

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 139

THE DRAGON, THE WOMAN, AND THE MANCHILD

John beholds two great wonders, or signs, in heaven. In the first two verses of our text he presents the first of them, when he says, "*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered*" (Rev. 12:1-2). Then in verses three and four he presents the second sign: "*And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born*" (Rev. 12:3-4).

The second sign which is seen in heaven stands in terrible contrast with this glorious, yet helpless, woman and her new-born child. It is a dragon. Do you know what a dragon is? Have you ever seen one? Have you ever touched one? Have you ever heard one? Is there a zoo anywhere in the world that has a dragon in captivity? Is there an animal park where you can drive your car through and observe them? Has any naturalist photographer come back from the jungles or mountains or depths of the sea with a photograph of one? Has National Geographic magazine ever published a picture of a herd of dragons? According to Webster's dictionary a dragon is "a *mythological* or *imaginary* monstrous animal resembling a winged crocodile, with fiery eyes, crested head, enormous claws, and often spouting fire." A dragon in scripture is not any natural animal of God's creation, but rather a *monster*. Not a real monster, of course, for it is a mythological creature created in the imagination of man, just as little children in their imaginations create within themselves the fear of the "boogey-man" or the "monster" lurking in the darkness, under the bed, or in the closet. And just like little children, people give power to that *image* which they have *imagined!* *Image* and *imagine* both come from the same root word. Can you not see that this locates this monster in the MIND OF MAN! The mind is his base of operation and his sphere of activity.

In the book of Genesis this one called Satan and the devil begins as a little serpent and by the time we come to the book of Revelation he has grown into a great red dragon! But it is a dragon of strange appearance. In the first place it is of a red color, the color of blood, war, and destruction. It speaks of flaming heat, of intensity of fierceness, of bloody warfare and death. And this well describes the inmost nature of Satan, as everywhere portrayed. Furthermore, it is a red dragon of tremendous proportions for it is described by John as a "great" red dragon. Therefore it is a great and powerful and bloodthirsty monster that John beholds in spirit! By his very appearance we may say that he signifies some tremendous and evil power.

As I mentioned above, in that long ago paradise Adam and Eve met with a serpent, and there the serpent was none other than the devil. And with that in mind we find little difficulty in discovering the identity of this dragon for the simple reason that our chapter tells us in plain words that it is the devil, for we read: "*And the great dragon was cast out, that ancient serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world*" (Rev. 12:9). The serpent is the fittest symbol of the devil because of its subtlety and shrewdness. But the little deceiving serpent of Eden does not adequately picture the devil today! The devil

of today's world must be symbolized as a *monster serpent*. The little serpent in Eden was of no particular color and had one head and no horns at all. But the great red dragon has seven heads and ten horns!

He is described as "the dragon." By this title we are to think of him as the old adversary, the devil, but now *in possession of great power*. In the garden he was the crafty little serpent, using *deceit* alone. Now he uses *coercion, force, and violence!* As the subtle serpent came with stealth into the garden of Eden defiling with *selfhood* the hearts of the parents of the human race, making a murderer of Adam's first son, so has he developed in mankind from that small and unimposing beginning to become a monster of gigantic dimensions filling the whole world with religious delusion, religious fanaticism, and fleshly corruption. In Genesis Satan entered Eden as a cunning little serpent, but in Revelation he has grown into a monstrous fire-belching dragon in the heavens and in the earth! In Genesis Satan is an enchanting serpent indwelling a mere handful of people, whereas in Revelation he is a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, a composite of peoples, nations, philosophies, and organizations. Though Satan himself is not large, but merely like the little pesky snake to those who know his tactics, still he has gathered to himself quite a huge body; in fact he has stolen the body of Christ and made it his own. "*And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High...and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time (for a limited time)*" (Dan. 7:25).

So now the network that he runs is huge and powerful and intimidating and dominates the world, all religions, and the church systems of man as well. He is no longer the inconspicuous little reptile of Eden. He is the horn of worldly strength that Jesus claims makes him "the prince of this world." How is it that Satan began as a little serpent in Eden and ends as a great dragon in the book of Revelation? Because he dwells in the *minds of men* and men have built him up in their minds and attributed to him such power and authority that the little serpent has been transformed into the great red dragon! The body of that dragon is all the institutions, organizations, and administrations that are dominated and controlled by that *satanic religious mind!* He is not some sinister creature from outer space, nor a powerful, omniscient and omnipresent spirit. Oh, no! He exists in the mind of man — he's *in your mind* if you allow him to be! That's why the scripture admonishes, "*...neither give place to the devil*" (Eph. 4:27). How do you *give place* to the devil? WITH YOUR OWN THOUGHTS!

This brings us to the curse laid upon the serpent in the beginning: "*...upon your belly shall you go.*" This judgment speaks of infinitely more than a literal snake slithering along upon his physical belly, just as the word "heel" speaks of infinitely more than a location on the foot, and the word "head" speaks of something greater far than a mere physical head in the words of the next verse: "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*" (Gen. 3:15). Large sections of scripture are couched in symbolic terms, hiding much of the "mysteries" of God in *figurative* language. This is done quite purposefully by the Lord that the unspiritual while "seeing" actually *see not* and "hearing" actually *hear not* (Mat. 13:10-17). The deep spiritual truth of the scriptures can be understood only *in the spirit and by the spirit!* So, "*upon your belly shall you go*" paints for the eyes of our understanding the picture of the serpent crawling in humiliation, prostration, limitation, and subjection upon the ground. The Psalmist uses a similar expression in Psalm 44:25, "*For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.*" Such denotes a prolonged prostration and a depth of subjection as could never be conveyed or expressed in normal terms.

The very fact that God states that the serpent was *now* to crawl upon his belly, which obviously he had not done before, reveals that there was a *descending* from one realm to another, from a greater to a lesser, from a higher to a lower. Moving on his belly limits the sphere of the serpent's activity, now he can only creep along the ground. Previously he had access to loftier realms, his sphere of activity extended to higher domains — exalted realms of pure spirit expression — but he is now lowered into the dust-realm, into the world of the natural man, confined to the earthly, and restricted to action upon and expression through THE MAN OF THE DUST. "*And dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*" (Gen. 3:14). How truly this accounts for the words of the apostle, "*And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, THE S-P-I-R-I-T THAT N-O-W WORKETH I-N THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE*" (Eph. 2:2).

Ah, yes, this evil *spirit* is IN MAN! When the ancient serpent was lowered into the dust realm, to crawl upon his belly and eat dust, man became the base of operation for his activity. I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, that you will find Satan operative in NO OTHER REALM in the whole universe! You do not meet the devil in rocks, trees, fish, mountains, rivers, clouds, birds, nor on far-away planets, in distant galaxies, in flying saucers, nor in any other object or location outside of man. Can we not see that under the curse God *limited Satan to the dust of the earth*, to the realm of the first Adam, the natural man, the carnal mind — the man of dust! “*The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven*” (I Cor. 15:47).

Many have seen the connection between Satan and the carnal mind and, not understanding the *origins* of these things, have assumed that the carnal mind *is* Satan. The truth, however, runs deeper than that — it goes to the *spirit* of the mind. In words fraught with eternal significance the inspired apostle exhorts, “*Be renewed in the S-P-I-R-I-T OF YOUR MIND*” (Eph. 4:23). As one has so aptly written, commenting of this verse, “Note that it reads: in the *spirit* of your mind, for this is far more than just mental gymnastics of our own self-efforts. There are beneficial results in the power of positive thinking, even on natural realms. But true transformation comes when the change is in the SPIRIT of your mind.” It is more than merely the renewing of the mind, exchanging our carnal mind for His mind — it is the renewing of SPIRIT — the *spirit of the mind*. That is the mystery. When there is the exchange of *spirit* — the spirit of our natural mind replaced by the spirit of Christ — then our mind is able to function on the divine plane. It becomes the norm of our life to just be thinking HIS thoughts, because of the establishment of His Spirit force within us. It is an absolute must to receive from a realm higher than Adam can give in order to have our minds renewed. The change comes in the realm of *spirit*, not by our self-efforts to change our way of thinking, believing, understanding, or acting.

Elwin Roach has shared this illuminating thought concerning the transformation of the mind. “This word, *renewing*, is adequately rendered in Romans 12:2; however, to be a little more accurate, the Greek word could be translated **renovation** (see Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance). We are then transformed by the **renovation** of our minds. There is only a slight difference in the two words, but when renovation is used, we get the thought of a complete house clearing, house cleaning, and then a total refurbishing. Everything old is removed and replaced with all new furnishings. God, however, does something differently in His renovation. He does it just the opposite. He does not clear out the old things and leave our minds a total void and then start filling them with new thoughts. He starts bringing in the new thoughts first, and with this the old passes away and gives place to the new — and all this is of God. Think about it!”

The activity of the mind is primarily in the realm of THOUGHTS. Thoughts are very real and alive! Thoughts are SPIRITUAL REALITIES, transmitted *energy*, coming upon your person via the gateway of your mind. Thus energy (thoughts) is transmitted into your conscious mind from the unconscious to cause you to act and react in a certain way. Thoughts do not originate in the mortal brain. Thoughts are invisible and powerful entities which have their origin in the dimension of SPIRIT. The unconscious mind is the link between the physical brain and the realm of spirit. Thoughts originate very deep in the world of spirit. Thoughts *do have* an objective! Until we understand the connection between *thoughts* and *spirit* we will confuse the chemical actions of the brain with the *real source* of the thought patterns which dominate and control our attitudes, personality, desires, ambitions, and actions.

Every decision that you have ever made or ever will make has its origin, intent, and power in the INVISIBLE REALM — the realm of *spirit*. You will never understand the mystery of life until you thoroughly know that there is a negative and a positive spirit force. The negative leads to death; the positive to life. The mind is the gateway, the channel through which these energy forces affect our lives. The thoughts that come to us bear the characteristics of the spirit force operating in us. Let us notice what the apostle Paul has to say about the connection between *mind*, our *actions*, and *life* and *death*. “*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a **reprobate mind**, to do those things which are not proper; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of **death**, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do*

them” (Rom. 1:28-32). What a list! All of these things *originate* from a **reprobate mind** — from the world of **thoughts!** They carry within them the power of **death!** Conversely, the “works of the spirit” come also from **mind** — from the **spirit** within the **renewed mind!** Can you not see the mystery?

Through the fall Satan became one with man, incarnate in the unconscious mind, the energy force of human nature, the spirit of the carnal mind, slithering about in the lowest realms of man’s earthiness, in the crooked thoughts, selfish desires, distorted emotions, religious perversion, unrighteous dispositions, in the illusions and delusions of the sense-realm of the world of appearances, and in all the corrupt motions of the flesh. May God graciously give us enlightenment to see that included with Satan is the kingdom of Satan; therefore, since Satan is in man, the kingdom of Satan is also in man. Satan is the prince of this world, so the world too is included in the kingdom of Satan and is also in man. Furthermore, since Satan is intensely *religious*, religion also is included in the kingdom of Satan and is likewise in man. That is why the natural man, in his unregenerate state, is *inherently religious!* And that also explains why all of mankind’s religions are *false* and *demonic!* The first Adam is not a small man! On the contrary, he is a big, all-inclusive man! The whole vast realm of reality, positive *and* negative, is **CENTRALIZED AND PERSONIFIED IN MAN!** And it is there that the great red dragon stands before the sun-clad woman! Oh, the wonder of it!

When Adam and Eve departed from Eden the serpent was in their hearts, their minds, and in their bodies. It should not be difficult for any man to see that all the unrestrained evils that are running rampant in the world today are but the out-croppings, the fruitage, the increase, yea, the manifestation of the dragon that is now full-grown from the little serpent in Eden. This monster dwells within each of us! It could be explained as the accumulated genetic legacy and cosmic consciousness from hundreds of our ancestors who have lived out of and cultivated the beastly nature. After Adam and Eve were expelled from the heaven-blest paradise of God it was but a short space until the serpent in Cain slew one righteous man, for “he was a murderer from the beginning” — whereas the dragon that stalks the earth today in a vast multitude of billions of Adam’s posterity has slain millions on the blood-stained battlefields of every continent and nation on the face of the earth, and the vast majority have been *religious killings*, and the saints of all ages have been viciously persecuted to death. Ah, yes, the little serpent has become a giant dragon, stalking and stomping about in the dust of Adam’s race!

We need not be surprised at the increase of this satanic power in the end of the age. Can we not see that in every age the degree of wickedness in the earth is proportionate to the **INCREASE OF MANKIND?** Of a dim and distant age it is written, “*And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth... God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil continually*” (Gen. 6:1,6). And of our own age it is declared, “*This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, devils, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*” (II Tim. 3:1-4).

Two millenniums ago the apostle Paul accurately prophesied, “*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*” (II Tim. 3:13). May the Spirit of the Lord open wide the eyes of our understanding to see the simple and evident truth that as **MEN** increase in the earth — **THE DEVIL INCREASES!** In making this statement, I am fully aware that such a thought runs contrary to long-established views of theology, but we are *not* in the least concerned with the views of Babylon’s theology, for so-called theology is not really the truth of God but the *ideas of men*. I am concerned only with the truth of God as it is revealed in His Word in the light of inspiration and revelation.

Another wonder appeared *in heaven*, that is, in the *realm of the spirit*. All of this is taking place in the *spiritual realm!* The great red dragon that John beholds appears to be very large, extremely formidable and frightening, and he appears to be in our heaven! Many folks cannot conceive of Satan being in heaven — even the heaven where the manchild sits upon the throne — yet he is there until we overcome him even in that realm and cast him out from that high place. There is no literal great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns strutting around up in some far-off heaven somewhere. These are spiritual realities right in the realm of the spirit where the saints of God live and move and have their being. When John beheld these wondrous things he was “in the spirit” in the day of the Lord! John now beholds another great supernatural

sign in the heaven of the spirit. He identifies this great red dragon as that ancient serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. We have seen that the dragon is the *spirit* of the old Adamic mind. Is it not true that just as soon as one ascends into the high realms of the Spirit where abides the mind of Christ, the old carnal mind, natural reasoning, and fleshly way of thinking exerts itself in its effort to circumvent, side-track, and derail the very thing the Spirit is speaking and doing.

We see this principle fulfilled in the story of Job. “*Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them*” (Job 1:6). May I reverently add that *every time* the *sons of God* present themselves before the Lord — Satan comes *also among them!* It bespeaks a condition within these sons — *our* mind versus *His* mind, *our* will versus *His* will, *our* ways versus *His* ways. It is a heavenly place within the sons of God wherein we must be tested to show whether we be sons indeed. This impudent devil of self-will is in every man, and even our blessed Lord Himself surrendered His own will to the Father’s, saying, “*Father, if Thou be willing remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done*” (Lk. 22:42). Until every son has been completely perfected and thoroughly tested it is not possible for the sons of God to come and present themselves before the Lord without Satan coming also among them. Does he not walk in the natural mind of every man? It is written, “*And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence cometh thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*” (Job 1:7). Now the Lord’s questions are never for His own enlightenment. He knew well whence Satan came. Oh, yes, Satan had been walking to and fro throughout the earth — God knew this — for he walks in *our earth*, even that earth which *we are!* From the east to the west, from the north to the south, from sea to sea and from pole to pole he walks in the earthly places of our souls, in the secret chambers of our minds, in the fleshly motions of our bodies; he travels up and down in us from the heights of our heavens to the depths of our hells. There is not a day that he leaves us! Dust is his habitation.

All the way to glorification this inner antagonist is present. This is why every revival God has ever sent through the ages ended in apostasy. Satan — not the devil with horns and pitchfork — but that inward devil of fleshly wisdom, sense-knowledge, and carnal zeal — has a subtle way of identifying himself with every move of the Spirit of God, so as to corrupt it from within. Many years ago F. J. Huegel wrote: “Students of the great Welsh Revival (1900—1903) say that the wonderful stream of Divine Life little by little lost its saving efficacy, as another stream from a very different source, naturally very filthy, began to mingle with the River of the Water of Life proceeding from the Throne and from the Lamb. ‘Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.’ Beware of false fire! Beware of the counterfeit glow! When the *soulish* takes the place of the pure working of the Holy Spirit, you have a ‘revival’ whose fires, though they purport to be from heaven are more likely to be from hell. There are any number of ‘doors’ through which Satan may enter to get control of revival. An undue stressing of the emotional; excitement which grieves and suffocates the Holy Spirit who works quietly; a glorying in the ministry rather than in the Lord Himself; clap-trap methods; *self*, whatever its form, in the ministry itself, obscuring Christ; these are some of Satan’s keys” — end quote.

SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS

“Behold, a great red dragon, having *seven heads* and *ten horns*, and seven crowns upon his heads” (Rev. 12:3).

Some have questioned the relative position of the seven heads and ten horns — how many horns were upon each head? Were there one horn upon four heads and two upon each of the remaining heads — or one of several other possible configurations? The question as to the relative position of the seven heads and ten horns is certainly irrelevant. John tells us nothing about their relative position, so the way in which they are arranged on the dragon is not the point and therefore has nothing to do with any spiritual truth. Rather, it is the *fact* of the “heads” and the “horns” together with their “number” or quantity that is significant to us. That is what the Holy Spirit is impressing upon us! The numbers *seven* and *ten* are symbolical numbers. They do not refer to ten kingdoms, or ten kings, or to seven kings literally; but they denote the *authority* and *power* of the dragon, the devil. Heads are the symbol of *authority*. When the scripture says that Christ is the “Head” of the church, and that the man is the “head” of the woman, it bespeaks a headship which expresses itself through a sphere of authority. Christ is the AUTHORITY over

the church! He is the Leader, the Chief, the Commander, the Captain, the Controller, the Administrator, the Master — the LORD! That makes Him the Head of this body!

The Lord gave to Israel a covenant of *AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS* when He said to them, “*The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath...*” (Deut. 28:12-13). This is also why prophets, priests, and kings were both anointed and crowned upon their heads — it signified the absoluteness and supremeness of their *authority!* The same thought of authority in relation to headship is to be seen in such scripture references as, “*But God shall wound the head of his enemies...*” (Ps. 68:21). Nor is anything else signified by the *serpent’s head* which is crushed by God’s Christ (Gen. 3:15). And then we read, “*The Lord shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen...He shall wound the heads over many countries*” (Ps. 110:5-6). Clearly this indicates that the Lord strips the authority and headship from the leaders of the nations!

Horns, on the other hand, are the symbol of *might, strength, and power*. The dragon has seven heads of authority and ten horns of power! Seven and ten are both complete numbers. Seven is a sacred number in this respect, that it generally is used of the perfection of spiritual realities and the completeness of God’s purposes and kingdom. It denotes *fullness* in the things of God. In the book of Revelation numbers do not actually define amounts at all, but they represent *concepts*. The number twenty-four, for example, is meaningless as an amount — there are not exactly twenty-four elders sitting on twenty-four thrones up in some far-off heaven somewhere. Some commentators, not understanding this principle, and trying to make twenty-four stand for an amount, have concluded that the twenty-four elders are the twelve patriarchs of Israel and the twelve apostles of the Lamb! Yet the whole imagery of the twenty-four elders round about the throne, together with the twenty-four courses of the typical Aaronic priesthood set forth in I Chronicles chapter twenty-four, shows that the number twenty-four signifies the *priesthood of God*. It is not an amount; it is the corporate ministry of God’s priesthood! The number 144,000 mentioned in the Revelation is relatively unimportant as an amount; but when we understand that it is a multiple of twelve, and that twelve is the number of *divine government*, then twelve squared by itself times a thousand (the number representing the *day of the Lord*) represents the absolute fullness and perfection of *divine government* within a people in the *day of the Lord!* Thus it stands for the manifest sons of God!

Seven is very significant in the economy of God. It is the most frequently used number in the Bible! The Hebrew word for seven is *sheba*. From it is *shaba*, meaning “to be complete...to seven oneself, i.e. swear by repeating a declaration seven times.” This is how the ancients swore, by repeating the oath seven times instead of placing their hand upon a Bible or merely invoking the name of God. Seven speaks of completion, fullness, perfection. Nothing can be added to or taken from it without it becoming marred. Being a prime number makes it divisible only by itself. The week is complete, full, and perfect in seven days. Seven completes the colors of the spectrum. There are seven notes in the musical scale. The cells of the human body completely replace themselves every seven years.

Ten is the number that denotes the measure of time or space or power as it is allotted and limited to any creature by God’s decree. A divinely limited measure of something is indicated by the number ten. Seven *crowned heads*, therefore, would signify the *perfection and fullness of royal authority*. As I mentioned earlier, seven, throughout the book of Revelation, represents perfection and fullness in the spiritual things of the kingdom of God. Therefore we must be careful with the interpretation of this dragon! In chapter five of the Revelation the Lamb in the midst of the throne has *seven horns!* The seven horns are identified as the *seven spirits of God*. *Seven horns* bespeaks the absolute perfection and power of the seven-fold Spirit of Christ! And now we see the dragon appearing with *seven heads*. Keep in mind, my beloved, HE IS A DECEIVER! John tells us plainly that the great dragon is that ancient serpent, called the devil and Satan, which *deceiveth* the whole world! Oh, yes, the whole world is deceived by the dragon into believing that carnal minds and carnal men and carnal means and methods and institutions and governments are the *authority* in this world! When the politicians and religious leaders and economists and educators and scientists and news men and military generals of *this world* speak they deceive mankind into believing that **THEY ARE THE PERFECT AUTHORITY IN THIS WORLD!** Indeed, Seven Heads! The devil is the deceiver. And by those seven crowns on those seven heads you must not be deceived. God did not put them

on his head. He put them on himself. They are not real crowns either. They are not made in heaven, whence all authority issues forth; therefore they have no value, they are counterfeit. The heads are an illusion and the crowns are tinsel. The truth is, the devil is the spirit enthroned in the carnal mind of the natural man, and the devil is a pretender, an impostor, an intruder, a usurper. He intrudes into the kingdom of God. When Adam sinned and was usurped by the serpent and fell from the glory of his sonship, upon fleeing Eden the serpent in Adam put on his own seven crowns and for six dreadful millenniums has exercised his dominion over the earth and all things, including all heavenly and spiritual realities (religion), by these seven crowns! And through carnal-minded religion, science, economics, education, and government he has *deceived* the whole world! That is the mystery.

Now, I mentioned before that the number ten denotes the measure of time or space or power as it is allotted and limited to any creature by God's decree. The *ten* horns of power signify that the dragon has just exactly as much power as God has allowed him — no more and no less. It indicates that the power of the devil is limited by the sovereign decree of God almighty and that the devil can do no more, no less, than that which God has decreed for him and which God wills him to do. The ten horns tell us that the devil has power, but it is a limited power, under God's control and for God's purpose. He does *not* out-fox God! He does *not* thwart God's purpose! He is *not* out of control! He can never defeat you, my beloved, matters not how he struts and comes at you charging with his horns. HE THAT IS IN YOU IS GREATER THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD! Aren't you glad!

THE DRAGON'S TAIL

“And *his tail* drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth...” (Rev. 12:4).

Some people who have never learned the nature of symbolic language try to imagine such a literal scene as the one here described and picture in their minds what an awful thing it would be to see the third part of the stars falling to the earth. But real stars that are fixed or planetary never fall, and if they did, it would only take one to completely obliterate this planet and the rest of the “third” would have no earth to fall upon! But with a knowledge of the spiritual meaning of the symbols we can easily identify the “tail” of this dragon and the “stars” that are cast down.

The idea propagated by the church systems is that our text is a reference to the fall of Lucifer from heaven along with one-third of the heavenly angels. The popular story asserts that away back before the worlds began some angels, one-third of the angels in heaven, in fact, led by the archangel Lucifer, rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven, whereupon the little vandals took over planet earth. God then created man in His image and likeness to show forth His love and righteousness to creation, but made the mistake of putting man on the same planet where the little devils were ruling. Soon Satan and his juvenile delinquents from heaven pulled a fast one on the man God had created and tricked him to fall under the power of sin and death. And that was Satan's way of getting back at God for kicking him out of heaven! He paid God back by bringing ruin, chaos, and darkness upon the beautiful creation of earth and mankind. So God had to scramble around and quickly develop Plan B, and with this plan God was regrouping and devising a means by which to regain control back from the devil. Under this plan God sent Jesus into the world to regain control of the earth and mankind. But after two thousand years even this plan has not worked out too well, for the vast majority of the human race is still held in the clutches of the enemy. These thoughts are hidden in the teachings of the preachers and I do not hesitate to tell you they are error for they make a mockery of the wisdom, sovereignty, and omnipotence of God, making it appear that He is a fumbling, blundering old man who doesn't know what in the world He's doing!

If we were making a law in reference to biblical interpretation surely a good one would be: “Thou shalt not establish doctrine on a word or phrase that occurs in only one passage in the Bible.” The popular doctrine of Lucifer is established on a word that occurs in the King James Version in Isaiah 14:2 and nowhere else. “*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations.*” How anybody, in their right spiritual mind, can take out of Isaiah chapter fourteen the concept that this refers to Satan is certainly possessed of an extraordinarily wild imagination. There is just no way one can read these verses, even with the greatest stretch of inventiveness or theological license, and derive from them that the prophet Isaiah is speaking of a so-called fallen angel

named Lucifer. First of all there is no mention at all of angels, much less one-third of the angels, or an archangel. Then the prophet states plainly that the term “Lucifer” prophetically refers to a **man!** “*Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. And they that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, 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 openeth not the house of his prisoners?*” (Isa. 14:15-17).

The entire chapter is addressed to the **king of Babylon**. “*Thou shalt take up this taunting parable against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the scepter of the (tyrant) rulers, who smote the peoples in anger with incessant blows and trod down the nations in wrath with unrelenting persecution — until he who smote is persecuted and no one hinders anymore*” (Isa. 14:4-6, KJV & Amplified). The whole section of the chapter about Lucifer follows these verses. Now look at what these verses say, along with the ones in the paragraph above, and you see exactly what the tyrannical king of Babylon did to all the nations he had conquered! And now God is revealing his judgment in highly symbolical and parabolic language. There is nothing in this chapter about the devil, my friend, it is all a *taunting parable* about the ancient king of Babylon!

The fact is, furthermore, there is no *name* Lucifer. Lucifer is not a proper name. It is a term that the Catholic translator, Jerome, installed instead of the Hebrew word *heylel* which means “shining one.” Shining one is not a proper name in Hebrew any more than it is in English or any other language. It’s not a name! It’s not the name of an angel. It’s not even the name of the king of Babylon. The Hebrew word is a descriptive term, but its not the *name* of anything. “Lucifer” is a contrived, invented, concocted, fabricated, made-up so-called name. But it’s not a *name!* There is no creature in heaven above, in the earth beneath, or under the earth that bears that name. Gabriel — that’s a name. Michael — that’s a name. Lucifer — *not* a name. You only find it once in the whole Bible. If you look in the original Hebrew text you will never find Lucifer. If you look in the Hebrew dictionary you will not find Lucifer. There is no Hebrew word nor any Hebrew name Lucifer. It’s made up! It is the Hebrew term for “shining one,” and it’s not a name. It was brought over into English from the Latin and transliterated as a name. The “name” Lucifer has been given to us by religious superstition, folklore, myth, and fairy tales!

Orthodoxy has long taught that Lucifer was, in the beginning, a high and beautiful archangel in heaven. The theologians and preachers recite over and over how Lucifer was “the anointed cherub that covereth...the most beautiful and wise of all God’s creation!” This being was, so they say, the ruler and leader of the angelic beings and apparently led them in their praise of God and shouts of joy...the greatest being God ever created, one who had unequaled strength, wisdom, beauty, privilege, and authority, and was next to God Himself. This blameless, perfect one, named Lucifer, was created without any form of evil and with the greatest intelligence of any created being. Then, we are told, this Lucifer, suddenly realizing how beautiful and intelligent he was, became inflated with power and pride and his heart was lifted up in rebellion against God. According to the story, Lucifer gathered one-third of the heavenly angels to his cause, mustering an army with which he planned to knock God off His throne and supplant himself as king and god of the universe — and there was war in heaven! Luckily, God won, cast Lucifer out of heaven and he became, instead of an holy angel, the devil that he is today.

It is nothing short of amazing that such a doctrine could have enjoyed such widespread acceptance in the light of the plain teachings of the scriptures on this subject. Man says that Satan *in the beginning* was holy, but later fell from that estate. JESUS said of Satan, “*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer (not an angel) 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). This verse states that Satan “*abode not*” in the truth. In the Greek text the verb “*abode not*” is in the imperfect tense meaning that as far back as this personality existed HE WAS NOT TRUE. Dr. Robert Young, in his *Literal Translation of the Bible*, renders this verse: “*He was a manslayer from the beginning, and in the truth he hath not stood, because there is no truth in him.*” The Rotherham version reads: “*He was a murderer from the beginning, and in the truth he stood not; because the truth was not in him.*” J. B. Phillips gives the plainest and most accurate translation: “*He always was a*

murderer, and has never dealt with the truth, since the truth will have nothing to do with him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks in character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

Furthermore, there is no mention in the whole Bible of "Lucifer" or "Satan" drawing a third of the angels of heaven into rebellion against God. The only place in all of scripture where "one third" is mentioned as being cast down from heaven to earth is here in our text in the book of Revelation. Here, the great red dragon (not Lucifer the bright, shining leader of the choir of heaven!) who is also identified as "that ancient serpent, called the devil and Satan," draws a third part of the stars of heaven with his tail and he casts them into the earth. The problem with using this reference to prove Satan drew a third part of the angels into rebellion is threefold. First, it is found in chapter twelve of the book of Revelation, which was written to reveal to the saints those things which "*must shortly come to pass,*" not things that already came to pass away back before the world began. Second, it is associated with the birth of the manchild and his ascension to the throne, and that certainly didn't take place before Adam was placed in Eden! Third, almost all commentators completely miss the fact that it is the great red dragon who casts the third part of the stars down to the earth — not GOD! The preachers tell us that GOD kicked the devil and his angels out of heaven, but the only record we have in the Bible of "one-third" being cast down from heaven to earth tells us that the *dragon casts them down!* "*And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.*" This is *before* the birth of the manchild! Yet, it is *after* the birth of the manchild and his ascension to the throne that Michael and his angels *cast the great dragon into the earth!* So the dragon casts the stars to the earth and Michael and his angels cast the dragon to the earth — the former takes place *before* the birth of the manchild and the latter happens *after* the manchild is born. We have certainly been told a lot of *fairy tales!* The notion that any of this can have anything to do with "Lucifer" is an absurdity of enormous proportions!

Let us meditate further on the symbolic and spiritual implications of this great scene John beholds in the heaven of the Spirit of the Lord. It would appear that the great red dragon lashed his tail backward and forward, as if in rage, and with the purpose to frighten and terrorize. What did, and what does, this dragon-tail signify? It certainly signifies something or it would not have been so described. Again, we must go back to the Old Testament for our explanation. In Moses' time, to be the *tail*, was to be the lowest; to be the head was to be the highest and most honorable (Deut. 28:44). In the time of Isaiah the *tail* was the false prophet and his teachings by which the Lord's people were led astray, and destroyed (Isa. 9:14-16). Isaiah said, "*The prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail.*" This is the true and scriptural meaning of the tail of the dragon. We know that the dragon is the great *deceiver*, and his tail is composed of all the false prophets and false teachers who proclaim his false doctrines — *lies!*

The dragon, that ancient serpent, has always had this tail! He had it in the garden of Eden, he had it when he met Christ in the desert, and he has it today. It is by this tail of error that he accomplishes his pernicious designs in leading men and women away from the living Christ — from truth, life, and reality! From the very beginning of history this tail has grown stronger, longer, and larger, until today he can lash that tail backward and forward over the whole face of the globe, and then even sweep the starry heavens above with it. Yes, this vision says, that by his tail he sweeps the very heaven where the sun-clad woman is in travail and where the manchild is birthed! He drags down easily and forcibly the shining stars there- from, that they should cease to give their light in the high places of God, but shine dimly in the polluted atmosphere of earth. Stars are heavenly bodies, and signify both divine truths and realities as well as those heavenly ones who walk in the light as He is in the light. Their being "dragged down" signifies perversion of the truth and apostasy of those who walked in that truth. Satan by his tail of religious, spiritual, moral, doctrinal, and practical error changes the truth of God into a lie and accomplishes the downfall of those in whom that truth shone. Just because we are of the manchild company doesn't mean we don't have any conflict with the dragon. Oh, yes! Even in the high places of the spirit we encounter the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns!

Michael and his angels (Jesus and the sons of God) do battle with the dragon and cast him down from the heavenly place where we dwell in the son realm. Are we so blind that we cannot see that not all who *aspire* to be manifest sons of God will truly shine in that glory? What does it mean to you, my brethren, when John tells us that the tail of the dragon drew a third part of the *stars of heaven*, and did *cast them to the earth* — *drew* them, enticed them, allured them, tempted and seduced them, even as Eve was seduced and as

even our Lord Jesus was tempted of the devil in the wilderness of Judea — and they are cast down, *dragged* down to the earth, out of the heavens of the spirit into the earth of the soul, abandoning the beautiful hope of sonship to lower themselves back into the soulical religious world of the carnal church systems of man, and sometimes into even darker religious realms.

This sad and painful picture has been with us through all the years of my walk in the kingdom of God and I have myself witnessed a great number of these star-sons drawn by the lies of the false prophets of the dragon's tail, cunning deceptions of false teachings, of sexual impurity, so-called "free love," of New Age delusions, of spiritual pride, of kingdom building and sectarian spirits, of going back into Babylon in an effort to impart deeper truth and a more blessed hope to the prisoners there, and they themselves become entangled again with the bondage and unfruitful works of the spiritual darkness of that realm of death! I find words and phrases totally inadequate to describe my sorrow at seeing these bright luminaries of the heavenlies falling down into the wilderness of the earthlies! Yet there is no denying what the Spirit is telling us in this vision.

God's Christ is now to be revealed out of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! God's Christ has been a mystery, he has been hidden, concealed, but now he shall be seen upon the throne in great power and glory! He will shine like the noonday sun! The ministries of the virgin church have been as stars, they have shone and sparkled like diamonds in the darkness of the carnal church age. These star-ministries will continue to shine as long as the night endures. But when the Day-star has fully risen in the hearts of God's called and chosen elect, the night stars will fade away. These stars (two-thirds) are *not* cast down to the earth, they are simply subdued, ruled, and eclipsed by the greater glory of the manifest sons of God!. The dragon tried to devour the manchild at the moment of his birth but was not successful, for the sons of God are overcomers who have conquered in all things and in all realms! "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony*" (Rev. 12:11). The dragon was successful, however, in casting down from their lofty positions one-third of the stars of heaven — the truths and ministries of the virgin church — drawing them with his tail of deception — and casting them down to the earth realm of delusion and shame.

The ministries of the church realm, even the virgin church realm, can be easily deceived, as we see again and again in chapters two and three of the Revelation. They can be defiled by the great dragon, but he has no power at all against the victorious overcoming manchild. Isn't it wonderful! Vast numbers of believers are dismayed and shaken when the notable, highly acclaimed, big-name ministries are cast down from their shining positions. We should neither be dismayed nor concerned! We should rather rejoice that these are cast down *before the birth of the manchild*. We should not want to see them sitting upon the throne! The dragon is ordained of God to sweep the heavens, he is God's great *broom in the heavens* to sweep away and remove all who will not pay the price to go all the way with God, and who would hinder or oppose the manifestation of Christ in and through His manchild company of "many brethren."

It is not the ministry alone that the dragon casts down — in reality it is the message, the word, the truth of God that is robbed of its spiritual life and light that is the instrument of their fall. The sweet singer of Israel penned these meaningful words: "*The entrance of Thy words GIVETH LIGHT; it giveth UNDERSTANDING to the simple*" (Ps. 119:130). The prophet Hosea, speaking of God, said, "*Thy judgments are as LIGHT that goeth forth*" (Hos. 6:5). "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a LIGHT unto my path*" (Ps. 119:105). Also in II Corinthians 4:6, Paul declares, "*For God, who commanded the LIGHT to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT of the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" Can we not understand by this that TRUTH is LIGHT, UNDERSTANDING is LIGHT, KNOWLEDGE is LIGHT and LIFE is LIGHT. We often hear someone say, "I got some light on that." They are not talking about the light from a bulb, they are declaring the reception of understanding! In like manner, DARKNESS is ignorance and error. "*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MIND of them which believe not, lest the LIGHT of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them*" (II Cor. 4:3-4). The "stars" are the spiritual truths of God that shine in the darkness of this world. When that truth is cast down to a lower level in the understanding of the Lord's people, they also sink down to that lower level with it. One can only live, experience, and walk on the level of his revelation. Can you not see the mystery?

I will close this message by quoting some instructive words from the pen of brother Bob Torango. “The dragon relies upon the ability to take truths about God and redefine them. Erroneously, some think that the dragon is out to ‘destroy truth,’ to hold it back from being birthed, but that is not its intention. The dragon itself is religious! It loves to take the truth and camouflage it, to disguise it, and give the truth a dragon identity. The dragon needs truth in order to live and be viable. The dragon takes concepts of truth, ingests them, and then changes them into the Lie. Without truthful concepts there would be no lies, for therein lies the power of the dragon, to deceive and corrupt truthful things.

“Notice, the dragon is not concerned about the woman herself. In fact, the dragon needs the woman to give birth to conceptual truths of God so the dragon can feed its religious nature, and so it has done since its inception. I do not believe that this is the first time the dragon has positioned himself in front of the woman to devour her offspring. In fact, if the truth be told, every order birthed by the woman has ended up in the belly of the dragon, a religious mindset that drags every truth of God into the murky depths of the religious, carnal mind. Every great move through the ages has eventually succumbed to the dragon’s power, from the glory of the early church which ended up under the religious-political rule of Constantine on down through the corridors of Catholicism and Popery, on down through Martin Luther and the subsequent branching off of the many aspects of Protestantism and Denominationalism all the way through the present time of this century with the outpouring of the Pentecostal movement and the Latter Rain and Sons of God movements — all have eventually gone away from the original spontaneous glory into a stagnation of religious mindsets. It is an inherent condition of man to bring the things of the spirit into a manageable, logical, religious mindset that can be structured into precepts and concepts that are relatable to our finite mind.

“So the dragon has been here before, has been positioned before the woman before, and is expecting to devour the child the moment it is birthed from the woman, ***but this birth will be different from anything else the woman has ever birthed!*** This is not conceptualized truth, nor is it representative truth, nor is it type and shadow truth. This is a birth of THE TRUTH, which has nothing to do with the religious, carnal mind of men, but is the ***offspring of the loins of God — Present Truth, Irresistible Truth, Life-Giving Truth!*** It is not going to be given to the dragon like all the other truthful concepts have been given, and allowed to be devoured according to the plan of God. That is why the dragon is so wroth, so full of rage at being cheated of its usual due, devouring this most precious of all births, because the dragon has always before been given the things of God to corrupt them and make them his own, ***but not so with this birth!*** This child is marked with a destiny of change and disruption, because after it is caught up, all hell breaks loose in heaven and earth and NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN!” — end quote.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY