

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 110

THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS (continued)

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star having fallen from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key to the *bottomless pit*" (Rev. 9:1).

The next mystery that we need to understand, in order to grasp the vision that John saw, is the meaning of the term "bottomless pit." Let me illustrate: "He's a liberal." "He's a conservative." He's a radical." "He's a capitalist." "He's a socialist." "He's a terrorist." "He's a freedom fighter." "He's religious." "He's spiritual." What do these words mean? To one person they bear one meaning, while to another person they may mean something else altogether. That's why we have dictionaries which endeavor to define terms. But even with a dictionary at hand, we all have our own ideas about what particular words mean. "Spiritual" probably means something very different to many who read these lines than it does to a Buddhist or a Spiritist! Often discussions and arguments end in confusion because we use the same words but invest them with different meanings. When we do this we cannot properly communicate with each other because we are not on the same "wavelength." For the student of the scriptures one of the toughest word nuts to crack is the term "bottomless pit"!

Now, what do we mean by a *bottomless pit*? The Greek word for bottomless is *abussos* which is derived from a root word meaning "depthless." In Greek it is called the "pit of the *abussos*" from which we derive our English word *abyss*! Perhaps it would be better translated as the "pit of the *abyss*" or the "pit of the *unfathomable depth*." "Bottomless" is a good translation of this word, for the thought of the Greek is that it is that whose depths are unmeasurable. As soon as one attempts to suppose a physical or literal reality corresponding to this picture-image, he falls into endless difficulty. My impression is that we have here a *spiritual picture* of a character and nature. It is true that righteousness and truth are related not only with *light*, but also with *height*, and evil and error are associated not only with *darkness*, but also with *depth*. Tracing backward to the root of the word *abussos*, it is interesting to note that *abussos* is a variation of *buthos* which means "profundity." It becomes, then, a *profundity* which in its spiritual meaning signifies a *thought* or a *nature* — *so deep* as to be beyond the comprehension of the natural mind!

Armed with these meanings of "bottomless" "depthless," "unfathomable depths," and "profundity" it is revealed as a pit which has no bottom! Therefore, there is no substance, no foundation, no ground to stand upon. What that really says to us is that it has no *reality* — that is, no basis in fact. Now, it *appears* to have a bottom, a foundation, for does not every pit have a bottom? Yet it does not. Therefore the pit represents a *lie*!

The next thing we need to remember in order to understand this great mystery is that Satan is a liar and the father of lies. Jesus said it so plainly and powerfully, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him*. When he *speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own*: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (Jn. 8:44). What is a lie? A lie is error. It is an untruth. It is an *unreality*. It is that which appears to have

substance, but in fact is an illusion or imagination. It's a mirage. It looks like something, but is actually nothing. That's a *lie*!

A study of the scripture passages in which the *abyss* is mentioned will reveal to us that it is always associated with the waters of the earth. At the dawn of God's creation darkness was upon the face of the *abyss*. Then the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the *waters* (Gen. 1:2). The deep springs of the abyss were broken up at the great flood (Gen. 7:11; 8:2). Again we read of the *waters* of the great deep, or abyss (Isa. 51:10). And in our text (Rev. 9:1) the word "pit" comes from a word meaning *well*. It could be translated "the *well* of the *abyss*." It indicates an immeasurable depth of water! The abyss is portrayed as the farthest extreme from heaven and the heights of the mountains (Gen. 49:25; Deut. 33:13; Ps. 36:6). In other passages it is used as a reference to the deepest parts of the sea (Job. 28:14; 38:16; Ps. 33:7). In other places it is pictured as subterranean rivers and vaults of water (Deut. 8:7; Job 36:16). The crossing of Israel through the depths of the Red Sea is repeatedly likened to a passage through the abyss (Ps. 77:16; 106:9; Isa. 44:27; 51:10; 63:13). Looking at the natural *shadow* or *type* of the higher spiritual truth, we find that the ocean covers seventy-two percent of the earth's surface. Its average measurable depth is 11,500 feet. Its greatest measured depths are the *Nares Deep*, 28,200 feet in the Atlantic and the *Nero Deep*, 36,614 feet in the Pacific. Off the coast of Japan, there is a spot so deep...they just gave up, marked how much line they had dropped and logged it "deeper than that." That, my beloved, is a truer picture of the abyss!

Bear with me as I repeat again the great truth that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and like everything else in the book the scenes John beheld in chapter nine are all *symbols* standing for spiritual realities, both positive and negative. As we progress from trumpet to trumpet there is an ascending scale in the depth of our Father's dealings in the lives of His elect! When the first trumpet sounded hail and fire mingled with blood were cast into the *earth*, the soulical realm of mind, will, emotion, and desire. This dealing of the Lord is with the "good" of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The natural mind, while appearing intellectual, moral, sophisticated, and even religious, is really "enmity against God." At the sounding of the second trumpet a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the *sea*, the body realm, with all the gross sins of the flesh. Then the third trumpet sounded and a great star from heaven fell upon the *rivers* and the *fountains of waters*, turning them to wormwood — *bitterness*. The judgment of God came into our lives and made bitter to us all the "streams" and "fountains" which flowed through the surface areas of our earthly, soulical lives, streams of man's wisdom, politics, business, religion, and all the worldly concepts and ways which supply refreshment, or a sense of knowledge, understanding, direction, accomplishment, entertainment, and well-being to the natural man. As the fourth trumpet sounded a third part of the sun, moon, and stars were darkened, signifying that those dominating things, movements, people, ideas, and powers from *without* — the rulers in the symbolic heavens of the old creation — begin to lose their authority and hold over our spiritual lives. Can you not discern the progression as we move from trumpet to trumpet?

Now, as we come to the fifth trumpet we are faced with an *abyss* — something deeper, more hidden, and profound than any of the four realms that preceded it! The abyss is deeper than the earth, deeper than the rivers, deeper than the fountains of waters, and deeper even than the sea! It is the *lowest realm*, and it is locked up — unseen, unknown, and only a mighty angel or messenger with the key is able to open it! Therefore, the great mystery and the great truth that the Holy Spirit is seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that there is a dimension of man's being which is not a result or a manifestation of anything else, but lies so deep within us that it is indeed the secret and hidden *root* and *cause* of all that pertains to the natural man. This is the realm of which John the Baptist spoke when, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, he said, "*Now also the axe is laid upon the root of the trees*" (Lk. 3:9). The bottomless pit or the abyss is downward, lower, in those regions beneath anything that can be observed or understood in our human lives. It is lower than heaven, lower than the mountains, lower than the plains, lower than the rivers and fountains of waters, and deeper than the deepest sea! It is within this abyss that Satan finds his abode in mankind. In this subterranean region of darkness abides the bestial nature of man and the lying spirits of the false prophet. While it is a dark, evil world within us, it is also a *religious world*. That is the mystery!

Now, what is this pit? It is a bottomless pit. A great many persons laugh at the idea of a bottomless pit! They say, "How can there be a pit that has no bottom to it?" Well, now, I can simply give you a natural illustration of a bottomless pit. Suppose the earth was hollow, as some scientists think it is. Now suppose

you could bore a hole in the earth, and drop something right down in the middle of this world, and there was a great cavity inside. Will you tell me where the bottom of that place would be? The exact center of that hollow space would be the center of the world. Should you drill the hole all the way through the earth, if you go up on this side of the world, you are on the top of the pit; if you go to the other side of the world, there is the top; and where is the bottom of a conclave surface, like the hollow earth? Gravity will meet in the center, and nothing will be able to fall out of the hole in either direction. It is indeed a bottomless pit!

But do you know that in its spiritual meaning there is a higher and greater significance to the term “bottomless pit” that comes closer home, and that is our *own selves*! Man is a sphere, the natural man is “earthly” and is a world within himself; he is a microcosm of the macrocosm; and when man falls from the life of the spirit and the consciousness of God, he naturally gravitates into his own self, and falls, falls, falls, deeper and deeper into the depths of his own human consciousness and earthly identity. That is what the “fall” of Adam was all about! He fell from God-consciousness into human-consciousness. He descended from life in the spirit and by the spirit into life in the flesh and by the flesh. He came down from the lofty wisdom and glory of the mind of Christ and took on the mind of the beast. The fall of man is not merely an historical event. Oh, no! It is that which happens every day. Man is forever gravitating to the center of his own being, and never finding it. And there is in man’s natural constitution, just as in the hollow of a globe, a bottomless pit. It is the deepest depths of the bestial nature. Suicides find it, haters find it, murderers find it, psychopaths find it, alcoholics find it, melancholists find it, criminals of all classes find it, swindlers find it, and most mysterious of all, *religious* racketeers, deceivers, manipulators, cultists, and fear-mongers of all kinds find it!

Oh! to think of the awful horror of just simply devouring yourself, falling into self, discovering the darkest depths of yourself. Man can never find righteousness, peace, and joy within himself! You can never find a place of rest in your own natural constitution. Your natural life, earthly consciousness, and Adamic identity have no more place for a rest or for any worthwhile accomplishment than a hollow world has; and if you were tumbled into a hollow world, where would you find any light, and where would you find a place to put your foot on? The only way a human being can find rest is to find *reality*! When man ascends and gets out of himself he will find the life and light of God in the spirit! If like Adam, we cut away from the life of God in our spirit, we are forever sinking down into our own self, into our own thoughts, our own imaginations, our own delusions, our own mistaken identity, our own bestial nature, passing the days like a piece of iron in a hollow world. We can never find rest! We can never see light! We can never be free! We can never touch reality! And so, my beloved, the worst hell is the pit that man carries in his own being — to be continually tumbling and falling into your own self, gravitating from God, without finding any rest, and peace, and satisfaction; going down, down, down, falling farther and farther away from the sanity of reality, from the light of truth, from the image of God, and from life full, abundant, and eternal!

THE HEART

Everything God has created consists of many “parts.” The geologist can explain to you the many “parts” of planet earth. The botanist is able to give you the names and functions of the various “parts” of a flower. The astronomer will point out the many billions of “parts” that make up the vast universe. God has also created man with many “parts.” These are not just the physical parts or organs of the body, but also parts of the mind or soul, and parts of the spirit. Do not think that the term “parts” in respect to our inner life originated with me! The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophet Jeremiah with this promise, “I will put my law in their *inward parts*” (Jer. 31:33). He is not referring to the inward parts of our body, but to the innermost parts of our sense of *being*. God also says that He will write His laws in our *heart*. The question follows — What are the *inward parts*, and what is the *heart*?

Jesus said that the very first commandment is this: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and with *all thy soul*...” (Mk. 12:30). Here we see two different parts of our being — the heart and the soul. Obviously each of these also has parts, for the command is to love the Lord with *all* (the parts of) our heart, and *all* (the parts of) our soul! These are both “inward parts” of our being and not outward physical parts of our body. The three main parts or divisions of man are *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*. Yet each of these has many parts! It is easy to realize that the body has many parts, but most people have not considered that the soul and the spirit must also have parts! And there are parts beyond these which are called the

“hidden parts.” “Behold, Thou desirest truth in the *inward parts*: and in the *hidden part* Thou shalt make me to know wisdom” (Ps. 51:6). According to the intent of this passage, and others, the word “heart” does not refer to the physical organ located in our chest that pumps blood through our body. A study of the use of this word in the scriptures will show this to be true. The heart in scripture is the interior portion of a person. In the Old Testament, the word “heart” comes from the Hebrew word *leb*. According to Strong’s Concordance, that word is used very widely for the feelings, the will, the intellect, and the nature. That word is taken from a prime root word meaning “to be enclosed.” It has reference to the deepest and most profound interior of a person!

As to the heart, it is deeper than the mere mind or soul. With my mind I can think about many things, both good and evil. All kinds of thoughts can present themselves in the mind! Often these thoughts do not represent the kind of person we really are. A wicked thought might pass through my mind, but that does not mean that I would seriously consider committing any crime or doing some evil. Many of our thoughts are mundane and can be easily dismissed. But when the “heart” thinks the wise man said, “As a man *thinketh in his heart, SO IS HE!*” (Prov. 23:7). Many scriptures speak of the thoughts of the heart! The heart also has “purposes,” “intents,” “emotions,” and “conscience.”

One of the greatest mysteries in the word of God is found in Ezekiel 36:25-30 wherein we read, “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A *new heart* also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the *stony heart* out of your flesh, and I will give you an *heart of flesh*. And I will put *my spirit* within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them...I will also save you from all your uncleannesses...” This wonderful passage teaches us that there is more than one heart. There is an *old heart* and there is a *new heart*! The old heart is the deepest part of being in the life of old Adam. The new heart is the deepest part of being of Christ in our spirit!

The old heart is the deepest and innermost sense of being, of the natural man. This heart is the root of all human expression and identity. It is also the well-spring of what is called “human nature.” Of that nature Jesus said, “Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not *into his heart*, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? That which *cometh out of the man, that defileth 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. 7:18-23). Our hearts are a bad neighborhood that we dare not walk around in alone! You don’t think there is a wickedness of the human heart that lies *deeper* than the outward sins of the flesh? Then consider and meditate for a while on these significant words of Jesus, “I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her *hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*” (Mat. 5:28).

That the “bottomless pit” or the “abyss” in the symbolisms of scripture portrays the human heart is beautifully confirmed by the words of the prophet David. David, in describing the wickedness of man, says, “Hide me from the *secret counsel* of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity...they encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They *search out* iniquities; they accomplish a diligent *search* (plumbing the depths): both the *inward thought* of every one of them, and *the heart, IS DEEP*” (Ps. 64:2-6). The *heart* is a *deep*! The Hebrew word here for deep is *amoq* meaning not only something deep, but “deeper than” other things. It is used in Job 11:8 of that which is “*deeper than hell*.” Again we find it used in this way, “He discovereth *deep (amoq)* things out of darkness” (Job 12:22). Then in Ecclesiastes 7:24 it refers to “that which is far off, and *exceeding deep*, who can find it out?” In all these passages there is a suggestion of both the words of Jeremiah and David that the heart of man is not only very deep, but that the depths are unfathomable — beyond the comprehension of any other than God Himself!

We must conclude, then, that the heart of man is the very lowest realm of man’s being! Sometimes the Lord’s elect fail to see that our natural heart is just like anyone else’s Adamic heart, and every son of God must clearly see, understand, and overcome the very basest things and powers that lie hidden, concealed, and buried in the unseen depths of the old, natural heart. Thank God, Jesus holds the *key*, it is He who *opens the abyss*, and brings forth the revelation of all that is lurking there! As John in spirit beheld the scene, the Lord

Jesus, receiving the key, opened the abyss and “there arose *smoke* out of the pit, as the smoke of a great *furnace*” (Rev. 9:2). That this bottomless pit is the heart of man is further confirmed by the words of Hosea who wrote of backsliding Israel, “they consider not in their *hearts* that I remember all their *wickedness*...for they have made ready their *heart* as an oven” (Hos. 7:6). The word here translated “oven” is, in the Hebrew, “furnace.” We see, then, the bottomless pit identified as a furnace in the words of the apostle John, and the heart of man identified as the furnace by the prophet Hosea, and from this furnace of man’s heart rolls billows of smoke!

Yet, Jesus also said, “Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8). Pure in heart! A heart that can see God! That certainly cannot be the same heart out from which arises all the evils the Lord enumerated to the Pharisees! So in order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in these statements, we need to understand the difference between the two hearts — the old heart and the new heart. The old heart is the heart of the natural man! The new heart is the heart of the new creation man! The old heart is the deepest consciousness and state of man’s natural life and human identity. The new heart is the deepest consciousness and state of man’s spiritual life and Christ identity. That which arises out of the old heart defiles the man. That which arises out of the new heart transforms the man into the image and likeness of God! All through the scriptures, when we read of the myriad expressions and activities of the heart we need to consider *which of these two hearts* is being spoken of!

Humankind has an enemy — a wily nemesis, an adversary, described in God’s word as *deceitful* above all things, and desperately *wicked*. This enemy has adversely affected every generation of mankind from the blissful beauty of the garden of Eden to the present. Just who, or *what*, is this inimical deceiver? The prophet Jeremiah unmasked this enemy in these inspired words, “The HEART is *deceitful above all things*, and *desperately wicked*,” and he went on to ask the searching question, “*who can know it?*” (Jer. 17:9). To the enlightened mind of this prophet, the *power of deceitfulness* and the *depth of iniquity* of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of any man to comprehend! This heart of deceit and iniquity is buried so far down in man’s being that no one can search it out or ever find it! How many times have you heard it? Someone perpetrates an unbelievably ghastly crime, like the ax murders of an entire family by a young lad barely in his teens, or the brutal murder of a father and a mother by a teenager some years ago, who buried them in a shallow grave, and then repeatedly drove a tractor over the site, in an attempt to cover the crime — and yet relatives, close friends and near neighbors all said, in a state of bewilderment and shock, “But he was such a nice, quiet, decent boy!”

A motion picture some years ago portrayed the dual lives led by a judge who had two families some distance apart! He had “married” two different women, was actually living with each for a certain number of days each week; would then disappear under the pretense of some important responsibilities in a distant town, when in actuality he was going to spend the remainder of that week with his second family! Obviously, each wife thought she *knew* this man, *thoroughly*! After all, just how well do you *know* your own spouse? Interesting, isn’t it! We feel we truly *know* our husbands, wives, children; our closest and dearest friends. But according to the word of God we don’t even *know ourselves*! We, perhaps above all people, are often deceived by our *own hearts*! There is a *deeper part* to all of us — a part that *only God knows*! We should not find this so utterly astounding were it not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, “The heart is *deceitful* above all things *except the devil*!” He stated in no uncertain terms that the heart of man is deceitful above *all things* — *PERIOD*! There can be no mistake, for Jeremiah wrote under the full inspiration of the Holy Spirit! If the heart is deceitful above all things, it naturally follows that there is nothing anywhere, not in heaven above, not in earth beneath, nor under the earth, nor in the lowest regions of all depths, that is more deceitful. The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE UNIVERSE! A photographer has the most difficult profession in the world. He does his best to make ugly faces good looking, smoothing out all the ungainly, uncouth features and marks. But when the portrait is finished in a manner satisfactory to the customer, it is usually anything but a true picture. But when God makes a picture of the human heart, He portrays it just as it is! “The heart is deceitful *above all things*, and *desperately wicked*.” That is the mystery!

It should be clear to every thinking mind that we have fostered and taught for generations a concept that stands in stark contrast to this amazing truth. We have indeed declared that there IS something more deceitful and vile than the heart of man! We have called him Satan (an adversary), and so he is! We have

called him the devil (slanderer), and so he is! We have called him a murderer and a liar, and so he is! We have read many scriptures about him and understood many things about him, but the one thing we have *not* known about him is his **LOCATION!** Can you believe, precious friend of mine, that Satan can work in someone right there where you are, and in someone in New York City, in someone in London, in someone in Moscow, in someone in Hong Kong, and in someone in Nairobi *all at the same time*? It is true — but *how*? Can he travel at the speed of light and be in that many people around the world at almost the same instant? Is he *omnipresent*? Absolutely not! The truth is, he dwells *in man*, for he is restricted, by the command of the Lord God, to the **dust realm** (Gen. 3:14), even that dust which the natural man *is*! No sooner had God told the serpent that he would from henceforth crawl in the dust, and have dust for his food, than he followed that sentence with this defining word to the man, “For dust *thou art*, and unto dust thou shalt return” (Gen. 3:19). “The first man is *of the earth, earthy*” (I Cor. 15:47). We thought Satan was a funny little creature in a red suit, with evil-looking horns and a forked tail, running around with a pitchfork in his hand, whose true home was in the underworld amidst the fires of Hades. We do know that he is the one who “deceives all nations” (Rev. 20:3) and “deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 20:9). Oh, yes! The human heart is **DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS!** And all the evils in the world arise **FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN!** There you have the two items — **deceitfulness** and **wickedness!** “The heart is *deceitful* above all things, and desperately *wicked*: who can know it?”

Do you suppose the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness as some kind of a dark, shadowy figure, with burning red eyes and a sinister, chilling countenance? How often with our childish and distorted understanding, have we pictured Jesus confronted with that legendary figure who looked something like Darth Vader! This is naught but foolishness, for Satan is spirit, and spirit is *invisible energy*! How many times have you been tempted by the devil? Can you count the times? How often has he spoken to you, enticing, suggesting, compelling? Have you ever *seen him*? Have you ever heard his *audible* voice? Certainly not! And yet — you *have* sensed his presence, you *have* heard his voice, you *have* felt his power! And it all came from somewhere **deep inside you!** And does not our Lord, the Spirit of Truth, speak to us in the same way? The spiritual consciousness, that still small voice, the inward *knowing*, the inner urging — all from a dimension beyond the natural senses! Because it is all from an unseen and unknown *depth within ourselves* does not mean that it is imagination or hallucination! Yet we recognize it as the voice of the spirit, truly the voice of *God!* Oh, no, my beloved, there was not some hideous spirit-being materializing before the eyes of Jesus at the hour of His temptation in the Judean wilderness. Remember — Jesus was not only divine, He was also human; He was not only the image of the invisible God, He was also made in the likeness of sinful flesh; He was not only the Son of God, He was also the Son of man. And being both He was capable not only of hearing from God *within Him* (the Father who dwelt in Him), but hearing those things that be of man.

The apostle James put it this way: “But *every man* is tempted when he is drawn away of *his own lust*, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14-15). The Moffatt Translation reads, “*Everyone* is tempted as he is beguiled (deceived) and allured by his *own desire*, the Desire conceives and breeds sin, while Sin matures and gives birth to death.” The record states that after fasting for forty days, Jesus hungered. When you’re hungry, what kind of desire do you have? You want to eat! In that crucial moment the Tempter came to Him. He began to feel the physiological pangs of hunger, and then, out from the depths of His human heart, the *thought* occurred to Him. Jesus dropped down from the high and holy thought of God, into the deceitful suggestion of the human heart! He descended in consciousness from the Son of God, to the Son of man. He said, “I know who I am; I *can* turn these stones into bread.” Out of His human heart the voice cunningly suggested, “If you are the Son of God, go ahead and do it! Use your sonship to fill your belly! You can use this power for anything you want to! Use it now to satisfy your own needs and desires!”

Thank God, Jesus quickly discerned the voice of that wily devil and knew how to nip that idea in the bud before it had time to blossom. He got to it before it could conceive, before it could start making a baby of sin and religious perversion. Jesus answered out of the depths of His spirit, “It is written — man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Mat. 4:4). In other words, Jesus recognized the source of the words, the origin of the *voice*. It wasn’t that there was anything intrinsically wrong with turning stones into bread; only days later Jesus did His first miracle in which He turned water into wine! The difference was in the *voice*. The voice that enticed Him to turn stones into

bread was the voice of Self; the voice that bade Him turn water into wine was the voice of His Father! Ah, there is the difference! Would He use His sonship power for His own gratification and ends, or would He do only and always those things He heard from His Father? That was the issue. That was the test. And that discernment ended the temptation! The battle lay not with some mythical personage outside of Himself. The conflict was *within*. The voice was an *inner voice*. The suggestion entered His mind out of the depth of the *deceitful heart* of the outer, natural man of flesh. Its power was in His emotions and desires!

God speaks to us out of our pure and undefiled *spirit*. Satan speaks to us out of the depth of the *deceitful* and *wicked heart* of the earthy man. There is no monster without. There are three things in this vast world, and only three — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (I Jn. 2:16); briefly, appetite, avarice, and ambition. I do not think you will be able to avoid the conclusion that all the inventions, creations, and contrivances of man are in existence to cater to these three things. It is with these three things that mother Eve was tempted! She *saw* the tree was good for food (the lust of the eyes), a tree to be *desired* (the lust of the flesh), a tree to *make one wise* (the pride of life), and the temptation was not from without, but from within. How remarkably the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness parallel these three! Every temptation of the devil comes to us through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. There are no others. Not for Adam and Eve, not for Jesus, and not for us. And each of these three temptations are both *deception* and *wickedness*. What they promise is a *lie*! To heed them leads to *ruin*! For “the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God *abideth for ever*!” Oh, the mystery of it!

While it is true that the heart is desperately wicked, that is not the first thing the wise man says about it. He tells us first that the heart is *deceitful* above all things! There is nothing in the whole universe *more deceitful* than the heart of the natural man! What a thought! That means that not even the one we call the devil is more deceitful than our own human heart! The mind and body, contrary to popular opinion, do not initiate action; they are always subservient to something else, something deeper and more powerful than either! We are generated or birthed into minding the flesh, but only because the “flesh” is the outward response to, and expression of, the *heart*. However, Jesus demonstrated His obedience to the *spirit*! The spirit within us also has a heart — it is the heart of God, who is the Father of our spirit (Heb. 12:5-10). When this heart is awakened within us, it is called a “new heart” (Eze. 36:25-30). It is not actually new, but it is new to us, for human nature regenerates itself in human beings and we are born into this world with a consciousness of that outer, human life. Man’s understanding, intellect, emotions, will, and desires all stem from the “old heart” or the human heart. These are all in harmony with the outer world of creation, which is the realm of death. Everything of the natural creation grows old and finally dies or disintegrates. Everything! Thus we are born into a realm where we live in the death consciousness and sin consciousness of the soul and body.

Those who have been quickened by the Lord no longer live in the sin and death consciousness of the old Adamic man. We have been awakened to a consciousness that is beyond the human heart, for we have received revelation in our spirit! This new birth separates us from the old so that we can know God in our spirit and hear what the spirit is saying! As we walk after the spirit we grow in the realization and knowledge of our inner man, Christ — we learn that we are partakers of the *divine nature*, we now become righteousness-conscious and life-conscious and live and move and have our being in the life of our Father, God. The Holy Spirit brings us the knowledge of our sonship and we understand that we are members of the *family of God*, or the divine family which *is God*!

It is instructive to understand *how* death came into this world! God said to Adam that if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the midst of the garden, he would die. The serpent disagreed and said, “You shall not surely die.” Adam ate and he died. Can we not see by this that sin and death came through *deception*! Eve, or the soul, was the one deceived by the serpent of the human heart. “And Adam was not deceived, but the *woman being deceived* was in the transgression” (I Tim. 2:14). The next thing we need to understand in order to grasp this great mystery is that IN EVE’S DECEPTION THE MAN BECAME JOINED TO THE DELUSION THAT IS IN THE LIE! Adam did not separate from his wife in her deception, but remained joined to her. Adam’s consciousness of himself was now birthed in a lie, and joined in both mind and body to the creation instead of the Creator he became separated from God in his thinking.

No person is infected by the disease of sin and death until he has been led to believe the wrong thing first. The tyranny and death that sin brings start when a person begins to believe a false view about God, himself, life, or divine purpose. The devil's doctrines are that ultimate set of false views which he constantly attempts to insinuate into men. Far more than witchcraft or magic, Satan uses "religious" and intellectual propositions to appeal to reasonable people. His most effective work is done, not in saloons and brothels, but in sermons preached from pulpits and in the minds of men. He is a destroyer of truth! He is a liar from the beginning! He is a pusher, not merely of marijuana or heroin, but of false propositions. He promotes an addiction to lies. Truly, he is DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS!

Because of the lie to which he was joined Adam now saw himself as a natural being, of the earth earthy, sin-cursed and sin-broken, sick, weak, confused, beset by troubles and sorrows, murderer and prostitute, proud and arrogant, mean and vindictive, and above all full of death and dying — all that is humanity! Someone says, "Oh, but God *made* Adam all that because he rebelled and sinned!" Not so! God warned Adam not to eat of the tree of the **knowledge** of good and evil, because in that **knowledge** he would die. Can we not see by this that sin and death are but the sad fruit of a tree of **knowledge**, that is, a **belief system**, an idea, a word, instruction, thought process, information, viewpoint, opinion, persuasion, conclusion, conjecture, assumption, or supposition. Oh, yes! It was the fruit of the tree of a certain kind of **knowledge**, a certain **view** and **belief system** that killed the glorious man that Adam was! But what Adam became, is that what man *really* is?

Most people on earth have forgotten their beginning. But the scripture is clear. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...and the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life; and man became a living soul. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7). What God actually did was that He imaged Himself in man. God imaged Himself in man by forming Himself in a man of earth. Thus man was created as a visible expression of the invisible God. Now that hasn't changed! Long millenniums after the fall of Adam the great apostle Paul asserted, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as **he IS the image and glory of God**" (I Cor. 11:7). What has changed is our perception of ourselves because of the fall! Our knowledge of God, ourselves, and divine purpose is all distorted, twisted, and warped!

Wonderful words were spoken at the very dawn of civilization, recorded in the oldest book of the Bible, which state simply and powerfully the reality of man. "There is a *spirit* in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). It is something great in man, Elihu conceives, that he is *spirit*, and, because he is, is capable of being *inspired*. He is not here speaking of Adam as he was in the primordial glory of Eden, nor yet of regenerated man in this wonderful age of the Holy Spirit; but, speaking thousands of years ago in the present tense, he magnifies man as being able to be inspired, just because he *is spirit*. And it is God, who likewise is spirit, that inspires him! Does this not reveal to us that the very being of man has a Godward or divine side, being related constitutionally to Him. The testimony of scripture is incontrovertible that there *is a spirit in man*, or what is the same, the fact that *we are, as being spirit, permeable and inspirable by the Almighty!*

This reveals man's capacity for God; to experientially know the presence of God, to let in the divine nature, to entertain the eternal Spirit witnessing with his spirit, to be energized by Him and filled with His glory, in every faculty, feeling, and power, being a vessel and channel for the life of God, to think His thoughts and do His works. Thus, "*the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit* that we are the children (offspring) of God!" (Rom. 8:16). And "*because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son *into your hearts (spirit)*, crying, Abba, Father!" (Gal. 4:6). "There is a *spirit* in man, and the *inbreathing* of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Only because *man is spirit* is all this possible!

What revealing light of revelation Jesus gave when He opened the truth about the origin of both man's flesh and his spirit when on that star-studded night long ago He explained to the questioning Nicodemus, "That which is *born* of the flesh *is flesh*, and that which is *born* of the spirit *is spirit*" (Jn. 3:6). This in my opinion is one of the most profound and awe-inspiring statements in all scripture. According to Jesus, my earthly parents are the parents *only* of my flesh, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh. That's all it is! On the other hand, God, and *only* God, is the Father of my spirit, for that which is born of the spirit

is spirit. Spirit begets spirit! And God is the Father of the spirits of all flesh! How could we ever think of God as the Father of the flesh? He is the Creator of flesh, of the physical, but He is the Father of SPIRITS. "God IS spirit," so He could father nothing less than spirits. As Father He puts the same life-force into His children; and this life-force is that which animates the flesh so that the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). This is true of all men! What a glorious statement this is — "the Father of spirits"!

That is what redemption is all about! It liberates us from the flesh consciousness of the natural-minded man and restores us into the conscious awareness of *our Father* and that we *are spirit*, the offspring of God. It delivers us from the power of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and causes us to again eat of the tree of life! Both of these trees are in the "midst" of our garden! We are being made like Him because we are of His same substance. Speaking to His disciples and to the multitudes Jesus once said, "But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER, *which is in heaven*" (Mat. 23:8-9).

That is the **truth** about man! The great mystery of which God is now giving us an understanding is that sin and death came into the world of mankind **through deception**. Man is **deceived** about who and what he really is! Hear it! "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became *vain in their imaginations*, and their *foolish heart was darkened*. Professing themselves to be *wise*, they became *fools*" (Rom. 1:21-22). "This I say therefore...that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the *vanity of their mind*, having the *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God *through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart*" (Eph. 4:17-18). "Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway *err in their heart*; and they have not known my ways" (Heb. 3:10). All through the book of Revelation Satan is referred to as one who **deceiveth** "all nations" and **deceiveth** the "whole world" and **deceives** "them that dwell on the earth." "And the devil that **deceived them** was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Rev. 20:10). The natural man is separated from truth, for he does not know that "in HIM we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

Adam is the high priest of the lie! The lie originates out of his human heart which is "**deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS!**" Our hearts are indeed deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Without the understanding of the Spirit, no man is capable of knowing the heart's falsity and corruption. Only by the revelation of the Spirit can we know the true condition of our heart! The Hebrew word "deceitful" means fraudulent, and is also translated crooked and polluted. And the Hebrew word translated "desperately wicked" means frail, feeble, and melancholy. That Hebrew word is also rendered as incurable, sick, and woeful. This is the true state or condition of our natural, human heart from the heavenly perspective! The truth of the matter is this — the heart is *wicked* just because it is *deceitful*! The lie that we are human beings living natural lives because of a divinely mandated separation and alienation from God and all that He is — *that* is the deceit, the lie, the delusion from which all sin and death proceed. Never were words more true uttered than when the wise man said, "As a man *thinketh in his heart, so is he.*"

What is this saying to us? It tells us that all the wars, greed, abuse, illicit sex, sin, aids, thievery, and conniving that are going on in this world right now, are the result of man's deception and blindness! No one, whether young or old, man or woman, educated or uneducated, has the spiritual energy to prevent himself from lusting after the things of this world. Freedom from natural desires and impulses and control of the flesh is not possible out of the old unredeemed mindset; it can only be obtained in Christ Jesus. Until we are quickened to know that we are sons and daughters of God, we do not have the spiritual energy to overcome! But the truth *does* make us free! The ransomed spirit is full of omnipotent, divine energy and its power is being raised up within all of God's elect, enabling us to overcome the world! We are first learning to overcome our own hearts!

All the suffering that is taking place in the human body today is due to our separation from God through the ignorance and blindness of our heart. Things are improving as we grow up spiritually into Christ! Wonderful changes are coming in us, even in our soul and body. We are not expecting everything to change automatically over night, as if by magic, for we are in the transition of "putting off" the old man, and "putting on" the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness! The foundation of a new dimension of life and reality is being laid in the lives of God's called and chosen ones! With our

spiritual growth, the old ideas and consciousness are dropping off like dead leaves. This is happening today! The transition from death to life is taking place first in us! There is a resurrection, a new creation arising within us! It's all happening as more and more we put on the ***mind of Christ!*** Christ *knew who He was, and He lived out of the reality of the Father in Him!* That is the key.

God is not redeeming the old Adamic man, nor is He changing the old Adamic heart. Those who want to preserve their Adamic nature and identity, have it changed, blessed, and immortalized will be disappointed. This will not happen because God has not promised redemption for the carnal mind, nor for the deceptive and wicked heart. He is raising up within us a new heart, a new spirit, a new consciousness, a new understanding, a new mind, a new nature, a new life and power of divinity! Our redemption is ***from*** that Adamic man! It is from our wrong idea of God, our mistaken identity of ourselves, our wrong concept of life and of who we are, and from our desire to preserve our old self in any form or fashion. This is what we are redeemed from! This happens when we turn to the Lord and learn to hear the voice of the Son of God! They that hear shall live! We have to hear Him individually within ourselves even though we are members of a corporate body.

Sin came into the world, and death by sin, but deception was there before the sin, for only when Eve was deceived did she transgress. What a mystery this is! Therefore, living in the realm of death in Adam means living in a delusion — living in a lie! Man lives in the lie that causes him to be alienated from the life of God. I do not say, as some say, that men are not alienated from God, for mankind *is alienated*, though it is because of the ignorance that is in them, the blindness of their heart, and by wicked works. That is the testimony of scripture! The delusion and lies come from the father of lies, out of the heart of man! That is what death in Adam is, for in Adam all die.

Christ's life was lived out of the truth, for He repudiated the lie! First He told the devil, "It is written!" He lived by the word of His Father in Him. Then His death was a death to sin — the lie had no part in Him. All the men around Him lived in the lie, and were separated from the life, glory, and power of God in their minds by the lie. They could not think as Jesus thought, for they thought out of a different mind. They could not do the works He did nor speak the words He spoke, for their energy came from a different source and they spoke from the hearing of a different voice. In order to be free from that lie, Jesus had to die to the lie. He laid that old human life down! By His resurrection He proved that death was caused by a delusion. Jesus is the truth; as He expressed Himself as the truth, He overcame the death into which He had entered. In expressing the truth and the true nature of His divine being, He overthrew death and exposed the delusion. This is His death! When we die with Christ and are dead with Him we have died to the lie and the delusion. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into *His death?*" (Rom. 6:3). The deceitful heart is removed from us and we are given (awakened to) the new heart! The death we have been put into separates us from Adam and the lie, and gives us a new heart which is not blind, but can see, which is the heart of *truth and reality*. It is not a deceitful heart; it is a *true (pure) heart!*

"Flee also youthful lusts: follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a *pure heart*" (II Tim. 2:22). "Let us draw near with a *true heart* in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). "Seeing that ye have *purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit...* see that ye love one another with a *pure heart*" (I Pet. 1:22). "But let it be the *hidden man of the heart*, in that which is not corruptible..." (I Pet. 3:4). "Blessed are the *pure in heart*: for they shall *see God*" (Mat. 5:8). We are now separated from the carnality and earthiness of creation! We have become a new creation in Christ Jesus because His word in us raises up a new creature in us. IT CREATES A NEW IDENTITY, A NEW SENSE OF BEING, AND PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINE NATURE! All this is the result of the new heart!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY