depressed or victimized by any kind of situation. I have the ascended Christ; I am in the ascended Christ." When you thus draw from Him you will BE RESURRECTED, you will BE ASCENDED, for the Christ whom you contact in your spirit IS THE CHRIST WHO HAS ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS. When you stand in union with Him you are high above the mountains, not in the valleys. You will be in the heavenly places, far above the earth. The problem is that far too often we forget that we are ONE WITH such a Christ who is ascended far above all! We do not appropriate Him. We do not come to Him. We do not contact Him in our spirit. We do not take our stand in union with Him.

When we endeavor to receive the revelation of infinite truth, we are often brought into conflict with that element of human wisdom which asserts itself within US. It is then above all other times that unbelief raises its ugly head to shout aloud that these things cannot be. The wisdom of this world questions in unbelief, "How can a man dwell in heaven while he walks upon earth? How can a man, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, be made to drink of the Spirit of God and live by Him? How can he sit with Christ upon the throne of the universe, daily drawing from the inexhaustible supply of the power, life and wisdom of the ascended Christ, while he performs the mundane business of everyday life? It all sounds so foolish," unbelievers and carnal-minded Christians have told me, and so it does to them, for the Lord Himself declared this very fact to be so when He said, "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). But by the Spirit I can shout, "Praise the Lord! Praise Christ! I am in Christ! I am raised up and made to sit together with Him in the higher than all heavens! All my troubles, all my distractions, all my problems, all my hardships, all my weaknesses, all my struggles and all my burdens are under my feet. They have become my footstool. I can rest my problems; I can rest my struggles. The more troubles I have, the more I appropriate the ascended Christ." This is the experience of Christ! This is the reality of living in heaven - N-O-W!

And so in the book of Revelation we view the glory of those events which transpire in heavenly realms and those persons who dwell upon the highest of all planes of life. Those who daily overcome are there for Jesus says, "Him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne," the realm of His triumphant power and dominion. The Church, washed and cleansed from every spot and wrinkle, is there, for we read, "And there appeared a great wonder in HEAVEN; a woman (the Church) clothed with the sun..." (Rev. 12:1). The overcoming Sons of God are there, as it is written, "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. And I heard a loud voice in HEAVEN saying, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down... and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony... therefore REJOICE YOU HEAVENS, and YOU THAT DWELL IN THEM" (Rev. 12:5,10-12). The Bride of Christ is there, for "I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God OUT OF HEAVEN, prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). But none who dwell in Babylon are there, for the cry goes forth, "Rejoice over her, thou HEAVEN, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God has avenged you on her" (Rev. 18:20). No, beloved, none of these wonders were wrought out somewhere ten trillion miles beyond the Milky Way, these are PRESENT REALITIES fulfilled in those who dwell far above the noise and strife of the carnal realm by WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.

THE EARTH

In contrast with this, the EARTH is the symbol of yet a third realm, 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, in the true sense is, of itself, neither heavenly nor degenerate. The sea, as we have seen, comprises the masses of restless, surging, sinning, warring men who live only and completely after the unrestrained desires of the flesh, while heaven comprises those seated 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 daily lives “mind earthly things”. We shall pursue this thought in more detail in our next chapter.

THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy” (Rev. 13:1). In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation the awesome prophecy is given of two beasts terrible in power and strength that dominate the inhabitants of the earth and make war with the saints. To the word “beast” must be assigned in both cases its fullest and most pregnant sense. The word is translated from the Greek “therion” meaning a “wild beast” -strong, fierce, dangerous, ravenous, raging, vicious, venomous and cruel.

To understand how John uses the word “beast” in Rev. 13:1, we must note how the word “beast” is used elsewhere in the Scriptures in a similar manner and under similar circumstances. The description of these “beasts” carries us back to the prophecies of Daniel where we find the statement, “I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven brake forth upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion... And behold another beast, a second, like unto a bear... and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard... the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly... and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns” (Dan. 7:2-7).

In this marvelous prophecy, the sea swept by strong winds from every point of the compass, until the opposing forces rush upon one another, mingle in wild confusion, send up their spray into the air, and then, dark with the reflection of the clouds above and turbid with sand, exhaust themselves with one long, sullen roar upon the beach as the wild, ravenous beasts lumber up out of the sea to stalk cruelly across the earth. A “beast” in prophetic language is a TYRANNICAL IDOLATROUS EMPIRE, and from Daniel’s own words in his book, and as confirmed by history, we know that the four beasts Daniel mentions are four great world empires which had a distinct control upon Israel - the people of God!

The first of these four beasts was Babylon, who became a world empire in 606 B.C. when she conquered Egypt. Daniel calls her a beast, like a lion. The second beast or world empire, described as being like a bear, was the Media-Persian empire (Dan. 8:20). The Media-Persian empire conquered the Babylonian empire about 539 B.C. and ruled until 331 B.C. The third beast prophesied about by Daniel was Alexander the Great’s Greek empire when, in 331 B.C., he conquered the Persians. As prophesied in the eighth chapter of Daniel, Alexander’s Greek empire disintegrated and powers from within, four Generals of Alexander, took over the empire and divided it into four kingdoms. They lasted until about 31 B.C. when the Romans conquered the last of these four powers. It was then that Rome became the fourth beast and the greatest world power to that date. The historical development of these four world empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, outlining the fulfillment of these prophetic Scriptures in Daniel, are readily available. History shows the prophetic phrase, “coming up out of the sea” has reference to empires, or organized kingdoms being made up from godless people, and heathenish laws and customs of many different countries. The government of man, the bestial

system of this world, becomes most “brutish” when man is severed from God, in whose image he was first made, which image is realized in the man Christ Jesus. Thus, the Kingdom of God and of Christ is NEVER represented under the image of a “beast”, nor as coming up from the sea, but as cut out of a high mountain and coming down from God out of heaven!

Notice that this beast contains some of the characteristics of the beasts in Daniel chapter seven. “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power and his seat, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2). This is a composite “beast”, made up of COMPONENTS which are listed in Rev. 13:1-3 and 17:7-15. IT IS A COMPLEX CREATURE! It is not one man; it is not one man’s government; it is not one church; and, most assuredly, it is not a giant computer! According to the Scriptures it is “mountains” (nations), “kings”, “kingdoms”, etc. This picture presents a composite “beast”, made up of many anti-Christ governments, rulers, kings, and kingdoms which we can trace down through history, as they have had their turn at world power. The portrayed contrast is MAN’S GOVERNMENT against GOD’S GOVERNMENT, the bestial system of this world as opposed to the Lamb and His followers upon Mount Zion. Man’s government follows the spirit and nature and ways of THE FLESH while God’s government follows the spirit and nature and ways of THE LAMB. These two systems are opposed to each other; man’s way... and God’s way!

This beast with seven heads has long ruled over the inhabitants of the earth. The bestial system first made its appearance in the Garden of Eden. Our eyes behold its presence with the understanding of these words: “Now the serpent was more subtle than ANY BEAST of the field which the Lord God had made” (Gen. 3:1). These words tell us that there was not only a beast (the serpent) in the earth in that hour, but there was a beastly spirit and a beastly system already waiting to enforce its dominion upon Adam and his Garden. Of all the bestial kingdom “the serpent was more subtle than any BEAST of the field...” The serpent was called a BEAST, and was not dwelling alone, but was the most subtle of the whole bestial realm, the great dictator of the bestial kingdom. He still is. In the book of Revelation, the subtle little serpent has increased in stature to become a dragon, and of the beast that comes up out of the sea it is stated, “And the DRAGON gave him his power and his seat, and great authority.” This same serpent said to the last Adam, “All these things (all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them) will I give You, if You wilt fall down and worship me!” (Mat. 4:8-10). The first Adam, made in the image and likeness of God, given dominion in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, exchanged that blessed realm for the grime and dust and filth and sorrow of the bestial kingdom.

It is not difficult to see the fruit of man’s enslavement by the bestial system inasmuch as it is opposed to God, substituting the human for the divine, the flesh for the spirit, the seen for the unseen, the temporal for the eternal. It is the spirit of the world of which Paul writes, “We received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God,” of which James speaks when he says, “Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God,” and in regard to which 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, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” This bestial system, in short, is the “cosmos”, the world system of which our Lord said that the devil was its prince, which He told His disciples He had overcome, and in regard to which He prayed in His

Gethsemane prayer, "I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them out of the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

As a dear brother said a number of years ago, "Seldom, indeed, will it be that a Christian will admit that he is a lover of the world; yet our Saviour said, 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also' (Mat. 6:21). Prayerful consideration of this text might be a disconcerting revelation to many a soul. Where do our thoughts remain the longest? What do we talk of most? What do we do in our spare time? Why do God's people love the world so fondly that they must be told, 'Love not the world?' With great heaviness of heart we confess that at the present time it is difficult to tell where the church system ends and the world system begins. The church system of our day is neither separate nor removed from the world. Christians, alas, are deeply engrossed in the world; each with open arms embraces the other because they are of the same spirit. The methods of the world are the methods of the church system; the sins of the world are rampant in the church system. Both are lovers of wealth. Both are lovers of pleasure. Divorce and remarriage are rampant among both. Both love to be entertained. The spirit displayed at Belshazzar's ungodly feast when the vessels of the Lord were dragged into the drunken orgy of the king is the exact spirit of this present evil hour, when light is mixed with darkness, flesh is mingled with Spirit, the harlot church systems walk hand in hand with those who profess to be filled with the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues, judgment smiles on error and disobedience, and lips that take God's name in vain shamelessly lift their voices with those who praise the Lord. This is not the Spirit of God! Have no part with them; neither bid them God-speed, for he that bids them God-speed is partaker of his evil deed (II Jn. 10-11)."

THE SEVEN HEADS

To further develop this theme let us notice particularly that as this beastly world system developed in the earth it was formed with seven heads, or SEVEN SPECIFIC ORGANIZED MANIFESTATIONS. "Seven heads" -a terrible kind of perfection, for it has "upon its heads names of blasphemy".

The seven heads are the seven world empires of the bestial system by which the people of God have been opposed, persecuted, and tried. The oldest persecuting power in Bible history is Egypt. Historically, Egypt was the first of the great world empires developed by man, and like the others, totally idolatrous. Thousands of years ago, Egypt was united under the rule of a powerful king whose name was Menes. He built his capital in the Nile delta, and called it Memphis. After Menes united Egypt, the people were ruled by many different dynasties. The Egyptians worshipped many gods, and built many temples to honor them. The most important god was Ra, the sun god. The next god of importance was Osiris, god of the dead. The god of the Nile was worshipped, and there were such other gods as the lion god, the hippopotamus god, the turtle god, and the frog god. The Pharaoh himself was thought to be a god, and the people worshipped him as a divine being. Then, about 3,500 years ago, Egypt became a warlike nation and began to conquer distant lands, becoming a mighty empire.

It was during this period of the Egyptian empire that they became the cruel oppressors of God's people, Israel. God raised up a deliverer in the person of Moses, and said to him, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver

them” (Ex. 3:7-8). The Lord sent Moses and equipped him with such power and authority in the Spirit that he was to Pharaoh even “as God.” Many and dreadful and great were the signs and wonders which were wrought by his hand, so that Egypt became utterly wasted at the hands of a God of judgment. One by one the plagues fell upon the land; and time and again Pharaoh promised to let the people go, only to harden his heart when the plague was lifted. Finally God declared His judgment upon the firstborn of all the land of Egypt - and then Egypt was literally “glad” to see the people depart, so dreadful and far-reaching was the destruction of the Almighty. The mighty plagues sent upon Egypt serve in Revelation as a wonderful type of the plagues of God’s refining judgments sent upon the mystical “Egypt” or “Babylon” -the bestial spirit and system reigning in our earth and in our very own hearts in this our day!

The first head of the bestial system was the tyrannical and idolatrous empire of Egypt. The second was Assyria, followed by Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, and finally by that power, wider than the Roman, which John saw was about to rage during the Church age against the simplicity, purity, holiness, spirituality, power and unworldliness of Christ’s little flock. Each of these is a “head”. Each directly opposed, persecuted, and tried the saints of God. “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them” (Rev. 13:7). Taken together, they supply what is absolutely essential to a correct understanding of the symbol the idea of the completeness of the bestial system of this world.

THE HEAD THAT WAS WOUNDED AND HEALED

The seven heads, therefore, are the completeness of the bestial system in its opposition to the people of God. The Roman head is the one “wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed” (Rev. 13:3). The word “wounded” is the same word in the Greek that is translated “slain” in reference to the Lamb: “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been SLAIN” (Rev. 5:6). The Greek word is “sphazo” meaning “slaughtered”. The head of the beast had not been merely wounded or smitten, it had been “slaughtered unto death”. And it was not merely his “deadly wound”, but it was the “stroke of his death” that had been healed. There had been actual death and resurrection from death - the contrast and travesty of that death and resurrection which had befallen the Lamb of God slaughtered and raised again! Of the bestial world system Jesus said, “In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD” (Jn. 16:33). And of the dragon who gives power unto the bestial system Jesus declared, “The prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me - he has nothing in common with Me, there is nothing in Me that belongs to him, he has no power over Me” (Jn. 14:30, Amplified).

Jesus did not come to modify the world system; He came to destroy it. Daniel makes this very clear. “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and it shall BREAK IN PIECES AND CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44). The Redeemer of the world came, not to wound or weaken the prince of this world only, but to “bring him to naught” (Heb. 2:14). He came to subdue him, to overcome him, destroying his dominion and crushing his power. This is the work which the Lord Jesus came to perform - to destroy the kingdom of Satan in the world, and to set up another kingdom in its place, subduing all things unto Himself.

Jesus came into the world in the time of the Roman empire. He was crucified on a Roman cross, pierced with a Roman spear, and sealed in His sepulcher under a Roman seal. But praise God! He burst the bands of death, shattered the seal of mighty Rome, and arose the Conquering Christ. And not only that - He ascended victor over all the powers of darkness, having brought to naught the prince of this world, having brought in eternal redemption for a lost world and redeemed all things back unto Himself. He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high and poured out upon the first few citizens of His Kingdom the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom of God was birthed, and gathered from Jew and Gentile alike a vast multitude into its bosom. What a flood of light and glory and power fell upon the world in the ministry of the humble followers of the Lamb!

And what glorious days those were! How God blessed His people! 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 had turned the world upside down! - so powerful was their message and spirit. In spite of persecution, in spite of untold thousands of saints impaled upon crosses, burnt at the stake, and fed to hungry lions to the thunderous applause of wild spectators, 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. The mighty Roman empire shut up its idol temples, sheathed its persecuting sword, and sat down as a disciple at the feet of Christ and His apostles. The raging, ravenous beast had been slain, the head was wounded unto death. The sword by which the deadly wound came was the sword of the WORD OF GOD in the mouths and lives of His people. The wound to that system was so deadly that for a time it appeared it would never rise again.

But John saw the deadly wound healed, and all the world wondered after the beast. Revived the beast became stronger than ever so that "they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. 13:4). My understanding of great spiritual matters is often woefully small. Nevertheless, it is my deep conviction that the seventh head of this beast represents Rome as its power is continued under the Papacy, the succession of Roman Pontiffs, the line of tiara-crowned monarchs who ranked as temporal sovereigns, for it is a fact that for more than twelve centuries ecclesiastical Rome exercised as much power over Europe and the whole world as did ever the pagan Caesars. It is generally known by all informed persons that for centuries after the fall of the Roman empire the popes ruled over the kings of Europe, setting up what kings they would and putting down whom they would, casting into prison and putting to death all who opposed them, and exalting whom they would, obliging them to prostrate themselves before him, to kiss his toe, to hold his stirrup, to wait bare-footed at his gate, as Hildebrand or Gregory VII did to Henry IV, treading even upon the neck, as Alexander III did to Frederic I, and kicking off the imperial crown with his foot, as Celistin did to Henry VI. This evil condition continues with variations to this day. Ask any historian what world-wide power succeeded Rome Pagan, and he will answer at once, "Rome Papal". Without doubt the civil and temporal power of the popes constitutes this last and most important of the "heads" of the bestial system.

When Imperial Rome fell, Papal Rome rose. In the selection of Rome as the seat of its empire, the Papacy secured enormous prestige. Sitting in the seat which the masters of the world had so long occupied, the Papacy appeared the rightful heir of their power. The Pontiffs were perpetually reminding the world that they were the successors of the

Caesars, that the two Romes were linked by an inseparable bond, and that to the latter had descended the heritage of glory and dominion acquired by the former. The Pontiffs also claimed to be the successors of the apostles. As the successor of Peter, the pope was greater, than as the successor of Caesar. The one made him a king, the other made him king of kings; the one gave him the power of the sword, the other invested him with the still more sacred keys to the Kingdom of God. Hear now the words of the formula of investiture with the Papal tiara: "Receive this triple crown, and know that you art the father of princes, THE KING AND RULER OF THE WORLD."

When the Church was allied with the State; when Christianity became the religion of the court and of the fashionable classes, the Church was not only impregnated with the errors of pagan philosophy, but it adopted many of the ceremonies and rituals of the pagan worship. The churches became as imposing as the old temples of idolatry. Festivals became frequent and imposing. Veneration of martyrs ripened into the introduction of images, a future source of popular idolatry. Christianity was emblazoned with pompous ceremonies. Superstition exalted the mother of our Lord to practically deification, an object of worship. Corruptions, heresies, abominable practices abounded. The teachings of Christ were forgotten, and the paganized teachings of the Church put in their place. It became a sin to believe the truth and serve the living God, yea, it was soon esteemed the worst of crimes to follow the Lord only and wholly. The humble and true saints were persecuted. In streams, ay! in rivers, their blood was shed, till the professing Church of Christ became "drunk" on the blood of His true disciples. Millions more martyrs fell under the sword of Papal Rome than were slain by the power of the Pagan empire.

The head of this great Apostasy put himself in the place of Christ as head of the Church and Caesar as head of the empire. He wore a triple crown, and claimed dominion in heaven, earth, and hell; power to pardon sins on earth, to loose from pains in hell, and to canonize in heaven; he carried two swords, to mark his temporal and spiritual government; and arrogated to himself divine attributes and authority. He spurned the sword of the Spirit, and, grasping the arm of the empire, turned its carnal weapons with relentless fury upon every weaker opponent that stood in the way of his ambitions.

Christ, contrary to popular opinion, is not a Person, but a great body of persons. In fact the word "Christ" is itself not a true translation of the original. It is not a proper name, but should be rendered "the anointed". And in I Cor. 12 :12 we find just what "the anointed" really is. It tells us, that as our natural body is but one body composed of many members, "SO ALSO IS THE ANOINTED". Christ, or the anointed then, is a huge company composed of anointed Sons of God "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13). And this body or company which IS CHRIST, has a HEAD, the chief Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Even so the antichrist is a body composed of many members. The company which is Christ is the true Church: the antichrist is the apostate Church, that which is "anti", or "opposed to", or "instead of" the true. Furthermore, as the true church is ruled by the New Jerusalem, so the false Church is ruled by "that great city Babylon" (Rev. 18:10-24). And as the true Church has a King, the chief Christ, so antichrist has a king, the chief antichrist. And this chief antichrist is also called in the Word, the king of Babylon. Babylon means confusion, and this peculiarly expresses the spiritual chaos of apostates (Isa. 24:10). The king of Babylon is then really the king of confusion.

In fact, to fully understand the mystical Babylon of the last days, we have to go back and consider the literal Babylon of old, which was a type of the mystical Babylon. The Babylon of old, we find, was a kingdom ruled over by a king who was not only head of their political structure, but was also the head of their false religious system. Therefore mystical Babylon also must have a king, or political head, who also is its religious leader. Mystery Babylon has a king, one who is also an arch deceiver, the chief among all the antichrists. He is, or was, an earthly sovereign, and at the same time was and is the spiritual head of the great apostasy. And no kingdom exists without its king. But the vast multitudes of Christians, who are carried away by the deceptive doctrines of the antichrist, have MISSED IT ALL. They know nothing of the day in which they live, nor of what has transpired, nor of what is transpiring before their very eyes, because they are imbued with the spirit of the same Babylonish kingdom. In one way or another, they are subjects of this king, in that they have taken the mark of this kingdom by believing and propagating its doctrines, observing its forms and ceremonies, celebrating its holy days, and glorying in its shame. And above all, most Christians today are one with the great antichrist in pointing the finger of accusation at some fictitious person who is supposed to appear at some yet future time TO BE THE ANTICHRIST! It is high time for Christians to awake!

It is an exasperating but undeniable fact that we in our day see the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, the heads of European governments, the Queen of England, even high authorities from Communist Russia, and, saddest of all, leading evangelists and leaders of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, making their journey to Rome to visit and receive the blessing of the Roman pope. When the pope visits the United States, Brazil, Poland, England and other countries, sought after and applauded by the millions of adoring followers, captivating millions more who cling with rapt attention to his form on the television screen, is it not astoundingly clear that even in our day the whole world “wonders after the beast” and the reverent cry is whispered from awe-stricken hearts, “Who is like unto the beast?”

Little wonder that the whole creation yet waits and groans for the manifestation of the Sons of God! Ah, my friends, I can tell you by the Word of the Lord that our God shall move again. He shall come, He shall move in and through His body, the enChristed ones, in the fullness of the power and glory and authority of which His coming at Pentecost was but the firstfruits! “And the kingdom, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heavens 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. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly upset me and my face changed color; but I kept the matter in my mind” (Dan. 7:27,28, Goodspeed).

I am indebted to another for the inspiring words with which I am led to close this article. “The entire dispensation of grace (Eph. 3:2) has been set aside, not in the vain and deceptive hope of the conversion of the world, as the preachers are always imagining, but for the distinct purpose of “calling out a people for His name” (Acts 15:13-18). These called out and elect saints, who have been in preparation for two thousand years, are the body of Christ, the Sons of God, whom God has chosen and ordained to sit with Him in His throne. They are the fullness and completeness of Him who everywhere fills the universe with Himself.

“In the blindness of Church tradition, the preachers have taught the people that the hope of creation is to die and go to heaven or go to glory by medium of the rapture, but anyone studying God’s Word with care will find that heaven is not the theme of the Old Testament and it is not the theme of the New Testament. In fact, there is a noticeable absence of any teaching on the subject. The theme of both Old and New Testaments is the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom as literal as that of Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, or Caesar. The difference is that those men were merely mortal men, possessed with carnal minds, but the glory that excels in the Kingdom of God is that the King is not carnal, but spiritual; not mortal, but immortal; not passing, but permanent; not of time, but of eternity. His sharp, two-edged sword will not be stained with the blood of His enemies. It is instead that same sharp, two-edged sword which is the WORD OF GOD. With it and by its transforming power He will smite the nations, not in the bloody conflict and seething hate of war, but as He smote the people at Pentecost, bringing them to repentance and the joy of salvation. He will pierce the consciences of the people and cause them to cry, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ He will prick them as Saul of Tarsus was pricked, and He will save them as he was saved. This is the way His righteous sword is wielded. It kills only to make alive and wounds only to heal. It kills only those things that should die and makes alive the things that should live. Thus will He rule the world through His body of Sons, with an iron rod - the rod of righteous judgment and the scepter of spiritual power and transforming grace.”

Chapter 9

In the foregoing chapter we wrote of three symbolical and prophetic terms used in the book of Revelation: SEA, EARTH, and HEAVEN. Most of the events in the whole book take place in one of these three realms - in the sea, in the earth, or in heaven. We pointed out that throughout the Scriptures the SEA is a type of the raging, restless, surging masses of unregenerate humanity, tossed to and fro by the inner storms of the turbulent nature of old Adam. The prophet Isaiah penned these inspired words: "The wicked are like THE TROUBLED SEA, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:20, 21). Jude also described wicked men when he said, "These are RAGING WAVES OF THE SEA, foaming out their own shame" (Jude 13). A number of things happen in this prophetic sea. "I saw a beast rise up out of the SEA;" "Woe to the inhabitants of the SEA, for the devil is come down unto you;" "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the SEA; and it became as the blood of a dead man," etc. etc.

The HIGHEST realm known to man is called HEAVEN. The Greek word for "heaven" is "ouranous". The meaning of "ouranous" is ELEVATION, HEIGHT, EXALTATION, EMINENCE. It has both natural and spiritual applications. In its spiritual application it bespeaks the eternal and omnipresent REALM OF THE SPIRIT in which God and all celestial beings dwell - FAR ABOVE the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. It is not a geographical or astral location. It is not a place. It is A DIMENSION OF LIFE AND REALITY, A STATE OF BEING, A SPHERE OF EXISTENCE. Heaven for those who have been born from above is not a future hope. It is a present reality. It is all around us. It is as near to us as the very air we breathe, yea. closer to us even than the blood coursing its way through our veins. We are one with it by virtue of our spiritual life. We touch heaven as we touch God. We behold heavenly things as we fasten mind and heart upon spiritual realities. We walk in heaven as we walk in the Spirit. Praise God, it is really true that God "has quickened us together with Christ; and has raised us up together, and made us SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ Jesus!" (Eph. 2:5-6). Our bodies may still be tied to earth, but the Sons of God are discovering the glorious and eternal reality of HEAVEN N-O-W! "As is the heavenly, such are they also that ARE HEAVENLY" (I Cor. 15:48). In the book of Revelation there is a whole series of events that transpire in heavenly realms (Rev. 12:1, 5, 10-12; 21:2; 18:20, etc. etc.).

THE EARTH

In contrast to the two realms described above, the EARTH is the symbol of yet a third realm, 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 nor degenerate. The sea, as we have seen, comprises the masses of restless, surging, sinning, clamoring men who live only and completely after the unrestrained dictates of the flesh, while heaven comprises those seated 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". In the book of Revelation there is a whole series of events that take place in this "earth" realm. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the EARTH;" "Woe to the inhabitants of the

EARTH! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath;" "These have power to smite the EARTH with all plagues;" "He has judged the great whore, which did corrupt the EARTH with her fornication;" "Power was given unto him to take peace from the EARTH," etc. etc.

In the Bible this "earth" realm is represented by Israel after the flesh. Although it is not generally known, it is nevertheless true that God made two covenants with Abraham, or, rather, that He made one with Abram and another with that same man after his name was changed to Abraham. This change of name was made that it might harmonize with the new character and the new order of things as they pertain to the covenant man. The first, or Abram, covenant was made when the man was ninety years old; but the second, or Abraham, covenant was not made until this man was called upon to make the one great sacrifice of his life. It will take but little investigation to reveal the fact that the second, or Abraham, covenant is a Messianic, and therefore spiritual covenant. "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven and said, By Myself have I sworn, says the Lord, for because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son: that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and your seed shall possess the gate of HIS enemies; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:15-18).

We understand that at the time these words were spoken it would have been impossible to give them the fullness of meaning which the Holy Spirit has given them, as interpreted in the New Testament, for it was under the illumination given to the apostle Paul, that their full import bursts upon us. It was when contrasting the law covenant, made with the national, fleshly Israel - the one which was annulled - with this only-son covenant, that Paul is careful to say: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of ONE, and to YOUR SEED, which IS CHRIST ... for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek ... for you are ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS. And if you be Christ's, THEN ARE YOU ABRAHAM'S SEED, and heirs ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE" (Gal. 3:16,27-29).

It is not only the words, but also the circumstances connected with the giving of these two covenants, which are prophetic. The second covenant, made with the SPIRITUAL MAN (Abraham) is a SPIRITUAL COVENANT fulfilled in a SPIRITUAL PEOPLE identified with the SPIRITUAL SEED, the HEAVENLY MAN, "the LORD FROM HEAVEN," and is, therefore, the covenant for all those who "dwell in heaven".

Now let us notice the text of the first, or Abram, covenant: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you: and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great ... for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed (plural) forever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall your seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto you" (Gen. 12:1-2; 13:15-17). We see at once that the great feature of this covenant is a multiplicity of seed for a man that hitherto had been childless; and that this multitude of people are to become a great nation, and that they were to be given the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. The covenant specifically deeds a PIECE OF NATURAL REAL ESTATE to the PHYSICAL SEED of an EARTHLY MAN!

While there are many beautiful spiritual types in Israel's entrance into and possession of the promised land, the fact remains that throughout the Old Testament one reads the history of a physical people receiving natural blessings in an earthly land. In the Old Testament the Lord always referred to an earthly land. You can recall how many times from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the end of the Old Testament the Lord stressed the land again and again. The land ... the land... the land I promised to your fathers; the land I promised Abraham; the land I promised Isaac; the land I promised Jacob; the land I promised you; I will bring you into the land; I will give you the land; I will bless you in the land. It was the land, the land, always the LAND!

The center of the Old Testament economy is the temple within the city within the land. The temple was a natural temple within a literal city built upon the physical land. You read how God brought His people into the promised land, and how His people remained there and enjoyed all its riches, a land "flowing with milk and honey." They ate and drank from the land - all their living came out of the land, the land was everything to them. But the blessings of this land were but temporal blessings lavishly bestowed upon a fleshly and mortal people. Notice the kind of blessings promised! "But the land, whither you go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinks water of the rain of heaven...and it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day... that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season... that you may gather in your corn, and your wine, and oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your cattle, that you may eat and be full. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your kine, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and your store. The Lord shall command the blessing upon you in your storehouses, and in all that you set your hand unto; and He shall bless you in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Deut. 11:11, 13-15; 28:3-5, 8).

The old covenant of law was a carnal covenant made with an unregenerated race of earth men. This covenant, we are informed, "had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly (earthly) sanctuary ... which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect ... which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and CARNAL ORDINANCES, imposed on them until the time of reformation" (Heb. 9:1, 9-10).

There is a simple order that God has established relative to the progression of truth and to the creation itself, and it is this: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual" (I Cor. 15:46). This principle is evident everywhere in the Scriptures. First, the old creation, then the New. First darkness, then light. First Abram, the natural man, and his seed, the fleshly Israel, and their inheritance, the earthly land of Canaan, then Abraham, the spiritual man, and his seed, the enchristed, and their inheritance of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. First Adam, formed of the dust of the ground, then the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. First the law of Moses, then the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. First the temple of stones from Solomon's mines, then the temple of living stones, a spiritual house. First the natural body, then the spiritual body. And the wonder of it all is this, that the end of the Old is the beginning of the New; and out of that which is destined to pass away there comes forth that which is eternal and destined to remain. It is important, therefore, that we should always observe that which is first, and natural, and from the natural learn to discern in what way it typifies the spiritual.

If we know the Scriptures and have light from God, we will realize what is meant by “the land”. The land is but a figure of Christ as our all-in-all. Have you ever realized that Christ is now the territory of your life? Christ is the land! You may feel that day to day you are living on this earth, compassed about, hedged in, and shut up by all the problems and pressures and frustrations of the bestial system of THIS WORLD, but you must realize that this earth is not your real land, this world is not the sphere of your living. “If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, NOT ON THINGS ON THE EARTH. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:1-3). The land is but a type of Christ as everything to us. By virtue of our new birth we now have the ground to enjoy all the riches of Christ! God gave us this ground.

I deeply feel that most of the Lord’s people are still living in the old land - the “shadow” - and have discovered but little of the true land, the substance of which is Christ. There is a big difference between the shadow of an object and the object itself. Shadows can be beautiful, as when, for instance, a day draws toward late afternoon and the mountains cast long shadows, transformed into purple, greatly enhancing the scene. But the shadows are at best only shadows, with no substance to them. It is my conviction that multitudes of Christians are today contenting themselves with the shadow rather than the substance. I think we can look upon the shadow and substance as picturing two sorts of Christian lives. There is a Christian life, if we can call it such, which is just a shadow of the real thing; things spiritual are not real to the one living it; the whole thing reeks of the scent of the “earthiness” of the old land - the shadow. These folk, though religious Church-going people (they may even sing choruses, clap their hands, speak in tongues and prophesy!), in most aspects of their daily lives MIND EARTHLY THINGS. They preach a lot of frothy discourses concerning the abundant life, but the abundant life of which they speak is not the abundant life of “those who dwell in heaven” but of “those who dwell upon the earth”.

They persuade the Christians that they should have the finest and best of all the good things THIS WORLD has to offer - the best jobs, the highest salaries, the finest homes, the choicest automobiles, beautiful clothes, good and luxurious furniture and an abundance of all of the amenities of life. Ah, dear ones, THIS IS NOT the abundant life of which Jesus spoke when He said, “I am come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly.” The abundant life is experienced in CHRIST THE SUBSTANCE, not in the shadow. The abundant life consists not of temporal things. If God has favored you with them, then you may accept them, but do not deceive yourself by thinking that these temporal things are a sign of God’s favor and the abundant life. The fleshly Israel of old enjoyed all these earthly things for which men seek, but they did not have the abundant life Jesus came to bring.

Hear now the exhortation of the Lord: “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. But rather SEEK THE KINGDOM OF GOD; fear not, little flock; for it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom...provide yourselves with bags which wax not old, a treasure IN THE HEAVENS that fails not ... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Lk. 12:15, 23, 31-34). The national Israel with its promises of physical blessings is but the shadow - Christ is the substance - and yet many Christians choose to live in the earthlies in place of the heavenlies, seeking after and receiving temporal things rather than eternal things!

One of the most significant utterances ever made by the apostle Paul is found in Eph. 1:3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ." "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). The source of all blessing is God who is Spirit. This includes temporal as well as spiritual blessings. However, in the apostles words above, the blessings are not temporal, physical, natural blessings for the outer-earth-man, but SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS for the inner-new-creation-man. These spiritual blessings are received and experienced only "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," thus these are realities communicated from the person and glory of the ASCENDED CHRIST. They are IN HIM and from the high and holy REALM IN WHICH HE DWELLS. In the phrase "heavenly places" the word "places" is supplied, the Greek meaning IN THE HEAVENLIES or HIGHEST HEAVEN. The thought is that the spiritual blessings of God have their source and substance in the highest spiritual realm and are ministered to our spirits from thence. This glorious realm is the realm of incorruption which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death.

The blessings most often sought after by Christians are not these of which Paul here speaks, but mere blessings of the corruptible realm of earth such as healing and health for the body, financial prosperity, houses, lands, automobiles, jobs, trips, solution to problems, multiplied daily needs, etc. etc. Remove these things from the average Christian's prayers and you would reduce his prayer life by 95%! It is remarkable that during the three and a half years of Jesus' earthly ministry, being found in fashion as a man, limited by the realm of the physical and mortal to which He subjected Himself on our behalf, He never performed one act, not even one miracle, sign, or wonder on the spiritual plane of incorruption. Every miracle performed by our Lord was for the earth-man as He raised dead bodies, cleansed lepers, made the lame to walk, blind to see, deaf to hear, healing every manner of sickness and disease among the people. He even turned water into wine and fed 5,000 people from five loaves and two fish. It was good wine, and delicious bread and fish, but, nevertheless, just physical and earthly, supplying strength for a few fleeting hours to the mortal part of man and then cast into the draught. Nothing incorruptible or heavenly there! And nothing for the INNER MAN.

But once Christ ascended on high He ministers from a higher realm, and now, as on the day of Pentecost, there comes from heaven something greater far than that which blesses the outer man, the Spirit has been poured out that we might be BORN ANEW FROM ABOVE, our spirits quickened by His Spirit, imparting the DIVINE NATURE. Within, in the inner life, there is now a RE-conciliation, a RE-birth, a RE-newing, a RE-storing, a RE-demption until we are brought back into oneness with God again as sons and daughters of the Most High. Truly! He has "raised us up together, and made us sit together in HEAVENLY PLACES." And it is here...in the heavenly places ... that He blesses us with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in Christ; blessings of wisdom and knowledge, of joy and peace, of love and faith, of grace and glory, of righteousness and power, of the mind of Christ and the image of God. The earthly blessings are first experienced when we are babes, minding earthly things, but the spiritual blessings are reserved for SONS (Eph. 1:3-6). One will know he is moving into SONSHIP when, in all his asking, he asks most often for SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS instead of TEMPORAL BLESSINGS! One will know that he is no longer numbered among the lusty throng who "dwell upon the earth" when, in all his seeking, he seeks only and always those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.

Is this not one of the thermometers by which we can mark our rise from the lowlands of our carnal selves to the vaulted skies of Sonship and identity with Jesus Christ? Our knowledge of God and our understanding of the things of God depend entirely upon WHERE WE DWELL - on earth or in heaven. If our dwelling place is in the natural realm, then the things of the natural realm become all-consuming and very important to us, but the things of the high realm of the Spirit grow dim and far away. They become unimportant and sometimes so removed that they are scarcely worthy of our belief at all. But to those who dwell in the realm of God and walk in the realm of the Spirit the things of earth grow dim and distant, very trivial and paltry and mediocre. The wealth and fame and pleasures of earth fade away, while the celestial song of the Spirit bursts within our breasts and we walk in the light of the Lord.

THE BEAST OUT OF THE EARTH

“And I stood upon the sand of the SEA, and saw a beast rise up out of the SEA, having seven heads and ten horns ... and I beheld another beast coming up out of the EARTH; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon” (Rev. 13:1, 11). In the thirteenth chapter of Revelation the awesome prophecy is given of two beasts terrible in power and strength that dominate the inhabitants of the earth and make war with the saints. To the word “beast” must be assigned in both cases its fullest and most pregnant sense. The word is translated from the Greek “therion” meaning a “wild beast” - strong, fierce, dangerous, ravenous, raging, vicious, venomous and cruel.

In our previous chapter we pointed out that a “beast” in prophetic language is a TYRANICAL IDOLATROUS EMPIRE. The beast out of the sea having seven heads represents the completeness of the bestial system of this world in its seven-fold worldwide manifestation beginning with the ancient tyrannical and idolatrous empire of Egypt and progressing on through the world empires of Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Imperial Rome and finally the Roman Papacy. You will note that the first beast comes up out of “the sea”, rising up out of the masses of restless, sinning, warring men who live only and completely after the flesh, while the second beast comes up out of “the earth”, or more correctly “out of the land”, - from a moral class, religious folk, who, while not sold under licentiousness, are not spiritual either, but in most of their thinking and interests “mind earthly things”.

This second beast rising up out of the earth realm had “two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.” “Horns” in prophecy denote dominion, power, authority, or kingship, so this unholy power has a two-fold dominion. This beast is called later on “the false prophet” (Rev. 19:20; 20:10), by which we understand that it is made up of false teachers as well as earthly rulers, for a false prophet in the Scriptures refers to an erroneous teaching influence in spiritual matters. John then reveals that this false teaching influence will represent itself “as a lamb”. The “two horns like unto a lamb” are unquestionably a travesty of the “seven horns” of THE LAMB so often spoken of in these visions; and the description carries us to the thought of the antichrist, of that which sets ITSELF up AS the true Christ, professing to be the anointed of God, but is actually a usurper who is opposed to the Christ of God.

So this beast with the “two horns like a lamb” denotes a two-fold religious power which professes to be the true representative of the Lamb of God in the world. It pretends to be harmless, meek, mild, inoffensive, nonaggressive like a lamb and has many professions of cleanliness, purity, holiness, sanctity, and godliness, but notwithstanding all of these,

“he spoke as a dragon” - just like the “great dragon”, the arch deceiver - Satan the devil! Now, I am well aware that the highest meaning of these symbols does not mean the external, organized systems 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, been partakers of that which is symbolized by the “beast”, “horns”, etc. But the Spirit of the Lord quickens to me that within the framework of these visions, the beasts are, undoubtedly, the OUTWARD REPRESENTATION of the spiritual realities, and this beast is APOSTATE CHRISTIANITY as it has existed through the ages and as we now see it.

The Lord foresaw that Christianity would spread over the world, and that, becoming popular, it would be embraced by many who would appreciate the form without entering into its spirit. He foresaw that as numbers of this sort would identify themselves with the Church, the worldly spirit, which is the opposite of the spirit of the Lamb, would come in with them; that selfishness, carnality, and a desire to be great and to rule, thus coming in, would not have long to wait, but in due time the Church would seize the opportunity and seek to dominate the world by means OTHER THAN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD. The Lord knew that once the worldly element entered the Church, the Church would forsake the mighty weapons of the Spirit and, turning to carnal weapons, would make its influence felt, and in the name of Christ would grasp the civil power of earth.

And thus it actually transpired: the nominal Church began to fall away from the walk in the Spirit as it increased in numbers under the teaching and example of ambitious men whose ideas grew more and more favorable to the power and worldly influence which numbers and wealth brought with them. Gradually the spirit of the Church became worldly, and the things of the world were coveted. The suggestion of ambition was - “If the great Roman empire, with all its power and influence, its armies and wealth, were only to support the Church, how honorable and noble it would then be to be a Christian! How speedily then would heathen persecutions cease! Then it would be in our power not only to overawe them, but to compel their adherence to the Church and the name of Christ. It evidently,” they reasoned, “is not God’s design that the Church should forever be subject to the world and persecuted by it: the apostle’s words, ‘Know not that the saints shall judge the world?’ as well as our Lord’s promises that we shall reign with Him, and the many prophecies which refer to the reign of the Church, indicate clearly that such is God’s plan. To us it seems clear that we can and should use every means to obtain a hold upon the civil government and conquer the world for the Lord.”

Thus gradually by a slow process of reasoning covering centuries, of the real hope of the Church for exaltation to rule and bless the world by the fullness of the power of the Spirit - namely, the manifestation of the Sons of God - was lost sight of, and a new hope took its place: the hope of success without the Lord, by the power of the carnal weapons of the flesh. And thus, by collusion, intriguing and exchange of favors with the world, the hope of the Church became a false hope, a delusive snare by which Satan led from one evil and error to another, both of doctrine and of practice. Ah, the Church came to rule the world alright, but alas! the world was two-fold more the child of hell than before!

“Christianity” is the name of this false kingdom; and it was built upon a misapplied truth - the truth that the Church is called to be kings and priests unto God and to reign upon the earth. “And he that overcomes...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: even as I received of My Father” (Rev. 2:26-27). But the power of the Kingdom of God is NOT POLITICAL POWER. “For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power”

(I Cor. 4:20). If the Kingdom of God is power, what kind of power would that be? It would have to be GOD POWER. What kind of power is GOD POWER? The Bible says that God is a Spirit. Therefore, the Kingdom of God would be SPIRIT POWER.

God is love. Is there power in love? Is there power in peace? I would say there is power in the peace of God! Is there power in joy? There is power in joy! It is contagious. There is power in faith! There is power in righteousness! There is power in the name of Jesus Christ! You see, the power of the Kingdom of God is SPIRITUAL POWER - power to change men's minds, power to transform lives, power to break the hold of sin, power to redeem, power to subdue men under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The power of the Kingdom of God does not reside in political offices, nor in judicial offices, nor in legislation, nor yet in vast armies and guns and tanks and bombs. Brethren, I can assure you that we shall yet see a manifestation of the fullness of the POWER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD through the ministry of the manifested Sons of God that shall "break to shivers" the pride and power of all the nations of the world and cause them to walk in the light of the Lord! "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him. All nations shall come and worship before You, O Lord; and shall glorify Your name" (Ps. 72:11; 86:9).

TWO HORNS LIKE A LAMB

For several hundred years the professing Church was one organization, one system. Division came after its basic nature was changed. During this time of development, Constantine, the Roman Emperor, converted to Christianity. Constantine was also responsible for the establishment of two separate Roman empires. The Roman empire at that time was often attacked by tribes of people whom the Romans called barbarians, who lived on the borders of the empire. Constantine decided that it would be necessary to establish a second capital of the empire, to the east. He chose the city called Byzantium, which later was named for him and became Constantinople, and which today bears the name of Istanbul. This eastern city soon became even more important than Rome and during the latter years of the Roman empire there were two emperors - a western Roman emperor in Rome and an eastern Roman emperor in Constantinople. The East Roman Empire is also called the Byzantine Empire.

When Christianity was elevated to the status of State Church, the official religion of the empire, the division of the empire also affected the Church. As in the western empire, so in the eastern, the Church succumbed to the same temptations to build a powerful ecclesiastical-political super-structure patterned after the fashion of the Roman empire. Although similarly apostatized by pagan doctrines, practices and customs, the main difference from the western Church was that the bishops in the eastern sections of the Church refused to vest final and absolute authority in the bishop of Rome. They refused to recognize the bishop of Rome as the supreme head of all Christendom. They had, instead, several "Patriarchs" who had jurisdiction over specific geographical districts, usually along nationalistic lines. These Patriarchs were regarded in theory as "equals" in Church authority, although in dignity and influence the Patriarch of Constantinople overshadowed the others because of his position in that "new center and capital" of Imperial Rome.

Thus, TWO POWERFUL CHURCHES developed side by side within the two empires. The western Church chose to incorporate the word "Roman" in its official title, which exists to this day: the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. However, in the east, the Church

did not incorporate the “Roman” word; being designated traditionally as the EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH; even so, the “Romanized” character of the eastern Church must not be overlooked just because the word “Roman” was not used in official Church names or titles. Today, the eastern Church is greatly diminished in size and importance in the world in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church. Together with the eastern Church, apostate Protestantism under the domination of the World Council of Churches, now makes up one of the two “horns” of the beast. The Encyclopedia Americana points out that on an international scale, the most important non-Roman Catholic development is the World Council of Churches, a federation of 260 Protestant, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox Church bodies with a total membership of about 400 million members. Historically, there were but two Churches, the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox. If a Christian were asked “what Church” he belonged to, it could mean only one of those two. Today, however, the question is stated differently: “Are you Catholic or Protestant?” But the principle remains the same - there are still TWO SYSTEMS --- T-W-O H-O-R-N-S L-I-K-E A L-A-M-B!

THE VOICE OF THE DRAGON

This beast of Apostate Christianity has two horns like a lamb, but his voice cannot be disguised. It is clearly THE VOICE OF THE DRAGON. Its voice speaks as loudly now as at any time in all history. If you do not belong to or submit to or bow down to this two-horned beast that now dominates the lives of dead and living alike, you will find yourself more and more misunderstood, more and more ostracized, more and more cut off, loudly called a fanatic, a schismatic, a heretic, a lone ranger, a fool, a false prophet, in error and under the condemnation of the Lord. And if you are in the system and follow on to know the Lord, if you do not heed the counsel of the Holy Spirit to come out from among them and be separate and touch not the unclean thing, you will eventually be ignored or rejected, rebuked, denounced, anathematized and unceremoniously excommunicated under the deafening roar of the dragon’s mouth.

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST

The so-called Christian Church systems as we know them today have become an instrument of Satan, exercising all the power of the first beast as they usurp control over men’s lives, enslaving millions of worshippers, binding the professing Christians with the hideous chains of tradition. It is filled with a form of godliness, but completely devoid of the true power. Rev. 13:12-15 gives an unmistakable description of long-standing conditions and of events now transpiring before our very eyes. “And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he does great wonders ... and deceives them that dwell on the earth...saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

The word here rendered as “worship” means “to kiss, as a dog licking his master’s hand, to fawn or crouch to, to reverence, to adore.” “Image” is defined to be “an imitation, representation, similitude of any person or thing; a copy, a likeness, an effigy.” My picture is an image of me. My shadow is my image. It and I have the same or similar features, and it moves only as I move. The second beast, then, is to manufacture something in

imitation of the first beast. The Roman empire and the Papacy which succeeded it were both humanly organized institutions governed by men who claimed divine power and infallibility, but were in truth mere fallible humans.

Under Old Testament economy God alone was King over His people until Israel demanded a human king in order to be like the nations around her. Before the time of these human kings, the government was a theocracy in the truest sense: that is, the government of the state was by the immediate direction of God Himself by the Spirit. Great was the condescension of God to thus honor the nation by becoming its political Sovereign, performing all the functions of an earthly monarch, and receiving the customary homage paid to a temporal king. Great was the dignity lent to the nation by the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth dwelling with them first in a tabernacle, afterwards in a splendid temple, there having His table, His altar, and His ministers. Great was His condescension to tolerate their displays of external splendor and pomp, to go forth with and command the army in war, to legislate, to execute laws, and to do all things that pertain to the office of an earthly sovereign. And yet the Israelites were not satisfied. They wished to have another to rule over them, a human king, as the nations about them had. God granted them their desire, and Israel forsook the Lord, provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods and abominations, and sacrificed to devils, provoking Him to anger. God was very lenient with them; but justice demanded judgment. Therefore, since Israel would not be in submission to God as their King, He decreed that throughout the term of His indignation they would, as a consequence of their folly, be made to serve the kings of their enemies.

Under New Testament economy the Christ of God was to be the one and only Head of His Church. But the apostate Church was for prostituting this Church and causing her to commit fornication with the kings and governments of the world, in that she began to be joined with them as she ought only to have been joined to HIM. Under God's perfect order for the New Testament age, both emperors and beggars must meet on common ground. Both are sinners; grace alone can intervene. Both must acknowledge their guilt and plead for mercy. Both should then be equal in dignity, in authority, in meekness, and in charity, deriving all their spiritual stature from HIS WORK WITHIN, and possessing none by virtue of what they are naturally. In the days of the apostles, men were made Christians by the operation of God alone, and thereby they were taken out of the nations as a people for His name (Acts 15:14). The ministries in the body of Christ were sovereignly raised up and anointed by the Spirit of God. With what power, signs, and wonders did they witness to the living presence of Christ! There was no man-made organization, no carnal Church boards, no dominating hierarchy, only the dynamic presence and power of Christ manifested in and through the living members of His body.

As the Church grew in numbers and wealth, the anointing and the anointed ministries were shoved aside and startling developments began to take place. Bishops became influential, not as humble servants of the flock, but as powerful, authoritarian men. Dioceses and parishes were established. Ecclesiastical centralization commenced. The weapons of excommunication were forged, The festivals of the Church were created, along the lines of pagan celebrations. Catechetical schools were created to teach the faith systematically. The formulas of baptism and the sacraments became of great importance. Costly and ornate edifices were constructed for worship. The services became ceremonialized and elaborate. Sculpture and painting were enlisted in the work of providing aids to devotion. Relics of saints and martyrs were cherished as sacred possessions. Religious observances were multiplied. The Church, with its array of gaudily

bedecked clergy and of imposing ceremonies, assumed much of the stateliness and visible splendor that belonged to the HEATHEN SYSTEM which it had supplanted. The mission of the Church was lost sight of in a degrading alliance with the State. Christianity was now a pageant, a ritualism, a vain philosophy, a superstition, a formula, an ARM OF THE STATE! The religious dogmas were enforced by the sword of the magistrate!

And thus, precious friend of mine, the second beast's IMAGE of the first beast was complete! The Church had become a human institution with human government, worldly wisdom, and political power - just like Rome! The word of God, inspired by His Spirit, could not be tolerated. What is said concerning the image of the beast applies to sectarianism as a whole and the human organization and carnal methods of all her so-called Churches. They may differ as widely as the various systems of heathen governments and religions symbolized by the first beast, yet they can be represented by the single symbol of an image to the first beast, because they are built upon the same general principles - are but human organizations, with unscriptural names, methods, practices, customs, creeds and government, and are all contrary to the ways of the Spirit of God.

And is not this the same picture of every organized Church in the world - including the so-called "non-denominational" denominations? Are they not all "incorporated" and "chartered" by the State? Do they not all have a system of government like the other "denominations" about them, with a "board", "majority vote", etc.? Are their ministers not registered with the government, and acting as civil servants of the government by carrying an "approved card" issued by a "state-chartered" organization so they can marry the living and bury the dead? Even if they are not, how often their lives are still tied to the beast system which controls their understanding, beliefs, and methods of operation. How the multitudes worship the IMAGE of the beast! It is a sad fact that untold millions of Christians are more devoted to their Church systems than they are to the Lord Jesus Christ. They can witness open rejection of God's precious Word, blatant resistance to His Spirit, and the vilest profanation of His holy Name, without uttering a word of protest; but let anyone say a word against THEIR CHURCH, and instantly they are aroused to the highest pitch of excitement - beast worshippers! To exalt such earth-born, man-made, carnally-controlled, unscriptural, unspiritual institutions and lead people to adore and worship them is but a species of idolatry and rankest deception.

"And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak..." (Rev. 13:15). Imparting life to the image of the beast simply signifies the complete organization of the ecclesiastical institutions imbued with the power of a spurious gospel and a false anointing. Every living body is animated by a spirit. "The body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26). God has only one Church called in the Word the body of Christ, which has been given "Ione Spirit" and "one Lord" and "one faith" (Eph. 4:4-5), with the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole Head and Legislator. The many bodies, and many names, and many faiths, and many creeds, and many governmental systems, and many legislators of our day constitute nothing but the beast and his image. The sectarian spirit that animates the Methodist body will lead people into that body. The religious spirit that animates the Roman Catholic body will lead people into that body. The spirit that animates the Presbyterian body will lead people into that body, etc. BUT THE ONE SPIRIT OF GOD WILL BAPTIZE US ALL INTO THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST where we can all DRINK INTO ONE SPIRIT and grow up into the ONE HEAD "from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint

supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16).

You will probably ask me the question, “Do you not believe in meetings, the assembling of the saints, and the ministries in the body of Christ?” I answer with assurance, “Most certainly I do!” We praise God for every ministry HE sets in the body of Christ, they are examples to the flock, and a source of encouragement, confirmation, and strength to all among whom they labor; we support and esteem them highly, and search deeply our own hearts when they admonish us in the Lord. At the same time we praise God that the consuming fire of His dealings and processings in our lives is being kindled to THOROUGHLY PURGE AND CLEANSE OUR HEARTS from the spirit and ways and image of the beast until once and for all we shall forsake all the apostasy and shame, giving ourselves wholly and only unto Christ, that He may teach us how to gather IN THE NAME OF THE LORD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH. When our minds are one with Him and all earthly tradition and program and system has vanished away and He takes His royal seat upon the throne of our hearts, then we are truly able to assemble and minister IN HIS NAME. Then we are LED BY HIS SPIRIT, and then there is a freshness for those who gather, and a flow of His life, light, and love, and confirmation to be received from each member, and then we can GROW UP TO BECOME THE SONS OF GOD.

VICTORY OVER THE BEAST AND HIS IMAGE

“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 ... 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” (Rev. 15:2-3). GOTTEN THE VICTORY OVER THE BEAST - that is, those who through grace and by the inworkings of HIS LIFE were delivered from the delusions and domains of the bestial system to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. These stand upon the “sea of glass, having the harps of God.” The allusion here is to the Israelites of old who, after having passed through the red sea dry shod, thus securing perfect and blessed deliverance from the bestial system of Egypt, stood upon the shore singing the song of Moses, Miriam and the women playing their timbrels, while their enemies with their chariots and their chosen captains perished in the waters (Ex. 15). The song now sung, however, is not that of Moses only; it is also THE SONG OF THE LAMB. Who might this company be? What might be the sea upon whose shore they sing the song of triumph and praise to their Lord and Deliverer? Methinks I have stood upon that very shore. As surely as the raging sea bespeaks multitudes of surging, clamoring, sinning humanity, so does the exquisite sea of glass represent an assembled throng of transformed saints IN WHOSE HEARTS THE SPIRIT OF THE LAMB RULES. This great sea of the Sons of God is calm and serene, tranquil and quiet - the bestial spirit and nature have been dealt with and these abide in the peace and joy and righteousness and power of the Kingdom of God. Ah! I have stood upon that shore, yea, and do stand with an innumerable company of men and women whose faces are set and whose hearts are fixed to do only and completely the will of the Father. These are they who live and walk in the Spirit, they are the firstborn-destined who are being delivered from the beast and his image. The glassy sea is here MINGLED WITH FIRE - the fiery trials and processings by which He purifies His people, sharpening their vision, whetting the appetite for things eternal, slackening the desire for all that is earthly and all that pertains to this present evil world.

GOTTEN THE VICTORY - victory, conquer, overcome, these all come from the same Greek word. God is producing OVERCOMERS who shall bear HIS MARK, and gain the victory over the antichrist beast and his image. SONS OF GOD, it is a present challenge to you, GUARD YOUR GARDEN, there is a beastly system just waiting to stamp its image upon you. You can walk high above it all - because "greater is HE that IN YOU than he that is IN THE WORLD" (I Jn. 4:4). The grace of God be multiplied unto you - and cause you always to triumph to His glory and praise!

Chapter 10

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 wonderful 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 Book of Life.

When the book of Revelation was written, John was IN THE SPIRIT. This is a fact of extreme importance. The realm of the Spirit is a realm beyond the reach of the natural. Spiritual things are all about us to such an extent that we live and move and have our being in them, yet the natural man can never see them until the Spirit draws aside the dusky curtains of our carnality and opens our eyes to the things of the spiritual world. Thus it was with John, in exile on barren Patmos, a place of few inhabitants and always swarming with pirates, but the record says of him, "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw...for the testimony of Jesus IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY" (Rev. 1:2; 19:10). Preachers and teachers ought to heed this wise counsel and concentrate on the TESTIMONY OF JESUS which is the spirit of prophecy rather than futuristic forecasts of earthquakes, plane crashes, riots, nuclear disasters, political coups, invasions, wars, foreign policies, world government, etc. etc. When God gave us the Holy Spirit, it was not to take soundings of uncharted depths into the future of Russia, America, Europe, or the Jews but to develop a SPIRITUAL CHARACTER, to put on the mind of Christ, and follow the Lamb wheresoever HE goes.

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 herald 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 brings forth an "image" to the bestial system of this world, to whom is given power over all kindreds, and tongues and nations. 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 walk in its light and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

The false Church is represented in Revelation thirteen as a beast that comes up out of the earth, having "two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon." "Horns" in prophecy denote dominion, power, authority, or kingship, and so this unholy power has a two-fold

dominion. This beast is called later on “the false prophet”, by which we understand that it is made up of false religious teachers, for a false prophet in the Scriptures refers to an erroneous teaching influence in spiritual matters. So this beast with “two horns like a lamb” denotes a two-fold religious power which professes to be the true representative of the Lamb of God in the world. It pretends to be harmless, meek, mild, inoffensive, nonaggressive like a lamb and has many professions of cleanliness, purity, holiness, sanctity, and godliness, but notwithstanding all of these, “he spoke as a dragon” - just like the “great dragon”, the arch deceiver - Satan the devil!

This “voice” makes its appearance in all manner of places. You will hear it preaching in the pulpits. You will recognize it in the creeds and edicts of great Church Councils. You will discern it among those who with THEIR MOUTHS confess that Jesus is Christ, but with their lives deny it. You will find that dragon voice among the miracle minded and the miracle workers, whose greatest miracle of all is how craftily they can fleece God’s precious sheep of their hard earned money to build and support their pompous kingdoms. You will hear its sound among that ministry which Paul describes as “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness (two horns like a lamb, indeed!); whose end shall be according to their works” (II Cor. 11:13-15). You will hear it flourishing in the great ecumenical movement and among the boisterous banner-waving street marchers who display more of the spirit of the mob than the Spirit of Christ.

HERE IS WISDOM

“And he causes all ... to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that has 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. 13:16-18).

Here is WISDOM: Let him that has understanding COUNT. Solomon said, “WISDOM is the principal thing;” but, in the same verse he added: “With all your getting get UNDERSTANDING.” 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), Wisdom is a state of being. We could say it has a “passive” quality - this wisdom comes only by the inworkings of God. Understanding and revelation are spiritual synonyms. Understanding has an “active” quality. The person who has understanding in this verse does something - he COUNTS! The mystery yields only to the understanding, that is spiritual, holy understanding - divine revelation! HERE IS WISDOM: Let him that HAS REVELATION COUNT the number of the beast. It should be evident to all who read these lines that this, too, is wisdom: Let NOT him who has NO REVELATION attempt to count (decipher the meaning of) the number of the beast!

Though such an one might study and search forever, plying endlessly through mountains of musty volumes, trying to figure out the enigma of this number, he would never come 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. HE is the truth and beside Him there is no truth. Our

knowledge of God and our understanding of the things of God depend entirely upon where we look. Paul penned these words to the saints in Colosse, "IN HIM are HID all the treasures of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE" (Col. 2:3). 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, 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. 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 God's anointed prophets and teachers will strike a responsive chord in the deepest part of your spirit, bursting forth with the harmonious melody of UNDERSTANDING! Here is wisdom: Let him that has understanding COUNT. It is clear, the mystery has a SPIRITUAL MEANING. Let us trust the Holy Spirit to make it real to our hearts!

THE NUMBER OF HIS NAME

For many decades and centuries God's people have been speculating about the strange phenomenon the Scripture calls the "mark of the beast". Rev. 13:17, however, lists three alternatives, two in addition to what most Christians have heard of: (1) the mark of the beast (2) the name of the beast (3) the number of his name. It is indeed remarkable that the Holy Spirit speaks of "the number" of the name of the beast; that is, the number representing and standing for the name. Why not be content with the name itself? Throughout the book of Revelation the followers of Christ are never spoken of as stamped with a number, but only a name. "To him that overcomes ... will I give a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it" (Rev. 2:17). "Him That overcomes... I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the City of my God... and I will write upon him My new name" (Rev. 3:12). "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1).

No one who reads the book of Revelation with a spiritual mind can have failed to notice that the word "name" is far more than an appellative. It expresses the inner nature of the person to whom it is applied. Thus, the "beast" represents something wild and ravenous in nature, the "whore" denotes something unfaithful and impure, and the "Lamb" is one who is meek, pure, and self-sacrificing. The "name" of the Father expresses the character of the Father, the "name" of the Son reveals the nature of the Son, the "name" of the city of God which comes down out of heaven from God bespeaks the implantation of the divine nature and character into the life of the man or woman who is BORN FROM ABOVE.

John the Revelator, therefore, might have been satisfied with the knowledge that the "name" of the beast, whatever it be, must be a name which expresses the inner nature of the beast; and he may have said no more. But the Holy Spirit revealed a further detail -

not the name alone, but the NUMBER OF THE NAME - a most profound depth of insight into the nature of the beast! No man could "know" the name written upon the white stone given to him that overcomes "but he that receives it". In other words, no one but an overcomer can have that experience which enables him to truly comprehend the "new name" - the nature of God wrought within. The world can never understand the man who has received the call to Sonship, much less the new nature itself. What strange mysterious element is there in the new nature that keeps a man pressing relentlessly on toward an invisible mark when friend and foe alike tell him that he is a fool to continue pursuing a vision which brings him nothing but misunderstanding, separation, persecution, tribulation, loneliness, and friendlessness? The inner command to completely and forever forsake the corrupted courts of Mystery Babylon to put on the mind of Christ, to be conformed to the image of the Son and know the wonder and glory of Sonship to God, makes him endure the cross, despise the shame, incur the scorn of fellow Christians and the wrath of Church systems, scoff at tribulation, and count every loss to himself a gain for Christ. Ah, such a walk can never be understood by any save "he that receives it"! The glory of Sonship to God is worthy to be written on pages of gold with ink of silver, but none of earth's vaunting philosophers can ever comprehend such truth and character as lies within the Christ nature.

In contrast to this, those who are partakers of the nature of the beast DO NOT "know the name" stamped upon them, are not aware of the character they bear, and have no idea of the depravity and deceitfulness of the nature in which they walk, as it is written, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: WHO CAN KNOW IT?" (Jer. 17:9). So many people today are worrying about what the mark of the beast is going to be. They themselves have taken that mark! The very fact of their not knowing what that mark is proves they have taken it. History reveals how that during the inquisitions and persecutions by the Roman Church in past centuries, many Christians who would recant to escape torture or death were branded on either the hand or forehead, or both, with a cross, even as cattle are branded to denote ownership. But that visible mark, which allowed those who took it to live and carry on ordinary business pursuits, was merely an outward mark to denote that they now subscribed to and upheld the doctrines of Rome and the deceptions of the beast. The whole realm of organized Christianity today subscribes to those same doctrines and deceptions in varying degrees.

Those who walk in carnal minds and dead letter-of-the-word understanding of the things of God can never understand what the mark is! Those imbued with the spirit and nature of the bestial system of this world, be it political, economic, or religious, bear the mark of the beast but are completely devoid of understanding of what it is! But HERE IS WISDOM: Let him that has understanding COUNT the number of the beast! Such understanding comes alone by revelation. There are two marks - the mark of the Father's name and the mark of the beast - and it takes a revelation to know either. As it takes revelation from on high to know the "new name" of the Christ, so it takes revelation from God to COUNT the "number of the name of the beast"!

Sufficient attention has not been paid by most Christians to the significance of the number six in the history of Israel in the Old Testament. Six is the broken twelve, and twelve is always the number of divine government and the signature of the Church in the Old Testament and in the New: the twelve Patriarchs, the twelve tribes, the twelve apostles, the multiple of twelve in the numbering of the mystical tribes of the 144,000 Sons of God, and the repetition of twelve and its multiples in the description of the

glorified Bride of Christ seen in the measurements of the New Jerusalem with its gates and walls. Six must therefore have a universal spiritual significance in the Scriptures.

One of the earliest occurrences of the symbolic usage of this mysterious number is in the primitive case of the giant who defied the armies of the Lord in the days of David - Goliath of Gath. This man symbolized the bestial system of the world. Goliath was six cubits (and a span) tall (more than nine feet). His spearhead weighed 600 shekels of iron. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" asked David (I Sam. 17:26). His glorious victory over Goliath beautifully typifies the victory of Christ and His body over the bestial system. The persistence of the number six in the family as well as the equipment of Goliath is one of the keys to the understanding of the "number" of the beast. Goliath had a brother of great stature who significantly had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot (II Sam. 21:20-22).

The full significance of the number 666 however, is disclosed in Daniel in the account of Nebuchadnezzar's great image set up in the plain of Dura, of dimensions 60 by 6 cubits. Goliath grows in dimensions and in importance the nearer we get to New Testament times. The image on the plain of Dura is ten times the dimensions of Goliath, and the number of the beast in Revelation thirteen is ten times that of the image of Nebuchadnezzar. The connection in history and prophecy is settled therefore. "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold whose height was three-score cubits and the breadth thereof six cubits" (Dan. 3:1).

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great image and was told by Daniel that the dream was a forewarning by God of the course of history until the Kingdom of God should come. The head of gold was the king of Babylon - "You are this head of gold" (Dan. 2:38). The dream image traced the rise and fall of the four great monarchies of Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome which dominated the civilized world, in succession, until Christ came and set up a Kingdom which was eternal and heavenly and which therefore could not pass away, but must destroy all worldly power in the course of its redemptive purpose. As the seven-headed beast of Revelation thirteen represents the COMPLETENESS of the world's bestial system, so the four-fold dream image of Nebuchadnezzar represents the WORLD-WIDE or UNIVERSAL power of the beast. At the height of the fourth monarchy a Babe was born in Bethlehem. Without human hands the image of world power disintegrated before this Kingdom of Christ which fought no earthly battles and could not be seen by mortal eyes, having no boundaries on earth, no visible royal center, but by the unseen power of the Spirit and the Word, overcame kingdoms, cast down principalities, humbled proud dominions, obtained promises, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness was made strong.

The image of this world's power and pride was brought down to nothing by the power of the WORD OF GOD. All this in effect was unfolded to Nebuchadnezzar, but he believed not, and remembered only that part of Daniel's interpretation which had to do with his own glory: "You are this head of gold." Deceived by the falseness of his own heart he sought to realize the fulfillment of his dream and establish HIS OWN GLORY, by the construction of an immense image of gold set up in the plain of Dura. Its precise measurements - 60 X 6 cubits - showed the impressive dimensions of his pride, as he modeled the image after the one in his dream, but instead of making the head alone of gold, he made the whole image of gold, usurping all the power and pride of all kingdoms UNTO HIMSELF! He forgot the prophet's warning "You are this head of gold ... the GOD

OF HEAVEN has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory...” and wrapped himself in his own pride, usurping the glory of God, taking that which was given by God and using it to his own ends and for the glorification of HIMSELF, requiring that all mankind should worship HIS IMAGE whenever they heard the music of his ungodly orchestra. The worship of the image meant in fact the worship of himself, who designed and built the image. In the contest which followed between the infatuated monarch and the three young Hebrews who refused to bow down to the bestial image, he learned a terrifying lesson. His furnace could not consume the victims of his wrath, who walked in the midst of the fire with One whose form was LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD! Can we not see by this that there is blessed deliverance from the bestial system of the world for all who are CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF GOD’S SON!

What John sees in his vision of the seven-headed beast and the two-horned beast and his image is the development of the scene in Daniel, only this of John is of a significance so much more exceeding in its immensity, that the 60 and six of Nebuchadnezzar’s image is dwarfed by the six hundred, three score and six of the apocalyptic image. But that which is signified is the same principle as that image on the plain of Dura. It is man, by the deceitfulness of pride of the human heart, usurping the glory of God, taking that which is graciously given by God and using it to his own ends and for the exaltation and glorification of HIMSELF. It is worldly power and pride exalted as an object of worship, elevated into a religion, imposed upon the consciences of men, demanding their homage and obedience. John’s vision therefore shows to us how the dragon in man raises a counterfeit to the Kingdom of Christ, proclaims his own kingdom as the Kingdom of Christ, and by usurpation, fraud, false doctrine, religious exhibitionism, and by all and every means diverts all worship to himself.

It is blasphemy against God to exalt the flesh and the world of man, in the place of God, and to take the high and holy things of God and use them for the promotion of SELF. But do not think for one moment, precious friend of mine, that the error of Nebuchadnezzar has not been repeated again and again, and in this our day! Hear now these sobering and anointed words which recently came across my desk: “There is a great and damning fault among Christians that seems to be past explanation. It is a fault that has developed and grown more grotesque as the years have come and gone. Men and women have come to desire and covet spiritual things, not for the glory of God and the honor of His eternal purpose, but that they themselves might become great men in the earth. Many a man has spent long periods in fasting that he might attain a great spiritual gift, yet all the time he is supposedly seeking the gift his talk shows that his mind is full of hope that he will become a great and powerful minister to whom people will look with awe and pride. This is wrong seeking and a very great evil. Many a man has sought after the gift of healing - not because he was burdened for the sick, but because the gift would bring him honor among the people. He expected that it would bring him crowds and fame and money. Oh, let men search their hearts before they ask of God lest they ask amiss to consume it upon their own lusts (James 4:3).

“Man is not satisfied by possessing earthly things. He secretly wants to possess the things of God as well and that for himself apart from God. Why did Nadab and Abihu wickedly offer strange fire before the Lord? Did they not want to possess for themselves what only God possessed? Why did Simon, the sorcerer, offer money for the gift that Peter had? He cared nothing for God, but in the gall of his bitterness and the bond of his rebellion he wanted to possess for himself something that belonged only to God and must not be had apart from Him. Do you not think that this strange desire exists today?

Do men desire the gifts of God to bring all glory to God, or do they covet them as a means of self-promotion and self-exaltation? How is it that so many men who seem to have gifts from God soon become the center of a little universe of their own where all roads lead to them and all fingers point in their direction? Let us face it. Men not only want to gather temporal things about themselves, but they also crave to have eternal things for themselves and to possess them in themselves and for the benefit and glory of themselves. The carnal mind is an eternal enemy of God. It refuses to become subject to the law of God, and indeed it is powerless to do so. But it secretly desires the things of God, wisdom, righteousness, and power, so that it may be AS GOD.

“The whole Church system itself is not one whit different. At the present time the existing Church system appears to be making significant gains all over the world. Probably more people go to Church than ever before in history, but, while numbers increase and costly buildings are erected in ever increasing and lavish profusion, while world-wide efforts costing billions are the thing of the day, the people for the most part have lost their sense of the majesty of God. Gaudily clad worldlings talk glibly about being born again; they speak with tongues, honor the pope, and even join their voices with those who hail Mary as the mother of God. Full well do they fulfill the words of Jesus spoken to the Church of Laodicea, ‘You say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked’ (Rev. 3:17). God’s counsel to all who are joy-riding with the system is: ‘Buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see’ (Rev. 3:18). The gains of the Church system have practically all been external gains and the fearful loss has been internal. The beauty of the life in the Spirit has been exchanged for the luxury of fine temples with comfortable pews. The songs which once swelled from hearts filled with God’s Spirit and holiness are now on the hit parade, being popularized by unsanctified professionals from Hollywood or Las Vegas. It is an enormous, degenerating calamity! It is an abomination that makes desolate!” -end quote.

To Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Daniel said, “You are this head of gold.” But Nebuchadnezzar took the glory conferred by God and used it to deify himself. He built his own image and commanded men to worship it. His image was all of gold. All its wealth was the wealth of the world. All its glory was the glory of the world. And was this not what the devil offered Jesus when he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, saying, “All these things will I give You, if You wilt fall down and worship me” (Mat. 4:8-9). Ah - the same voice heard centuries before on the plain of Dura! And it is reckoned with today BY ALL WHO WOULD FOLLOW ON TO KNOW THE LORD. The ultimate test for every Son of God is this: What will he do with what he receives from the Lord? Will he use it to his own ends, for his own or will he, like faithful Abraham of old, offer it as a sacrifice on the altar of full obedience to God? Every would-be Son will sooner or later face this test, and how he deals with it will determine whether he becomes one of the manifested SONS OF GOD or one of the many ANTICHRISTS.

The self-exalting spirit is not the Spirit of God - it is the spirit of the golden-gilded monstrosity of Babylon. By it millions are deceived to flock to the standards of covetous men. If you will listen to these modern-day Nebuchadnezzars, these self-appointed kings of Babylon, you will seldom see the humility of God’s Christ or the worship of Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, but the showmanship and arrogance of one who purports to be “God’s man of the hour”, or “God’s man of faith and power”, or some specially chosen vessel, commissioned to bring the gospel to the whole world in these

last days. If their human effort, their public relations companies, their monthly fund-raising letters, their begging for money, and their abominable gimmicks were taken away, their programs would disappear in a month!

Millions more follow after the beauty and pageantry of that which appears religious - with all its paganism and Romish doctrines, its worshipping of idols and altars, its ritual and ceremony, its elevation and worship of men, its trading in human souls, its love for money and power and all things for which the carnal nature lusts.

“666”

On that distant day upon the plain of Dura Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold was sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. We notice that the Church system is never satisfied with GOD ALONE, but is always building images - images of organization, system, ceremony, ritual, program, etc., as Nebuchadnezzar did, so that all their subjects should worship that image. In Revelation thirteen a mysterious number is attached to the beast and his image, called the “number of his name”, and special attention is called to it by the Holy Spirit. In the book of Revelation especially, the number seven is, as elsewhere throughout the Scriptures, prominent as the sacred number of completeness and perfection. The contents of the book opened by the Lamb is contained under seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials - a TRINITY OF SEVENS. It is in this book that the “number” of the beast is also represented as a TRINITY OF SIXES, and the contrast, as well as the intrinsic meaning of the number, intimates, that whatever else it may be, it is a perfect number of imperfection, or rather a number denoting PERFECT IMPERFECTION. In the Bible the number six refers to man - it is a human number. Man was created on the sixth day, man's appointed days of labor and toil are six, the Hebrew slave was to serve for six years, and for six years the land was to be sown. Six is the number of man's unredeemed nature, Old Adam - THE FLESH.

The number six itself awakened a feeling of dread in the breast of any Israelite who knew the significance of numbers. It fell below the sacred number seven, just as much as eight went beyond it. The number eight denoted something apart from just attaining perfection. Every Israelite male was circumcised on the eighth day, the “great day” of the greatest of all feasts was on the eighth day, Jesus Christ was revealed in the glory of resurrection life on the first day of the week (eighth day), etc. The number eight always expressed a NEW BEGINNING in active power. By a similar reckoning the number six was held to signify inability to reach the standard of DIVINE PERFECTION, and hopelessly falling short of it. To the Israelite there was thus a doom upon the number six when it stood alone. Triple it; let there be a multiple of it by ten and then a second time by ten until you obtain three mysterious sixes following one another; and we have represented a power of evil of which there can be none greater. The raising of the six to tens and hundreds (higher powers) indicates that the beast rises into a manifestation of FLESHLINESS and BEASTLINESS of which there can be none worse!

As we meditate upon these thoughts we are able to go a step further and see that man acts on three planes: THOUGHTS (in the unconscious realm), then WORDS (in the conscious realm), and finally, a culmination of both manifested as DEEDS performed by the physical body. If we have understanding to count it, as John said, we are able to see here the number of the beast. MAN'S number is SIX - and SIX in the realm of thought, then SIX raised to a higher power in the realm of words, and finally SIX raised to yet a higher power in the realm of deeds is 666 which = flesh, FLESH, F-L-E-S-H! Ah, who is

the beast? And what is his number? It is MAN - MAN exalting HIMSELF as God, usurping God's glory, taking the precious things of the Spirit and misusing them for his own purposes and aggrandizement.

While we once looked anxiously about for a social security number, a credit card number, or a laser-tattooed identification number to be the "mark of the beast" was it not truly there for us to see all along, for John plainly told us: "HERE IS WISDOM. Let him that has understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the NUMBER OF MAN and HIS NUMBER is SIX HUNDRED, THREESCORE AND SIX." The indefinite article "a" which appears in the King James translation is supplied by the translators and is not necessarily included in the Greek, since that language has no indefinite article. In symbolism, furthermore, NUMBER is used to denote the characteristics or the nature of a thing. Thus, the NUMBER OF THE BEAST is the NATURE of the beast, and the number 666 is shown to be the NATURE OF MAN! Even if we include the indefinite article so that reads, "For it is the number of a man," this does not in any case mean that the beast is "a man" for the "number of a man" means the measure of a man, that is, his inward state of being manifested by his outward actions, and how these are perceived by those about him.

The NUMBER then is important, not the name. We listen to the words, "His number is six hundred sixty six," and we have enough to make us tremble. There is in them a depth of perverseness, pride, presumption, deceit, and shame which no one can "know" except him to whom it is revealed by the blazing light and deep searching of the Holy Spirit of God. David, understanding something of the awful depth of the wickedness of the human heart cried out, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23-24). Ah, how different would be the story of human history had Adam, in holy humility and brokenness before God, earnestly prayed that prayer! Adam, walking in the Spirit, reflecting the glory of God, expressing the image of the Father, filling the earth with light and glory and righteous dominion, fell from that place in the heavenlies because of the lurking sin of SELF. We see this evidenced in the "I WILL" of Isa. 14:13-14: "I WILL ascend into heaven, I WILL exalt my throne above the stars of God ... I WILL ascend above the height of the clouds; I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH." This was Adam's response, in the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to the serpent's temptation: "YOU shall be as GOD!" You see, Adam was not content to allow the wisdom and glory and authority of God to operate THROUGH him. He wanted to take the dominion himself. The temptation that the serpent offered was merely the articulation of the deep-seated secret desire of Adam's SELF NATURE: "I will be like the MOST HIGH."

Perhaps now the enlightened mind can understand how it is that from the very beginning, when Adam was banished from the blessed Garden of God, SIX has been the number of MAN'S LABOR apart from GOD'S REST. And oh! how man labors. The carnal mind is always busy contriving new ways to WORK "FOR" GOD. In this hour we are continually being admonished to "get involved", get involved in politics, get involved in the Church, get involved in community activities, or in a hundred different things. The Church system is crying for people to become involved in her activities, and her programs are legion, but in all this cry for involvement I hear very little being said about GETTING INVOLVED WITH GOD. The Lord's command to the apostles was, "Tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). In simple language this means DO NOTHING until you are so yielded to God that HE CAN WORK through you!

Come near to the holy men and women of the past and you will soon feel the heat of their desire after God. They mourned for Him, they prayed and wrestled and sought for Him day and night, in season and out, and when they had found Him the finding was all the sweeter for the long seeking. Moses used the fact that he knew God as an argument for knowing Him better. "Now, therefore, I pray to You, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You"; and from there he rose to make the daring request, "I beseech You, show me Your glory!" God was frankly pleased by this display of ardor, and the next day called Moses into the mount, and there in solemn procession made all His glory pass before him. In meekness Moses sought nothing for himself, all for the glory of God. Through faithful communion with God Moses became acquainted with God's intentions. He was able to see far into the future and understand what the Lord purposed to do in distant ages. His wise heart knew what would evolve from the confusion and disorder of the day, He knew that from among the stiff-necked people he led the Lord would raise up a prophet like himself and that prophet would be Jesus Christ who would as a Son do all the will of the Father and only those things that pleased the Father. He saw, furthermore, that by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit the Lord would raise up other Sons of God who would be manifested in the end of the age in the fullness of HIS LIFE.

David's life was a torrent of spiritual desire, and his psalms ring with the cry of the seeker and the glad shout of the finder. Paul confessed the mainspring of his life to be his burning desire after Christ. "That I may know Him!" was the goal of his heart, and to this he sacrificed everything. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as refuse, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

But the beast will have none of this! He is busily engaged in his own human effort and program and has no time to seek God. What Church board consults the Lord to decide matters under discussion? Let anyone reading this who has had experience on a Church board in the organized Church systems try to recall the times or time when any board member read from the Scriptures to make a point, or when any chairman suggested that the brethren should fast and pray and wait in holy brokenness before God to see what instructions the Holy Ghost had for them on a particular question. Board meetings are habitually opened with a formal prayer or "a season of prayer"; after which the Head of the Church is respectfully silent while the REAL RULERS TAKE OVER. Let anyone who denies this bring forth evidence to refute it. I for one will rejoice to hear it!

What Sunday School committee goes to the Holy Spirit for directions? Do not the members invariably assume that they already know what they are supposed to do and that their only problem is to find effective means to get it done? Plans, rules, literature, visitation, puppet shows, and all kinds of new methodological techniques absorb all their time and attention. The prayer before the meeting is for divine help to carry out THEIR PLANS. Apparently the idea that the Lord might have some instructions for them never so much as enters their heads. After all - who ever heard of "waiting on the Lord" or expecting a "move of the Spirit" at a Sunday School committee meeting!

What foreign mission board actually seeks to follow the guidance of the Lord? They all THINK they do, certainly, but what they do in fact is to assume the Scripturalness of their ends and then ask the Lord for help to find ways to achieve them. They may pray all night for God to give success to THEIR ENTERPRISES, but Christ is desired as their helper,

not as their Lord. Human means are devised to achieve ends assumed to be divine. These crystallize into “policy”, and thereafter the Lord doesn’t even have a vote.

In the conduct of our meetings where is the Lordship of Christ to be found? The truth is that today the Lord rarely controls a service, and the influence He exerts is very small. We sing of Him, clap to Him, and preach about Him, but He must not interfere; we will worship our way, and go through our time-honored forms, and it must be right because we have always done it that way, as have the other Churches in our group. And those in the so-called “end-time” move of the Spirit are generally not any further advanced. Doesn’t everyone know that a meeting must begin with a few choruses, followed by a season of worship with singing in the Spirit, and then is the time for a prophecy or two? A few more choruses, a little more worship, perhaps another prophecy, prayer, announcements, offering, and the sermon. Don’t be deceived, brethren, we have created our very own little PATTERN, our unique little FORM, our “Spirit-led” SYSTEM! Surely, beloved, you cannot miss the obvious “number of his name” in all this - 666 - flesh, FLESH, F-L-E-S-H!

This is why Jeremiah the prophet declared with such strength of purpose: “The heart is DECEITFUL above ALL THINGS and DESPERATELY WICKED” and he went on to ask the searching question, “WHO CAN KNOW IT?” To the enlightened mind of this prophet, the depth of deceitfulness and iniquity of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of any man to comprehend. And this iniquity is not to be found in the overt sins of the flesh: adultery, murder, thievery, etc., but in the high places of God as the flesh grasps after the things of the Spirit for the promotion of SELF. The carnal mind is always desirous of spiritual gifts. It likes to appear honored of God and accepted. That is why there are so many false prophets, false teachers, false healers, and false miracle workers in the world. Men who love people to think they are the great power of God will, in spite of all their apparent wonders, hear God tell them on that day, “I never knew you.”

BUYING AND SELLING

“And that no man might BUY OR SELL, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Rev. 13:17). Our good friends of the “futurist” interpretation of Bible prophecy, with their fascinating and thrilling best-selling books, persist in their horror stories of days now supposed to be impending when for a very brief period of time (say three and a half years at most) the saints will be prohibited from engaging in commercial transactions! Sensationalism is always preferred to true spiritual understanding. The fact that many good men are already in prison, or are prohibited from preaching the gospel in many parts of the world, mean’s nothing at all to writers who cannot or will not be persuaded that the book of Revelation is a symbolical and SPIRITUAL BOOK, intended to be SPIRITUALLY UNDERSTOOD, and that buying and selling, in the prophetic sense, has a much more significant meaning than that of supermarket shopping.

Buying and selling in the spiritual sense has naught to do with the principles of commercial trade. The prophet Isaiah faithfully exhorted God’s people, “Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters, and he that has no money; come, BUY, and eat; yea, come, BUY wine and milk without money and without price” (Isa. 55:1). The prophet made it plain that he was not talking about worldly commerce, but about PAYING THE PRICE for the “milk” of God’s Word and the “wine” of His unspeakable joy and abounding

life. The wise man counseled: “BUY THE TRUTH, and SELL it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (Prov. 23:23). To “buy” the truth means to PAY THE PRICE to embrace and walk in the truth, and I have learned through many years of experience that the “price” of truth is oft times to simply be willing to “give up” or “sell” an error! To the Church at Laodicea, which prided herself that she was rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing, but knew not that she was wretched, poor, blind, and naked the Lord admonished, “I counsel you to BUY OF ME gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich...” (Rev. 3:18).

There is a pattern in the book of Revelation that shows that the first use of a word establishes the use and meaning of that word throughout the book. In this case, the first use of the word “buy” is with a SPIRITUAL APPLICATION. To “buy or sell” means, naturally, to engage in the ordinary pursuits of life, and to exchange one item of value for another. If the purpose of the whole vision in Revelation thirteen is spiritual, then applying this as a symbol on the spiritual plane reveals that those without the distinctive mark of the bestial system have no more recognized standing in the carnal Church systems than men who are not allowed to buy or sell have in a community. “Selling” as a symbol, specially indicates the DEALING OUT of truth, the MINISTERING of the things of the Spirit, while “buying” typifies the ACCEPTANCE of truth, the RECEIVING of the things of God.

And is it not true that a man of God walking in the Spirit and in the blazing light of heaven’s revelation, independent of all the man-made organizations, creeds, methods, and programs of Babylon, WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LABOR AMONG THE CHURCH SYSTEMS, after the truth for which he stands becomes known, or until he should take their mark upon him by joining himself to them? And if he holds meetings in the community, the members of the Churches are often warned by their leaders against “buying” - receiving - from this ministry because of his not having the mark or name of the beast. Their ministers are specially marked, for they come out of their colleges and theological seminaries with the stamp of their respective doctrine and traditions upon them and a license from the sect to engage in its ministry; and those not thus marked or designated HAVE NO PLACE AMONG THEM! Whether a man is a man of God with a heaven sent message matters nothing - he MUST bear the mark! This also reveals the manner in which the beast causes those who will not worship the image to be killed - an analogous killing; namely, an ecclesiastical cutting-off, an excommunication - the absolute refusal to either “buy or sell” the things of God with you unless you take upon you THEIR MARK!

How many of my readers would be permitted to “take communion” in most of the Churches in your city on Sunday morning? How many could teach a Sunday School class in one of those Churches? Ah, matters not whether you are a saint of God, and whether you bear the Word of God - you CANNOT “buy or sell” with them unless you take the mark and worship the image! You see, dear ones, there is not the slightest danger that I will be invited to say mass at St. Benedict’s Catholic Church next Sunday. There is absolutely no chance that I will be called to be the Pastor at the First Methodist Church, the First Baptist Church, or the Assemblies of God! I do not have to stay awake nights wondering what I will share next week at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses. You see, I don’t bear their mark, neither will I worship their image! And no man can “buy or sell” the things of God within those institutions save he that has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The facts just stated are well illustrated by the following circumstances. A number of years ago a precious brother in the ministry went into a certain town to find a place to conduct a series of meetings. He was directed by a Presbyterian lady to their pastor, who, she said, sometimes rented their Church facilities for various functions. When he called on the minister and made known his errand, the first question asked him was this, "Are you a member of the Presbyterian Church?" The brother answered in the negative. He did not have the name of the beast. The next question that greeted him was this, "Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith to be orthodox?" He answered, "No, sir." He did not have the mark of the beast. The last question asked was, "Do you belong to any of the various orthodox Protestant denominations?" The brother said, "No." He did not have the number of his name. The answer was, "You can not use our building." "Selah." (Pause and think about that!).

And organized religion, both Catholic and Protestant, is big business. The Charismatic movement is big business, too. Religion, in fact, is the biggest business in the world today! You and I, if we refuse to subscribe to its mockery, are excluded from carrying on the Father's business with it. All who refuse to subscribe to the traditions, dogmas, and defilements of the religious systems are ostracized and accused of being heretics and anathematized in as true a sense as were the martyrs of past ages who refused to bow down to the bestial system of this world.

Chapter 11

In dealing with issues so vast and extensive as those we have considered in these messages on THE ANTICHRIST, I am well aware that I have passed over many wonderful truths of overwhelming importance. As the antichrist spirit has been uncovered, the man of sin unmasked, and the antichrist system exposed, my great concern has been that beyond it all men might truly, as never before, SEE THE LORD. My deepest desire is to know Christ, not antichrist. I want to know not just about him, I want to intimately and fully know HIM. I want the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and make them real to me. Therefore I am more interested in CHRIST than in antichrist, and I am more concerned about the MARK OF GOD than I am with anything that pertains to the mark of the beast.

We stand before God in truth as did the queen of Sheba before Solomon as we read in I Kings 10:4-5, "And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; THERE WAS NO MORE SPIRIT IN HER." There is no more of our own spirit within us as we are melted before the revelation of the glory of the Lord in this day. For those who have received the call to sonship, incomplete as the present revelation is, yet we find that God is beginning to cause us to realize something of the magnitude and wonder of the work He is doing within our own beings as He brings us as Sons to His own glory.

No man who ever lived walked more faithfully with God than our Lord Jesus Christ and none was ever endued with so great an anointing as He. Mighty were the signs and wonders that followed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, yet even that bountiful outpouring was given by measure, the "earnest" of the Spirit, but of Jesus Christ the pattern Son it is written, "God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (Jn. 3:34). Time and again I have marveled at the wisdom with which He spoke, the nature in which He walked, and the power with which He ministered.

In the gospel of John, chapter five, Jesus has come up to Jerusalem to attend the feast. As He reaches the city He comes to the Pool of Bethesda and looks into the pool. There are five porches around that pool. He passes through the porches, and at last comes to a poor man, sick for thirty-eight years, who has been pushed away from the sacred spring. The man is lying there miserable and weary and we can imagine his cry: "O Jehovah Rapha! Jehovah my Healer! Have You come to earth? Is it true that You have come to save us? O Jehovah Rapha! Have You come to open the eyes of the blind, to give hearing to the deaf, and to make the lame man walk? Oh Christ of God! Have You no hope for me?" He pauses as he hears the Voice, "Will You be made whole?" And he looks up into the face of a Man who is looking down at him, asking that strange question, "Will You be made whole?"

Now you can imagine a man in this condition, who has been carried there for over thirty years, turning around and saying, "What is the use of asking me such a question? My mother carried me here to this pool when I was a baby, my father brought me here when he could. The hands of those who loved me best are moldering in the grave, and I have only a few friends to carry me here now. But others push me back and when the water is

moved I cannot get down to the pool. But I still hope. I have been thirty-eight years sick. Of course I am willing to be made whole. What is the use of asking me such a question?" That's what a man today would probably have answered. "Why of course I am willing." But he doesn't talk like that. The Man that is speaking to him has said, "Will you be made whole?" and there goes right down into his heart a strange sensation, his whole being vibrates like a harp when every string is touched by a master hand. That Voice is unlike any thing he ever heard. "Will you be made whole?" Gently he explains that he has no man to help put him into the pool, but that others when he is coming, step down before him. Then he waits with his eyes fixed on the Man who has so strangely appealed to his will. He gets ready, for the very next moment he hears the Voice of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, of Him who is the Lord of lords and King of kings say, "Rise, take up your bed and walk!" And in a moment there comes into his body with that Word, power; and he rises, takes up that bedroll, rolls it up and walks home, set free from the bonds of Satan who has bound him for thirty-eight years.

Precious friend of mine, ponder if you will, this solemn inquiry: Have you truly SEEN and MET Jesus the Christ? Has the Holy Spirit ever revealed to you that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Has He come to you, not as a man in the streets of ancient Jerusalem, but in mighty spirit power to deal a death blow to the works of the devil in your life, to renew your mind, transform your nature, and completely and forever MAKE YOU WHOLE in the image of God? If you have seen Him even through a glass darkly, you will be as Isaiah who wrote, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: and one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." If we see Him in this way, we will cry as Isaiah did, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have SEEN THE KING, the Lord of hosts." Any man who sees the glory of God so longs to be rid of the filth of his sin and the wretched defilement of the bestial system of this world that he cries, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23-24).

Do you see the Christ high and lifted up upon the throne in your temple? What part does He have in your life? "Oh," you say, "I am a member of the Church. I attend its services, I take its communion, I received its baptism, I see its forms and ceremonies, I see more services and activities and programs, I sing psalms, I have had hands laid on me, and I believe in miracles!" You can have all these things and never see the Christ! When we see Christ, my friend, neither heaven above nor earth beneath can find terms grand enough to express the wonder of His presence, or the miracle of the transforming power that comes into our lives with His Word, for in seeing Him we are eternally changed, as the apostle said, "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another" (II Cor. 3:18, KJV & Amplified).

This concluding chapter of the series on THE ANTICHRIST will not be a systematic study of the subject as have the preceding ones. My hope is to share with my readers a few "fragments" and "gleanings" that have been omitted along the way due to lack of space. Many use the term "antichrist" to designate an end-time super-deceiver who will embody the spirit of opposition to God and who shall emerge upon the world scene, grasping the reins of international political power, inaugurating an unprecedented reign of terror and

time of tribulation over all the peoples and nations of earth. This unscriptural usage is unfortunate. The Bible nowhere speaks of “the end-time antichrist”! The Church today is full of energetic and sincere preachers and teachers who are just full and bubbling over concerning things that are going to happen. Almost daily I receive across my desk their dire prophecies of doom and terrifying predictions of the coming antichrist, economic collapse, earthquakes, assassinations, Illuminati conspiracies, that this or that is the mark of the beast, etc., often complete with dates and time tables, none of which ever come to pass. It should be very humiliating to have world events continually follow a course exactly opposite to that which has been mapped out by one’s prophetic teaching, and to have one’s predictions proven false almost before the ink is dry on his paper. But not these false prophets! They are masters at glibly side-stepping their repeated failures with the assertion that they said merely that such-and-such “might” happen or “could” happen, or enough people prayed so that it “didn’t” happen, or their vision of the date involved was a little “hazy” so that it “may” have been 1990 instead of 1980! With feigned words and deceit they dupe and delude their sensation-seeking followers.

The world pays no attention to the modern day preacher when he always cries “Wolf”. By that I mean that the world today pays no attention to all this “calamity howling” being broadcast by the preachers. It is just something to joke about or to be endured by the world at large. Prophecies and sermons are given in the thousands of words. Books are published by the hundreds of thousands, giving dates and times and cycles and calamities that are to take place and NEVER DO THEY COME TO PASS. So the world scarcely notices, and goes on about its business of trying to make ends meet and keep up with the demands of daily living in a technological world. People sell or give away all their possessions and loudly proclaim the end of the world or the coming of the Lord, and many times assemble themselves in various places to await the supposed coming events. The time for their happening comes and goes, and the disappointed and disillusioned people are left destitute. Yet there are countless others waiting to be duped and disillusioned by some one else! Ah, beloved, it is high time for all the preachers and teachers and would-be prophets to leave their ignorance of God and His majestic purposes and acknowledge publicly their desperate lack, forsaking forever the delusions of their dead letter-of-the-Word interpretations of prophecy, and turning to the Lord for true SPIRITUAL wisdom and understanding.

Now, the remainder of this chapter will consist of “fragments” and “gleanings,” brief, sometimes disconnected, thoughts and insights the Spirit of God has quickened to my heart throughout these months of meditation and writing on this subject of the antichrist and the mark of the beast.

THE MAN OF SIN

We must understand that the antichrist has never been, and never will be, a real personage. The word comes from a compound Greek word made up of the preposition “anti” and the Greek word for Christ which is “Christos”. “Anti” is a Greek word meaning “opposed to” or “instead of”. The Greek word “Christos” means “anointed”. Therefore we find that the word “antichrist” properly signifies one who opposes, or one who sets himself up in the place of Christ, by appropriating some of the attributes of Christ. That is, antichrist appears AS Christ and by so doing is actually AGAINST Christ - usurping the place that rightly belongs to Christ alone! Anything that is placed INSTEAD OF Christ, is literally antichrist. Our lives and our Churches have been literally filled with the spirit and system of antichrist! Previous chapters in this series go into detail on this point.

Now I wish to point out a very important truth concerning the term and tenure of the “man of sin”. Note carefully the words of the apostle Paul in II Thes. 2:3-4. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day SHALL NOT COME, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin BE REVEALED, the son of perdition: who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” I would especially draw your attention to the TENSES of the verbs in verse three: “opposes”, “exalts”, “sits”, “showing”, “is” - these are all PRESENT TENSE. They indicate that at the very time the apostle penned these words this man of sin was ALREADY EXISTING AND OPERATING!

Now, let us go back to verse three and notice the difference in the tenses of the verbs in that verse. Paul says that that day “shall not come” except there “(shall have) come” a falling away, and that man of sin “(shall have been) revealed”. These are all FUTURE PERFECT TENSE - indicating that the actions expressed in verse four have been in operation before the actions expressed in verse three shall operate to completion. So we see that the tenure of the “man of sin” was already in force in Paul’s day and would continue right on until he “shall have been revealed” and subsequently, in verse eight, “consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming.”

Today, nineteen hundred years later, the “man of sin” is still not revealed except to a few. Have you noticed, dear one, that Paul does not say of the man of sin that he should be BORN - but that he would be REVEALED. He does not say that he suddenly emerges upon the world scene, nor that he seizes political power, nor that he marshals vast armies - but simply that the one who was already, in his day, sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God, opposing and exalting himself above the rule of the Spirit - would be REVEALED. The whole world has been waiting for the man of sin to be revealed, and now by the grace of God HE IS BEING REVEALED as the Lord makes known to His apprehended ones the awful depths of our own inherent sin, self-will, and carnal minds which ARE ENMITY AGAINST GOD and are not subject to God, neither indeed can be.

This man of sin seated within our very own temple of God will do everything within his power to conceal his identity, for his discovery is his undoing! He is hidden, not to Christ and God, but to the man who is not walking in the Spirit. As our lives become exposed to the life and light of Christ the man of sin IS REVEALED, uncovered, exposed - then to be dealt with, destroyed, consumed by the bright-burning of the arising of the sun of righteousness within our hearts. If the cunning, craftiness, subtleness, deceitfulness, treachery, and wickedness of the self-ego of old Adam’s nature is being uncovered, revealed, exposed by the Spirit’s dealings, then know, beloved, that THE HOUR OF HIS DESTRUCTION IS AT HAND. The order is: REVEALED... DESTROYED! Praise the name of the Lord!

This long tenure of operation of the man of sin is, then, at least 1900 years, the totality of the Church age. This definitely precludes the possibility of the man of sin being a single man upon the earth in one specific time period. The active period of any human being’s dominating influence is generally limited to a decade or a quarter century. Surely it is evident that the man of sin is not an individual human being! But who will argue with the fact that the CHURCH WORLD has been dominated by the self-ego and carnal mindedness of MAN throughout the nineteen long centuries of Church history! Ah, the man of sin has RULED in the temple of God, but thank God! the day for the CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE has come and for all who are apprehended of God to be a part of this

great work the Spirit is faithfully and relentlessly purging, refining, crushing, and stripping these of all that pertains to the wickedness and power of the carnal mind.

IS MAITREYA THE ANTICHRIST?

(originally written in 1982)

Perhaps the boldest effort ever made to bring forth a world antichrist occurred on April 25, 1982, when major newspapers around the world carried a full-page advertisement which proclaimed in part: "In Answer To Our Call For Help, As World Teacher For All Humanity - THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE. HOW WILL WE RECOGNIZE HIM? Look for a modern man concerned with modern problems - political, economic, and social. Since July, 1977, the Christ has been emerging as a spokesman for a group or community in a well-known modern country. He is not a religious leader, but an educator in the broadest sense of the word - pointing the way out of our present crisis. We will recognize Him by His extraordinary spiritual potency, the universality of His viewpoint, and His love for all humanity. He comes not to judge, but to aid and inspire. WHO IS THE CHRIST? Throughout history, humanity's evolution has been guided by a group of enlightened men, the Masters of Wisdom. They have remained largely in the remote desert places of earth, working mainly through their disciples who live openly in the world. This message of the Christ's reappearance has been given primarily by such a disciple trained for his task for over 20 years. At the center of this 'Spiritual Hierarchy' stands the World Teacher, LORD MAITREYA, known by Christians as the Christ. And as Christians await the Second Coming, so the Jews await the messiah, the Buddhists the Fifth Buddha, the Moslems the Iman Mahdi, and the Hindus await Krishna. These are all names for one individual. His presence in the world guarantees there will be no third World War ... WHEN WILL WE SEE HIM? He has not as yet declared His true status, and His location is known to only a very few disciples. One of these has announced that soon the Christ will acknowledge His identity and within the next two months will speak to humanity through a worldwide television and radio broadcast. His message will be heard inwardly, telepathically, by all people in their own language. From that time, with His help, we will build a new world..."

The cost of this full-page ad in major cities worldwide ran in the millions of dollars. It was headline news in parts of Western Europe. The organization promoting this "Christ" is known as "Tara" and the man responsible for proclaiming him is one Benjamin Creme. The Tara organization, in its publication EMERGENCE, published the following account about the activities of Mr. Creme: "WHO IS BENJAMIN CREME? Benjamin Creme is a 58 year old Scot, an artist by profession. Since his early youth, he has been interested in 'the esoteric', the area of the Ageless Wisdom which has been transmitted from one generation to the next. In 1959, he received a telepathic message from his own Master, a member of the Hierarchy - an event which came as a complete surprise to him. At that time, he was given to understand, among other things, that the return of the Christ was at hand and that he would play an active role in it himself. Later, Creme received communications which came directly from Maitreya himself. In 1975, he was given the mission of announcing publicly the coming of Maitreya, although at the time Creme did not yet know precisely when that would occur. Some months after the World Teacher had reached his center 'somewhere in the modern world' from His residence in the Himalayas, Creme received the first public message from Maitreya. These have continued up to the present..."

The word “maitreya”, in the ancient Indian language, Sanskrit, means “friend”. Evidently, this is not his real name, but an assumed title used to imply that he is the friend of all mankind. According to propaganda by Benjamin Creme and the Tara group, Maitreya was born 2,600 years ago in the Himalaya mountains, Since that time he supposedly has been evolving into the perfect spiritual being, until he has become a god, the messiah of the world! One claim made by Mr. Creme for his messiah is that he will perform great wonders and miracles. The most ambitious miracle of all is explained in an interview that appeared in the May 10, 1982, Los Angeles Examiner. Creme said, “We shall see His face on our television sets but He will not speak. His thoughts, His ideas will seep into our minds in our own language. It will be an inner telepathic contact which He will establish with the whole of humanity. We shall hear Him in English, while the Russians hear Him in Russian, the Chinese in Chinese, the Dutch in Dutch, the French in French, the Italians in Italian and so on and so on. Simultaneously throughout the world, hundreds of thousands of spontaneous, apparently miraculous healings will occur to reinforce the fact that He is indeed the Christ that we are watching. And soon after the day of declaration, He will introduce to the world 12 of His Masters, His disciples. One of them will be the disciple who was Jesus in Palestine 2,000 years ago, and he will be in charge of, as he is now, the Christian Churches, wherever they are found.”

It is abundantly clear that Mr. Creme knows nothing at all about the Christ of God. He states that Maitreya IS THE CHRIST, and then declares that Jesus is ONE OF THE DISCIPLES OF MAITREYA, given authority only over the Christian Churches. It is evident that he has not read nor does he believe the anointed words proclaimed on the day of Pentecost, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same JESUS, whom you have crucified, BOTH L-O-R-D AND C-H-R-I-S-T” (Acts 2:36); nor is he aware that God has “set HIM (Jesus) 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, not only in THIS WORLD, but also in that which IS TO COME” and “God also has highly exalted HIM, and given Him a name which is above EVERY NAME: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that EVERY TONGUE should confess that JESUS CHRIST I-S L-O-R-D to the glory of God the Father!” (Eph. 1:20-21; Phil. 2:9-11).

A number of people have written asking what I think about Maitreya - is he the antichrist? Literature I receive from one self-appointed prophet in the midwest (whose prophecies I have tacked up on my office wall - none of which have come to pass) boldly proclaims in the May, 1982, issue, “THE BEAST IS COME ... the Lord has directed me to set down in Texas for a rest break and to pursue the emergence of this Beast-Anti-Christ. This report has this vital and urgent subject as focus. What has Jesus said to me? On May 9, 1982, Jesus said this: ‘This is he of whom I spoke.’ We knew it was for our life time, but its hard to believe its here, except here it is. Generally I find that most Christians, and too many ministers, are complacent, indifferent, unbelieving, and ill-informed. Those that hear this news fail to grasp the gravity and the deadly nature of this evidence of the Beast’s presence. When I say evidence, I speak of something very obvious, yet to many it seems insignificant. Jesus plainly told me on Feb. 19, 1982, ‘The Beast is Come.’ Jesus would then send me out over the USA and Canada SEALING HIS PEOPLE and has me speaking as I SEAL them saying, ‘I seal you with the Seal of the Living God and the empowerment of Christ to stand against the Beast Anti-Christ and to stand in the victory of Christ.’ It would be on the 40th day since I began this journey to SEAL the saints with Christ’s empowerment and help that this WORLDWIDE FULL PAGE AD WOULD

APPEAR ANNOUNCING THE BEAST'S PRESENCE AND EMERGENCE. Is this just coincidence? What is essential to grasp is that the Beast Anti-Christ is here ... the next important issue is how long before he reveals himself and lastly, what are we to do about it? Jesus has sent me out to Seal His children against the Beast ... up until April 8, 1983." -end quote.

This is the day of false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming THEMSELVES into the apostles of Christ, and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great wonder if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness (II Cor. 11:13-15). The world is filled with those who claim to be prophets, messiahs, or heralds of the messiah. A day seldom passes when we do not receive such claims from people who say they are "the anointed" to lead God's people through the dark and troublesome days at the end of the age, or God's "special messenger" to get the saints ready for the Lord's return, or God's prophet commissioned to "seal" the elect before the fury of the tribulation breaks, or that they themselves are Elijah, or the Two Witnesses, or the manifested Sons of God, or the Melchizedek Order. One claims to have a golden altar powerful enough to stop an invading horde of two hundred million Chinese. Another claims that their group of "sons" already control the events of the whole world. A dozen more claim to be "God's man of the hour". All these and many more claim to be the anointed of God, and every one of them have hundreds of followers, while some of them count their followers in the millions. These are false prophets and false Christs, false anointed ones, DECEIVING MANY by their crafty claim to be anointed of God.

Is Maitreya "the antichrist"? Some say he is. I must speak a word against that! I am perfectly willing to have my prophecy placed along-side that of anyone who presumes to prophesy that Maitreya is the long-awaited end-time "beast" or "antichrist". We will see who the false prophets are! Certainly Maitreya is "an" antichrist, as the beloved John explained, "Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now there are MANY ANTICHRISTS; whereby we know that it is the last time" (I Jn. 2:18). For those who trust in Maitreya as the Christ, he is indeed an antichrist, supplanting the place of the true Christ of God in their lives. Consider carefully what I now say. There are no deathless 2,600 years old "Masters of Wisdom" in the Himalaya mountains of India and Tibet. It is all a cruel delusion, a satanic effort to mimic and counterfeit the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD destined by God to bring glorious and complete deliverance to the groaning creation. But it is a lie. I am sure I speak the truth by the Spirit of God when I say that Lord Maitreya doesn't even exist - except as a LYING SPIRIT in the mouth of the false prophet, Benjamin Creme!

It is true, wonderfully true - THE CHRIST IS HERE! Ah, He has come in mighty Spirit power to indwell a people, the body of Christ, and to be formed in all perfection and fullness in that people, as the apostle asserts, "to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). "I am the vine; YOU are the branches" were the living words that fell as the dew of heaven from the anointed lips of the Christ of God. As the branch grows out of the vine, so in like manner do we, the Sons of God, grow out of the VINE WHICH HE IS. The vine bears the branches. The branches bear the fruit. And there shall be an abundant harvest as many Sons come to His very own glory! Press on, saints of God. The Christ IS HERE in a many membered body. Let us not sell the groaning creation short - let us yield ourselves into His loving hands until HE IS REVEALED in all His glorious and eternal reality!

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

There is a highway which begins in southern Arizona, runs through part of New Mexico and into Colorado. It is numbered Highway 666. We used to cross this highway when we made frequent trips from El Paso, Texas to Phoenix, Arizona. I remember commenting to Lorain one time that I wondered how many people would be afraid to travel on that route because it has the number of the "beast". Later I learned through a brother that there are actually people who would rather not drive this highway because of this number. He knows people who feel they should drive especially carefully while on this road! Of course it is always sound judgment to drive carefully, but why on Highway 666 any more than on Highway 66, or Highway 90, or any other! Obviously Highway 666 has nothing to do with the mention of 666 in Revelation thirteen. Two entirely different things are in view, the only similarity being the number. Yet often superstition causes people to worry about things that are senseless. May the Lord thoroughly cleanse all who would be Sons of God from silly SUPERSTITIONS!

You would be amazed to know just how much plain old SUPERSTITION many of God's precious saints have in regard to "end-time" events! Some people become fearful around every election time. I heard a brother in Florida in 1960 predict that if Kennedy won the election the Pope would rule the United States and every Bible-believing Church would be closed up before his term was out. I heard of another preacher who predicted practically the same thing, and when Kennedy won the election this man had a heart attack and almost died! I knew some lovely people who campaigned "for God and Goldwater". They believed that if Goldwater lost the election the tribulation would be upon us! Sad to say, since that time it has come to light that Goldwater wouldn't even know God, if he saw Him! I know others that FEAR of the "Beast Government", or the "tribulation", or some prophesied destruction caused to sell their homes and property and move to some wilderness farm or some other "safe" place. The things they feared never came to pass. Their lives would be better, happier, and more productive for the Kingdom of God if they had stayed right where they were. Too often people become alarmed about what this world leader or that leader is going to do. But remember when Pilate said to Jesus, "Don't You know that I have power to crucify you, and have power to release you?" Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me, except it were GIVEN YOU FROM ABOVE" (Jn. 19:10-11). I have come to see that there is really no point in getting all worked up over the politics of "this present evil world", as though my vote for one man whom I may imagine to be better than another is really going to preserve the world from the Communists, or from the "Beast", or from the "tribulation". It is my deep conviction that it is the MOST HIGH GOD who "changes the times and the seasons: HE removes kings, and sets up kings: He knows what is in the darkness, and THE LIGHT DWELLS WITH HIM" (Dan. 2:21-22).

There are many preachers, even in this end-time move of the Spirit, who specialize in preaching FEAR instead of the Kingdom of God. These suppose they must always tell the bad side of things. They wildly speculate about world events, elections, economic collapse, wars, the mark of the beast, etc., supposing that every national or world crisis that comes portends the end. With each new election, or change, or crisis they suspect a vast conspiracy. If they don't like the Jews, all the trouble in the world is blamed on the Jews. Or it is the Communists - everyone they don't especially like is branded a Communist! Or they blame the United Nations, some minority group, the Illuminati, the world bankers, computer systems, or the Catholics! They continually live on the brink of Armageddon - and apparently feel they should preach FEAR all the time so they will have plenty of company!

The prophet David spoke of times like those in which we now live, and like Jesus, he too likened the chaos of this present evil world to the relentless lashing of the sea and waves, as the clamorous demands of men and nations strike out against the bulwarks of a civilization that was once thought to be impregnable. David's prophecy is addressed to those who have faith in the wonderful promises of God, those who have been translated into the citizenship of the Kingdom of God, and of these he declares, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. THEREFORE WILL WE NOT FEAR, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof" (Ps. 46:1-3).

"WE WILL NOT FEAR!" declares the prophet. WE WILL NOT FEAR though the earth (social and religious order) be removed! WE WILL NOT FEAR though the mountains (strong kingdoms) be carried into the midst of the sea (brought down by raging, clamorous masses of godless humanity)! WE WILL NOT FEAR though the waters (peoples) be troubled! WE WILL NOT FEAR though the mountains (kingdoms) shake! No place to hide, there, surrounded on all sides by trouble, distress, and calamity, with no "safe area" unto which to flee, but, WE WILL NOT FEAR! Hallelujah! "FOR GOD IS OUR REFUGE, a very PRESENT HELP in trouble."

Fear religion is everywhere and, alas! it has reared its ugly head even in the camp of those who would be the Sons of God. Some are hoarding food, others are storing up guns and ammunition. A number are fleeing to farms and communes in different parts of the world. All of these activities stem from a deep-rooted FEAR, and none of them are from GOD! It is only when doctrines of demons and ideas which come from demonic delusions begin to creep into a person's thinking that various kinds of dark FEARS emerge. When a person becomes obsessed with PHYSICAL PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION he has quit thinking on "those things which are above" and is more concerned about "things on the earth". Such a person is reasoning from FEAR, not faith!

"For God has not given to us the SPIRIT OF FEAR; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7). There is only one legitimate fear in the whole universe and that is the FEAR OF THE LORD. When the prophets of doom prophesy destruction upon your city or state, if you are easily moved by the spirit of FEAR you will sell your home and run! On the other hand, if your life is motivated by the FEAR OF THE LORD, you will wait upon God, try the spirit of the prophet, inquire of the other Spirit-anointed ministries in the body of Christ, and then make a judgment from the witness of the Spirit in your own heart. Mark well, my beloved brethren, this DIFFERENCE between the SPIRIT OF FEAR and the FEAR OF THE LORD. Meditate deeply upon the different kind of action evoked by each. True prophets of the Lord at times prophesy judgment. But in receiving the message, we will act or react either out of FEAR OF THE JUDGMENT, or out of REVERENCE OF THE LORD. How we walk in this hour manifests which company we are in: the company of the Sons of God, upon whom shall rest the seven Spirits of God, or the company of them that "draw back unto perdition".

Another has expressed this truth so beautifully, that I feel to quote: "No need for panic, for hasty action - you can well afford to wait for God, He goes before you, and He goes WITH YOU, and He fights FOR YOU, and He remains right with you, and all with the purpose of your ultimate salvation. He is bringing forth many Sons unto glory, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Our salvation is of first priority in His purpose. Wonderful! The angelic hosts are commissioned to minister for those who shall

be heirs of salvation. All creation groans and travails together waiting for the birthing of the Sons of God. Everything in the universe is directed towards this event in God's present purpose of the ages. Why then should we tremble, make haste in some fearful, panic-stricken action to try and save ourselves? HE will save us! 'And in that day it shall be said, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation' (Isa. 25:9)."

See that you do not fear. The Lord your God in the midst of you is mighty. In every circumstance and situation He is present, not only around you, but within you. Daniel didn't have to find a wilderness retreat in order to escape the Lion's den. GOD was with him! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't store up guns in order to shoot their way out of the fiery furnace. GOD was with them IN THE FURNACE! Noah "passed through" the waters of the flood and came out victorious on the other side. GOD was with him! The children of Israel never needed any fortress to protect them from any enemy, regardless how powerful or formidable, as long as they made GOD their refuge and strength. GOD was with them and fought their battles! The very last people on earth to lean upon the arm of flesh should be those who have received the call to sonship...

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST OVER ANTICHRIST

After multiplied centuries of activity and preaching by the antichrist religious systems two-thirds of the human race are buried still in heathen darkness, sensual and ignorant as animals, selfish and cruel as wild beasts, bowing down to the creature, and knowing nothing of the Creator. Of the other third, nearly six hundred millions, cursed with the degrading creed of the false prophet, Mohammed, are almost equally sensual and ferocious and cruel, while they dishonor God still more by blaspheming and rejecting His beloved Son; almost six hundred millions are nominally involved in the Papal apostasy, and about seventy-five millions in the Greek Orthodox; how little is God either glorified or enjoyed among these! How little is His word received, or His character understood, or His will done, or His communion sought! And in the small remainder, the three hundred and forty millions in the Protestant world, what carnality and vanity reigns, and how little is God either experienced or glorified!

It is acknowledged on all hands that in the metropolises of the greatest so-called Christian nation in the world, our own beloved country, where, if anywhere on earth, Christ is acknowledged, here, instead of God being glorified, His laws are by the masses trampled under foot, and sin and misery, crime and violence, immorality and perversion, and worldliness and apostasy, in one form or another, abound. How truly the whole creation groans, and travails in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God! The deepest and truest compassion for the sufferings and sorrows of humanity must prompt the cry, How long, O Lord? And apart altogether from the joy and glory that is to be brought TO THEM by the manifestation of the Sons of God, the saints must long for this unveiling, that the creation itself may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God (Rom. 8:18-21).

If God does not intend to deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption, and if God's purpose is not to bring all creation into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, then the manifestation of the Sons of God is totally meaningless. Nothing chills my spirit more than the wicked contention by some that all things shall continue on as they are, generation after generation and age after age, light and darkness co-existing, truth and error dwelling together, sin and righteousness side by side, life and death synchronous,

and Christ and antichrist contending in an eternal, never ending conflict. I hate such a doctrine, for it denies the omnipotent Christ of God His ultimate triumph, while distorting His nature, limiting His love, restricting His grace, and maligning His wisdom. Ah, beloved, how I rejoice in the knowledge that the good old Book is really true! The apostle was not lying when he wrote, "THEN COMES THE END when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down ALL RULE and ALL AUTHORITY AND POWER. For HE MUST REIGN, til He has put ALL ENEMIES under His feet. The LAST ENEMY that shall be destroyed IS DEATH ... and when ALL THINGS shall be subdued UNTO HIM, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him (the Father) that put all things under Him, that GOD MAY BE A-L-L I-N A-L-L" (I Cor. 15:24-26, 28).

It should be evident to every thinking mind that death will never be destroyed so long as there is one man anywhere in all the unbounded universe abiding in death; and God will never be all-in-all so long as He is only some-in-some, or all-in-some, or some-in-all. The moment the Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts the infinite wisdom of God's purpose of the ages, then it becomes crystal clear what the Scripture means when it says that IN THE END God shall be ALL-IN-ALL. This can be the only logical conclusion to the purpose of a God of omniscient wisdom, omnipotent power, and all-encompassing love.

While we praise God for every moving of His Spirit and each step of His all wise plan, the fact remains that none of the revivals of history have ever once-for-all defeated satan, sin, and death. No revival in any land has turned the whole world to God! No dealing of God with humanity has ever brought to pass the TOTAL TRIUMPH of His Kingdom in all realms! Sin and death still stalk across the earth, the vast masses of humanity held tight in their terrible clutches. Is there no deliverance for these? How truly the whole creation groans, and travails in pain together, waiting, not for another Luther, or another Peter, or another Finney or Moody; waiting not for another Pentecost, nor for another healing campaign; but for THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD! "For the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered..." Praise God!

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was never intended to accomplish so great a purpose. God's purpose in this age has been, not to deliver the whole creation, but to "take out a people for His name" in order that, by His goodness to us in Christ Jesus, He might display in the ages to come the transcendent RICHES OF HIS GRACE (Eph. 2:7). Having accomplished His purpose for this age, the Lord shall then use the finished product from this age, a company of Sons in His image, to be deliverers to the rest of creation.

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, to build a little kingdom. These all imagine that somehow they are going to go out and storm the world and "take the world" for Christ. 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 their ambitious programs and preaching their own ideas and the doctrines of the antichrist. It simply would not work. The world has grown steadily worse. Their lofty phrases, and text-book prayers, and apologetic platitudes, and time-honored traditions have utterly failed. Now a new company is to go forth with a burning message of truth direct from the throne, and in the fullness of power of which Pentecost was but the

“earnest” and the “firstfruits”. The anointing of the Sons of God shall be an anointing WITHOUT MEASURE, and the message of these Sons shall be a message stripped of all the ineffectual absurdities that have been preached throughout the years. Religionists have side-stepped, and mollycoddled, and back-slapped too long. Their day is done. A new army is being prepared for a new day, an army of the Sons of God perfected in His image, radiating the effulgence of His glory, demonstrating the omnipotence of His power. And there shall be exultant victory. For now the day is dawning when “A-L-L nations shall come and worship before You” (Rev. 15:4). Not men out of all nations, but ALL NATIONS shall come and worship! Glory.

Thank God, Dan. 7:27 is really true! “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and A-L-L DOMINIONS S-H-A-L-L S-E-R-V-E H-I-M.” Thank God, Eph. 1:10 is actually the fully inspired Word of God! “And this is in harmony with God’s merciful purpose for the GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD when the times are ripe for it - the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head IN HIM” (Weymouth).

Of death it is written: “And there shall be no more death” (Rev. 21:4). Of Mystery Babylon it is stated: “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). Of the bestial system of this world it is prophesied: “And the beast was taken, and... cast... into the lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20). And of the Kingdom of God it is declared: “The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ... but it shall BREAK IN PIECES AND C-O-N-S-U-M-E A-L-L T-H-E-S-E K-I-N-G-D-O-M-S, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44). Blessed promises of a mighty deliverance, which even now we behold with the eyes of faith and revelation!

The manifestation of the Sons of God is not a doctrine, it is the revelation of the wonderful purpose of God for the next step in the development and triumph of His Kingdom. And while it is true, He sets HIS SEAL upon those whom He has called unto His purposes, there must be also a response on our part, and this is the kind of act that the beloved John is speaking of when he writes, “He that has received HIS TESTIMONY has set HIS SEAL to this, that God is true” (Jn. 3:33). Praise God, there is a people, even in this dark hour, who are setting THEIR SEAL to the truths the Spirit is revealing, agreeing with God, not willing to accept the emptiness of man-made religion as God’s instrument for this hour, unwilling to be content to possess only an earnest of the Spirit or to settle for anything less than HIS FULLNESS, and living in daily anticipation of the GREATER GLORY to be revealed in God’s Sons.

There is such a deep desire within to be freed from every aspect of the character of the beast, cleansed and purified, transformed into HIS IMAGE, until the life and glory and power of God shall flow from our lives setting all creation free. Our spirits shout, AMEN! Those who put THEIR SEAL to the word God is speaking to His chosen ones in this hour have a single eye unto HIM. Not a divided vision, for “a double minded man is unstable in all his ways.” Today he wants to be a Son, tomorrow he wants to serve the flesh, and in all the vacillating between he will receive nothing from God. All who cherish the hope of sonship now face the hour of TOTAL COMMITMENT UNTO CHRIST and to the truth,

even though it means taking a stand against our own flesh, and all we have held dear, while it is dealt with by His cross.

I believe I speak the truth when I say that many of us have reached the point of no return - there is nothing to go back to, not in the flesh, not in the world, not in the Church systems, there is nothing out of which we have been drawn to which we would return, it is all empty, meaningless, lifeless, worthless. Now we must FOLLOW ON TO KNOW THE LORD IN HIS FULLNESS. It is vain to come out, unless we are committed to ENTER IN. We are committed to a course which cannot be altered, for it is fixed in its destination - His throne! "To him that overcomes 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).

Precious friend of mine, have you set YOUR SEAL to the inward testimony of God's purpose in this hour, and His will in your life? "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).

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).