

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 147

THE WOMAN IN THE WILDERNESS (continued)

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood" (Rev. 12:15).

In this scene of John's vision the woman fled into the wilderness. At least she began to flee from the serpent who was pursuing her, but soon realized that there was no way that she could outrun the serpent. As she cried out to the Lord, two wings of a great eagle were given her and she flew away to the place in the wilderness prepared for her by God. When the serpent saw that he could not pursue the woman into the wilderness, he stood at the border of the desert and cast out of his mouth a stream of water after the woman, that she might be carried away with the flood. His attempt was not to destroy the woman while she was in the wilderness. He was not trying to drown her with the flood. Our text reveals that his purpose was in reality very different. He knew that he could not approach the woman in the security of her isolation in the desert. He could not touch her! She was "hidden" from the face of the serpent. She must remain there. He must leave her alone. Hence, his only option at getting to her was to cast a stream of water after her, that she might be borne up by that flood and carried out of the wilderness. *"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that **he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.**"* That is his purpose! He does not mean to drown her, but he means to lift her up from her isolation, carry her away to a different place, not the place where the Spirit has placed her and the sons of God are nourishing her, but to remove her from God's dealing with her in her wilderness experience, and thus carry her back into the world from which she fled.

Understood in that sense, the message of the vision becomes crystal clear. The serpent realizes that under the sovereign hand of God's dealings, in the isolation of her separation unto Him, he cannot do anything against her. And therefore he makes the attempt to get the woman out of her unique union with God in the spirit, and draw her back under the influence of the world and the flesh. He tries to sweep the woman-church into the spirit of the world, back under the powers of the carnal mind, human reasoning, natural understanding, and the ways, means, and methods of the flesh. As with Job of old, he seeks to remove God's hedge from around her, attack her life, deplete her strength, and bring her under the dominion of the religious spirit of the world. Then he is certain that no more "sons" will be born of her, and that she will not be able to go on to fulfill her destiny as the glorious city of God. Clearly you may see this attempt!

There is startling drama in the figure which represents the dragon casting out of his mouth a river of water which becomes a flood. To paint a natural picture of this would be meaningless. The "flood" is a symbol, just as the woman and the wilderness are symbols. The flood comes out of the serpents "mouth," signifying that it is not at all a flood of literal water, but rather a flood of *words*! The nature of the serpent reveals the character of the words that stream from his mouth, for he is a liar and the father of lies. The flood that the serpent cast out is, among other things, *deceit, accusation, and carnal reasoning*. He wants to swallow up the spiritual life and reality within the woman by this horrible flood; he believes the truth will not be able to withstand the flood of lies!

All of us who lived through World War II know something of *enemy propaganda*. Enemy agents deliberately circulate lies in time of war to destroy the morale of the troops and discourage the people at home. These lies are plausible and clever, and deceive many. But good intelligence is often able to trace these deceptions to their source and reveal them for what they are. Following World War II we passed through the long era of the Cold War. Cold War techniques on the part of both East and West, of secrecy, snooping, and misinformation, used against foreign governments and foreign populations, became tools even of domestic politics, a means to harass critics, build support for questionable policies, or cover up weaknesses and blunders. But the cleverest and most plausible propaganda the world has ever known emanates not from Berlin, or Moscow, or Al Queda, or any other political entity, but from the seat of the father of lies, the *carnal mind* of man! There has never been a time when so many “words” are available through the many channels as today. The world is flooded with a deluge of words which express the thoughts of man’s mind, each carrying a definite “spirit.” And one particular “river of lies” which sweeps multitudes up and carries them away is the flood of *religious propaganda* — the many “winds of doctrine,” a flood tide of false doctrine, traditions, commandments of men, carnal-minded interpretations, lying prophets, lying signs and wonders, false apostles, religious hucksters and racketeering televangelists, that would so engulf the woman it would carry her away from her pure walk in the spirit and in the truth.

The flood not only flows from the pulpit, from books, tapes, and television screens, but the *source* of the flood is the carnal mind within each of us! Words originate in thoughts. A stream of thoughts, a stream of words, worldly words, words of carnal wisdom, words of human ignorance, words of deceiving spirits, words of condemnation and accusation. “Who do you think you are? Look at you! Out here in the wilderness, isolated, encased in silence, *waiting* on the Lord. You’re not going anywhere! You’re not accomplishing anything! You don’t really amount to anything! You thought you were so high and mighty there, clothed with the sun and a crown of twelve stars upon your head. Ah-ha! And now you are trapped in this desolation, separated from everybody and everything, while creation goes to hell. Just who do you think you are, anyway!” Oh, yes! Can we not see that the “flood” is the same river of accusation that the dragon made against “the brethren” who have now overcome it all by the blood of the Lamb and by the *word of their testimony*! It should be clear to every prayerful heart that this flood from the serpent’s mouth is indeed a flood of the very *same accusations* the dragon brought against the manchild in the very highest realm of the spirit! Now cast into the earth he continues his work of “accusing the brethren” as he spouts forth his flood of lies, deceits, and accusations against the woman who brought forth the manchild!

THE EARTH HELPS THE WOMAN

“And the *earth helped the woman*, and the earth *opened her mouth*, and *swallowed up the flood* which the dragon cast out of his mouth” (Rev. 12:16).

The imagery here is quite a common sight in the deserts of the Middle East, in the rainy seasons. The rolling waters of a flash flood rush on in their open channels and then suddenly disappear into subterraneous passages, through which they often gush into the open again somewhere beyond. To the observer, the earth appears as though she had opened her mouth and swallowed up the floods.

As Israel fled from Egypt, Pharaoh sent his army after them but they were drowned in the Red Sea. As they stood on the banks of the sea, Israel looked back and saw their old masters dead, their bodies floating up upon the shore. With what joy did they sing the song of the Lord with Moses, “*The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea...Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, **the earth swallowed them.***” Here is the first example in scripture of the earth helping God’s called and chosen people by “swallowing up” the flood that was threatening them!

Later, in their wilderness journey, Korah and his company rebelled before the Lord. This was not an armed rebellion, there were no swords or spears raised. It was rather a rebellion of debate and argument — a rebellion of *words*! Their stout words were raised against Moses, God’s chosen leader raised up for Israel’s deliverance and direction. Korah caused an uproar in the camp when he reasoned in his mind that all the Lord’s people were equal before God and therefore he was just as holy as Moses and Aaron, and just as capable to speak the word of God and know the mind of the Lord. He accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves above the congregation of Israel, all of whom were holy, separated unto God, and should share in

the decision making. Korah was, it seems, the first *Congregationalist*! But the Lord was not pleased with this uprising against the authority of His chosen leaders. Moses spoke unto the congregation of Israel, saying, *“Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind. If these men die the common death of all men...then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and **the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up**, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them, and **the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up**”* (Num. 16:28-32). The earth not only swallowed the men, but their words, and those whose hearts were thinking such words!

But what does it mean that the “earth” helped the woman by swallowing up the flood of words? This is certainly a truth having different levels of application. Individually, the earth signifies the soul, the primary faculty of which is the mind. Is not the greatest battle right within our minds? The serpent sends forth his falsities, his lies, his distortions, his perversions of truth, his arguments, and his accusations and these speak to us in our mind. And it is also within our mind that we are enlightened and taught by the spirit of truth! As we put on the mind of Christ we are given the *understanding* of the truth as it is in Jesus. Paul refers to this as the “renewing of our mind.” The “earth” is still the soul, but now at last something happens in the soul that is able to save the woman. The quickened soul is raised up into union with the spirit as a mighty defense, so that the mind of the spirit becomes the understanding of the soul. Someone says, “But truth is not understood with the mind, it is understood only by the spirit.” No, it is understood *first* by the spirit. Then, just as a husband may explain something to his wife until she comprehends it, so does the spirit impart to the soul the understanding of the Lord, until that which is truth in the spirit becomes *rationally understood* in the mind.

You see, my beloved, when the Lord shined forth into my life the revelation of reconciliation, sonship, and the kingdom of God, it was revealed in my spirit — by the Spirit of the Lord! I first saw the truth by the sovereign, quickening revelation of the Spirit. I did not understand these things theologically or scripturally. I could not have exegeted them or proved them out of the scriptures. And a thousand objections flooded in, clamoring in opposition. And brethren used all their proof-texts to convince me of my error. Ah, the serpent’s flood! Yet I knew it to be truth within myself, whether I could explain it or not. But as I searched the scriptures to see “whether these things be so” the Lord began to quicken and teach my understanding out of the scriptures until eventually I could see that these were in all reality the cardinal truths which threaded their way all through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The truth became so real, so substantial, so established in mind and heart from the word of God, until the un-truths I had been taught all my life in the religious systems of man were seen clearly for the fallacies, myths, superstitions, folklore and fairy tales they truly were! The lies of religion *fall to nothing before the understanding of the spirit-enlightened mind*. Thus, the “earth,” the “mind” or the “soul,” helps the woman by swallowing up the serpent’s flood! Yea, the spiritual mind casts out of its memory the empty words which stream so convincingly and so violently out of the serpent’s mouth!

It is this union of the soul with the spirit that is presented to us in our text. The soul has become so enlightened by, and one with, the spirit that none of the rush of “waters” out of the deceiver’s “mouth” are able to contaminate, harm, move, or carry away the woman from “her place.” They enter, but cannot wash her away! They simply disappear, swallowed up by the understanding of the spiritual mind, never to be seen — embraced or manifested — again! This is one aspect of that “salvation of the soul” of which the writer to the Hebrews referred when he wrote, *“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that **believe unto the saving of the soul**”* (Heb. 10:39). To which the apostle James adds this testimony, *“...receive with meekness the **engrafted word, which is able to save your souls**”* (James 1:21). Then Peter says, *“...yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, **even the salvation of your souls**”* (I Pet. 1:9).

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to *make war with the remnant of her seed*, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17).

Armed with the understanding of the beautiful truths clustering around John’s vision of the woman in the wilderness, it is not difficult to understand the last verse of this chapter, where we read that the dragon, being enraged with the woman and yet realizing his impotency to destroy her, goes to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and bear the testimony of the Lord Jesus. We would expect him to be angry with the earth, which had helped the woman. And since he was, indeed, angry at the woman, we would accordingly expect to hear of other plots and plans against her. Instead, because he saw that the woman was obviously safe, by a transfer of emotions, he “went to make war with the remnant of her seed.” He is out to overcome anything he can, even those who are the least threat to him! At first sight we may think that this is a somewhat strange expression. Is the manchild who was born of her not the sum total of her seed, or offspring? And how, then, must we conceive of this idea that the devil, after he has been cast out of heaven by the overcoming sons of God, then turns on the mother that bare them; and after being soundly defeated in all his efforts to destroy the woman, can still turn to other children she has borne — the rest of her seed? Who are these “other children”?

This is not difficult to understand, however. During our journey into God there are varying degrees of growth, experience, fellowship, and relationship with the Lord. “*In a great house,*” like the kingdom of God, “*there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and earth*” (II Tim. 2:20). The kingdom is indeed a great house, in which are many vessels, varying in quality, capacity, purpose, rank, and order. Jesus said it this way, “*Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven*” (Mat. 8:11). Paul stated this truth yet another way. “*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are but one body: so also is Christ. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him*” (I Cor. 12:12,14-18).

The scriptures and our own experience both give ample evidence that there are degrees in the spiritual walk. The fruit of God that men bear in their lives are, Jesus taught us, some thirty fold, some sixty fold, and some a hundred fold. Paul spoke of those he had fed with milk because they were babes. John wrote his epistle to three classes of believers: little children, who are the new born in Christ, and all who fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord; young men, who are those who have grown up and become strong in many ways, yet lack experience; and old men, who are the fully matured sons of God. These are not permanent states, but merely stages of growth and development. “*Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing*” (James 1:4). “*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 3:14). We see the same variety of levels of attainment in the Old Testament economy. Moses was above the other prophets (Num. 12:5,8). Only the tribe of Levi were priests. The birthright was given to Ephraim and Manasseh. The scepter was given to the tribe of Judah. David classified his mighty men according to their attainment (II Sam. 23). All men shall be made alive in Christ, writes Paul, yet not all at the same time nor raised into the same degree of glory, but “*each in his own order or rank*” (I Cor. 15:23).

Nearly three-quarters of a century ago Seeley Kinne shared the vision given to a brother David Lee Floyd who wrote: “I stood upon a large stadium, that had been erected to face a large gradual sloping hill. The hill sloped downward toward the stadium. Thousands of Spirit-filled Christians were seated upon the hillside, and they faced the stadium. They were grouped in many orders. They were also in many shades of color. I do not mean races or nationalities. Some were very white, some very dark. There were many varieties of shades between black and white. These thousands of Spirit-filled believers were gathered and seated in their various ranks. They were waiting for the Lord to give them the Last Great Message, for the preparation to set up the kingdom of God among men. I was seated in the stadium not knowing what I was going to do more than to just view the thousands of God’s people, seated in their various ranks upon the hillside. I studied their faces. I was fully aware that the Holy Spirit was opening my eyes and my

understanding to discern the *many ranks* of His people. As I have stated above, every group or rank was of a different shade or color. The highest order was the whitest; and the lowest the darkest. Everyone was in rank according to the light of God abiding within them. This had nothing at all to do with their race or nationality. Everyone was located according to their individual rank in the Spirit. I was in deep meditation concerning their various degrees of experience” — end quote. There is a little more to brother Floyd’s experience concerning the judgment of God among his people, but the point of the vision is that there are many different spiritual levels and companies of the Lord’s people, even among those who are *pressing forward into God!*

In the great house of our Father’s kingdom there are different degrees of experience and various heights of attainment. In the book of Revelation we see in the progressive unveiling of Jesus Christ within His people a number of different companies or spiritual planes to which men attain in Christ — there is one outstanding company called overcomers, or kings and priests, or the manchild, or the 144,000, or the sons of God; another called the woman, or the bride, or the New Jerusalem; another called the church, or the candlesticks; and then there are the remnant: witnesses, martyrs, messengers, harpers, the great multitude, etc. These companies all correspond to the ranks of believers as set forth in the vision quoted above. These are all a variety of redeemed people who walk with God in varying degrees of light and glory, different depths of intimacy, and diverse orders of calling and experience. Some are very near to the heart of God, while others dwell and serve in the outer courts of His presence. Some are queens, virgins, and concubines; others are counselors, judges, priests and kings; some are soldiers and warriors of varied ranks; still others are servants, guests, and couriers.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will impress upon all who read these lines the great truth that the end of the matter is not any or all of these various companies and ranks. These are merely the blueprint of our *progression* into God! In that glorious end where God is All-in-all there are *no companies or ranks*. In the end there is no Outer Court. In the end there is no Holy Place. In the end there is no Holiest of all. At the conclusion of God’s great plan of the ages there is no Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles; no First Day, Second Day, or Third Day. In the great consummation of all things there are no servants, no bride, and there are no sons as separate from other orders. In the end there is *only* GOD ALL IN ALL! It means that God is all, and furthermore He is *All*, that is in His *Fullness*, within everyone everywhere! God all in all reveals the blessed fact that every creature will move through the progression from realm to realm, until each is filled with all the fullness of God. Anything short of that is not God as ALL — **IN ALL!** All may not move in this Day, just as all have not moved in other Days, but God has a great, tremendous, glorious plan of the ages, and all creation **will move forward!** Isn’t it wonderful!

You see, my beloved, it’s just like a school — it *is* the great school of God! The purpose of a school is not the school itself. The purpose of a school is the *progression* through the grades so that you finally graduate. Everybody who enters the school is supposed to *graduate!* So we are not to glory that we are in the first grade, the seventh grade, or the twelfth grade. We are not to cling to our status as a junior, sophomore, or senior. It is wonderful to be a senior, but if you remain a senior you will never graduate! To be senior is not the *goal*. The beauty of all the grades is that each in turn accomplishes its purpose, bringing *everyone* to the same, final state of accomplishment and attainment. Everyone walks across the stage and receives his or her diploma and goes out into the world a finished product in the fullness of God. Hallelujah!

That’s how it is in the kingdom of God! Today we view believers as being nominal Christians, born again Christians, Spirit-filled Christians, deeper life Christians, brideship Christians, sons of God, or some other classification. We equate their standing in God with whether they are in the Outer Court, the Holy Place, or the Most Holy Place. But those are merely broad-swept *pictures* of their spiritual state of growth and development, their progression into God. Each is just a temporary arrangement, a grade to pass through, and *all creation* will pass through the grades either now or in the age and the ages to come! When every man who has ever lived, or ever shall live, has received his diploma and walks off the cosmic stage of *spiritual graduation* — God will be **ALL IN ALL!** There will be a sign posted on the door of the school of God’s great redemptive and restorative purposes — “Closed.” When everybody graduates, you don’t need the school anymore!

Some of us have been in school for a long, long time and have moved through many levels of God’s teaching. We have been passing from grade to grade, from experience to experience, from discipline to

discipline, from realm to realm, from dimension to dimension in God. We have passed through the Tabernacle with all its furnishings and compartments. We have partaken of the Lord's Feasts one after another and He has now brought us to the Feast of Tabernacles. We have arrived at the threshold of the Third Day. We have stepped into the Most Holy Place. He has ushered us into the throne room within the City which has the glory of God. We have been passing through the grades, and all creation will pass through the same grades. God has plenty of time. His plan is the *plan of the ages*. Consider how many ages the Lord's people have passed through since the day Adam and Eve were driven from Eden! God's progressive purpose began ages ago, and will extend into vast ages yet unborn. In one sense each of us is a microcosm within the macrocosm. There are *ages within us*. I lived a Pentecostal age, and it ended. I lived out a Latter Rain age, and it ended. I lived out an Anglo-Israel age, and that ended too. I lived out an Apocalyptic age, and God took that heaven and rolled it up within myself. Everyone of us has lived ages within ourselves, according to God's plan of the ages. All creation will come the same way, not necessarily with identical ages, but they will grow experientially into God from glory to glory, and God has plenty of time! God has brought us from Abraham to the Manchild in our brief lifetime, for the ages are within us.

Now in our text we come to a company of God's people identified as "the remnant of her seed." Who is "the remnant of her seed"? The word "remnant" literally means *remaining ones* — other, which remain, residue, the rest. The term is employed six times in the Revelation. In every place where this word is used in the Revelation, it refers to the *remaining* number of a class previously mentioned, *but not exhausted*; and according to Greek scholars it can be extended to *any class beyond them*. The simplest understanding is that "the remnant of her seed" refers to all true people of God who are *not* either seated with the manchild upon the throne or with the woman in the wilderness. The espoused bride of Christ is not all of God's true people; the manifest sons of God are not all of God's true people. There are many who know the Lord, love the Lord, worship the Lord, and seek to please and walk with Him in the Spirit. Yet they have not been drawn into that deep, close, personal intimacy with Christ that characterizes *brideship*, nor are they actively *being sons* unto the Father.

This is plainly borne out by the two explanatory phrases that follow. Who are the remnant of her seed? They are those who "keep the commandments of God." The commandments of God are not the *ten commandments* given through Moses! That is what many people think. Nor are they the other laws, statutes, and judgments set forth under the Old Covenant. Those only had respect to the *externals* of human life, and even then no human could "keep" them. In fifteen hundred years of Israel's history not one single person ever fully and perfectly obeyed and fulfilled all the law! And Paul said that any man of the New Covenant who lives "under the law" is *fallen from grace*! Ah, "the law came by Moses, but grace and *truth* came by Jesus Christ!" Can we not see by this the law is *not the truth*? It is a natural figure of the truth, but it is not the *reality*! The reality comes not from Moses, but by God's Christ! Jesus said, "The words that **I** speak unto you, they are *spirit* and they are *life*." The *living words* of Jesus Christ, who is Himself The Word of God — there you will find the "commandments of God"!

How can we be certain that the "commandments of God" are not the Old Testament laws, including the ten commandments? Let us see what the New Testament has to say about the commandments of God! John, the writer of the Revelation, also says in his third epistle, "**And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment, and he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him**" (I Jn. 3:23-24). No man can ever dwell in God and God in him by keeping the ten commandments! Now let us notice further what the scriptures have to say about God's commandments.

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, **He gave me a commandment, what I should say...and I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak**" (Jn. 12:49-50).

"**A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another**" (Jn. 13:34). Under Moses, the command was to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength. But man was impotent to fulfill this order because of his sin, weakness, and limitation. What man could not do, Jesus Christ came and did completely; and now, instead of man being invited to love God, as the law of Moses demanded, man is asked to *believe* on His

Son, the one who *did* love God as the law demanded. Instead of man being asked to love God now, he is invited to behold how much *God loves him* through Christ! “*We love Him, because He **first** loved us.*” God does not ask man now to give Him his heart. But He does ask him to *believe* on Christ who is the revelation of the *heart of God* toward man, and when this is done man receives a *new heart* and love will flow out through the heart and life of man, not so much toward the “neighbor,” but toward the “brethren.” The commandments of God under the New Covenant are *believe*, and then *love*! That’s it!

“This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you” (Jn. 15:12).

*“Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an **old commandment which ye had from the beginning.** The old commandment is the word which ye heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is **true in Him and in you:** because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth”* (I Jn. 2:7-8).

“And this commandment we have from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also” (I Jn. 4:21).

*“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in **truth (Christ)**, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. **This is the commandment.** That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. Whosoever transgresseth, and **abideth not in the doctrine of Christ**, hath not God. He that **abideth in the doctrine of Christ**, He hath both the Father and the Son”* (II Jn. 4,6,9).

*“If ye love me, keep **my commandments.** He that hath **my commandments**, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him”* (Jn. 14:15,21).

*“If ye keep **my commandments**, ye shall abide in my love; even as **I have kept my Father’s commandments**, and abide in His love”* (Jn. 15:10).

*“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things that I write unto you are THE COMMANDMENTS of the Lord**”* (I Cor. 14:37).

Again, we ask who are the rest of her seed? First they are true people of God for they “keep the commandments of God,” which commandments we can see are, under the New Covenant, *the living words of God’s Christ!* Second, they are those who “have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The word for “testimony” is *maturia*, and has the significance of record, report, witness, and evidence. What is this evidence of Jesus? There are two verses which make the answer to this question plain, and though the word “witness” is used in one verse, and the word “record” is used in the other, in both cases we have our word “testimony,” *maturia*, or evidence. Let us read these verses. “*He that **believeth** on (Greek: into) the Son of God, hath the **witness** (evidence) **in himself**”* (I Jn. 5:10). “*And this is the **record** (maturia — witness, evidence), that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that **hath the Son, hath life**”* (I Jn. 5:11-12). Ah, the testimony, witness, and evidence of Jesus Christ is THE LIVING REALITY OF THE CHRIST WITHIN! We have this testimony, this witness, this evidence *within ourselves*, John says, and the evidence is *the indwelling life of the Son!*

The “rest of her seed” are then the spiritual people of God, made up of all who believe on Christ, and love the brethren! God has many dear children who are not part of the sonship company, the manchild, nor part of the brideship company, the woman in the wilderness. These are a company living on a lower plane than the woman herself, just as the woman in the wilderness is living on a lower plane than the manchild in the throne. They are the ones with whom the dragon now is exceeding wroth, and against whom he is carrying out his great war! Can you not see the mystery? Who today upon earth is in a constant battle with the devil? Who is it that testifies, “The old devil has been after me all week!” Who is it that says, “The devil made me do it!” I heard of a little girl who was told that the devil caused her to bite her little brother. She said, “Maybe so, but it was my own idea about hitting him in the head!” At least she was honest. Who is it that believes the devil is “on their case” and “out to get them”? Who is it that finds their greatest struggle

day by day to be with the temptations and onslaughts of the devil? Who is it that believes that God is *trying* to do this and that, but the old devil is always *hindering* and somehow getting the *upper hand*? Who are those that are, if we judge by their words, more devil conscious than they are God conscious! Who are they? Not the woman in the wilderness, for she is “hid from the face of the serpent.” Not the manchild upon the throne, for he sits in the highest heaven in a realm from which the great dragon has been thrown down!

Gary Sigler once put it so succinctly when he wrote, “Do you know that the devil is a Pentecostal? You tell me what other realm you can get into today and hear so much about the devil! I have been in more Pentecostal meetings and heard more about the devil than I ever heard about God. For a long time I managed the Tree of Life Christian Bookstore in Eugene, Oregon, and the largest selling category of books that we had were books on demons and witchcraft and devils. What it was, was books trying to teach you *how to deal with the devil*. I’d be a fool to tell you the devil isn’t real, because he’s running rampant in Pentecost! But I’m telling you there is a higher realm, and in that realm there is no devil. Remember the words of Jesus, **‘The evil one comes, but he has nothing in me.’** The only place the devil can be real to you is that place he has in you. If he has no place in you, then the devil doesn’t bother you anymore.”

Yet, it is not only the Pentecostals, but nearly all evangelical Christians with one accord attribute to the devil almost omnipotent powers. The common perception would be that Satan is like God — omnipresent, everywhere in the world. They see the devil or demons behind every bush, around every bend, lurking, waiting for the slightest opportunity to pounce on them and cause them to sin, to miss God, to rob them of their victory, deceive them, or otherwise derail their walk in God. But it is true that the Pentecostals and Charismatics are more obsessed with the devil and demons than most, for they are the ones who believe they have power to cast out demons. There is indeed such a thing as demon possession. To deny this would be to wickedly repudiate the ministry of the Lord Jesus and His apostles. I do not believe, however, that most of what is *called* demon possession today is really demon possession at all. For the most part it is merely the *works of the flesh*. If you have ever seen real demon possession you know that it is far different than what the so-called “deliverance ministry” is calling possession today. They call such *fleshly* activities as fear, lust, rejection, anger, cursing, lying, criticism, gossip, sexual fantasies, masturbation, adultery, incest, harlotry, nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, gluttony, hatred, envy, and a hundred more — *demons*! There is *no place* in the New Testament where the saints of God are exhorted to get “deliverance” from such demons! I tell you, my beloved, it’s *not* in the Book! Rather we are exhorted to “*Put off the old man with his deeds*” (Col. 3:9), to “*Mortify the deeds of the body*” (Rom. 8:13), and to “*Mortify your members which are upon the earth (of the earth realm)*” (Col. 3:5), and “*Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:16). Read all these passages, and many more, and it is plain to see that the works of the flesh are exactly and precisely the very things the deliverance preachers are *calling* — DEVILS! And the solution the Holy Ghost gives is not in “casting them out” but in *mortifying* them, or *putting them to death by walking in the Spirit*!

All kinds of unscriptural methods and techniques are used by the deliverance preachers in their casting out of devils. Often the “possessed” are exhorted to “cooperate” for their deliverance. They are told to breathe a certain way, or not to breathe. They are instructed to cough or yawn to aid the demons in leaving. Some claim that the most common manifestation of a demon’s departure is coughing — the very one manifestation that is *never* mentioned in scripture! The exorcists generally use great physical exertion, raising the voice, shouting and screaming at the devils, repeating the name of Jesus again and again, as if such physical demonstrativeness and the very *volume* of the verbal command could add something to its authority! Let me tell you something, my beloved. The Spirit of God needs not to lift up its voice — the authority of the kingdom of God is legal, judicial, and governmental authority. A judge does not shout his sentence at a criminal, the tone of his voice could add nothing whatever to the authority by which he speaks. The authority is vested in his *office* — not in his physical demonstrativeness. With a simple phone call and a bare whisper the President of the United States can send all the might of our military into action against an enemy. He *has* the authority, therefore it *works*. Hours of shouting, sweating, pleading, rebuking, barking the same command again and again would only call into question his sanity!

That is definitely NOT how the firstborn Son of God cast out devils! When Jesus demonstrated the power of the kingdom He spoke with absolute authority. While following the Master through the Gospels a marvelous revelation is unveiled. Not once did Satan or evil spirits persistently resist Him. They challenged and questioned Him, but they did not carry on a prolonged *battle*. Not one of His deliverances was

progressive with some deliverance this session and a little more the next time. Not once did He scream at devils; not once did He groan over them; not once did He use tongues or any other spiritual gift to overcome them; with a word He *commanded*, and at once they *obeyed*! They recognized His ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY! When Jesus spoke a word to the devils He had no need to “create an atmosphere” with prayers, singing, praise, scripture reading, or sentimental background music — HE HIMSELF WAS THE ATMOSPHERE! **THIS IS MANIFEST SONSHIP!**

Now what is the difference between sonship ministry and the way the church world today deals with the devil and demons? Just this. The sons of God have cast the dragon out of the heavens where they dwell! He has no more place in them. They are not personally concerned with him. And the woman who brings forth the manchild is free from his molestations, for she is safe in her wilderness, “hid from the face of the serpent.” Yet the devil is in a great battle today! And that battle rages in the church realm! It should not be difficult to ascertain just who the people of God are today who constitute “the remnant of her seed,” for are they not the ones who are engaged in conflict with the dragon? They are the ones with whom the devil is now exceedingly wroth, and against whom he is carrying out his great war. He has turned his efforts against the remaining ones of her seed, those who are truly born from above, but who are not yet overcomers, they are yet in the “earth-realm,” and are subject to the enemy’s attacks. The warfare is not in the heavenlies, but in the earth. And this remnant of her seed is fervently fighting the battle, though they are ill prepared for it. They are indeed a rag-tag army and not very professional. Their weapons are wrong, obsolete, and inadequate. Their methods of warfare are defective, incorrect, and misguided. Their results are less than desirable. Yet they fight on! The vision does not reveal how long the battle lasts or what the final outcome is. Later visions do shed more light, and we will come to that in time, as the Lord wills, but this is where the matter rests at the time of the woman’s isolation in the wilderness.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY