

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 150

THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA (continued)

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw *a beast rise up out of the sea*, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority” (Rev. 13:1-2).

John beholds how out of the sea there emerges a frightful monster, a beast, indeed a *wild beast*, as it is in the Greek, ferocious and ravenous of nature. When we compare the term “beast” with the term “dragon” and the location of each, it becomes clear that the beast out of the sea is not the same as the dragon which has been cast out from heaven into the earth. The dragon is identified in chapter twelve as that ancient serpent, which is the Devil and Satan. The beast rises up out of the sea and receives his throne, authority, and power *from the dragon*. Individually, the beast represents the same thing as the sea out of which he ascends, that is, the body-realm, the carnal nature of the flesh man, the natural man, the wicked man, man at the lowest level of his being, the man of sin who is motivated, dominated, and controlled by the satanic spirit. **YET THIS BEAST IS SOMETHING MORE THAN THAT!** The scene here is not one merely of our individual state of being, but bespeaks *manifestation, expression, action, organization, proclamation, and power!*

The beast doesn't remain hidden beneath the turbulent waters of the sea, but rises up into the earth-realm in visible manifestation. His description indicates a *corporate expression* rather than an individual one. He walks, speaks, acts, and accomplishes. The beast blasphemes God and makes war against the saints. Power is given unto him over all kindreds, tongues, and nations. This is the carnal nature, the man of sin, *manifested* in a visible, organized, and powerful apparatus! In meditating upon these things a strange and wonderful unfolding pervaded my spirit and the truth of this became exceedingly clear. It is my deep conviction that this beast signifies the outward expression of **THE WORLD SYSTEM OF MAN**. This is the beast lurking beneath the surface of the deep, which rises up from our sea (fleshly nature) having many heads (manifestations of authority), many horns (organized powers), and spewing blasphemies from its mouth. This beastly system is always, everywhere, decade after decade, century after century, generation after generation, rising up out of the sea of humanity, out of all the people on the earth. It is a ferocious and vast system originating right out of human nature! And this system relentlessly makes war against the spiritual life of God's people!

We know that the “world” is a “cosmos,” a system. It is not a loose-knit, disconnected pile of things like the cast-offs in a junk yard. It is a highly organized, sophisticated *system*. It is a cohesive order organized out of the ***cunning and worldly wisdom*** of the Adamic mind. The apostle James describes two kinds of wisdom, and each of these two types of wisdom originate from a *mind*! “*Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,*

and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (James 3:13-18).

The wisdom which is from *beneath* is the wisdom from the mind of the beast that rises up out of the depths of the sea. This mind is the mind of the flesh, known as the carnal mind, and is earthly, sensual, and demonic. It is rooted in pride, lust, and vanity, and its fruit is selfish ambition, envy, jealousy, and strife. This earthly, sensual, and demonic wisdom can also daily be heard coming from the mouths of politicians, educators, psychiatrists, psychologists, newscasters, preachers, advertising, television programs, movies, plus a thousand other places. Be still, my beloved, and you may hear its whispering voice right out of your own fleshly mind! Oh, yes, it poses as “wisdom,” a way or attitude or action which *seems* desirable, acceptable, justifiable, logical, and needful, but it is the wisdom of the dragon.

All the wisdom of this world contains the mind (thoughts and intents) of the evil one. It is centered in selfish ambition and worldly pursuits and pleasures, and governs this world system. The carnal mind cannot receive the mind of Christ because the flesh cannot receive the things of the spirit, for they are spiritually discerned. On the other hand, the wisdom from *above* can only be received or known by *revelation!* The wisdom of heaven is full of godly discernment and divine character and purpose! The carnal mind delights in fleshly, earthly, and demonic wisdom, and it despises the heart, mind, and will of God’s Christ. The spiritual mind, which is the mind of Christ, is empowered to discern the true nature of all things and rejoices in that which is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praise-worthy (Phil. 4:8).

No phase or feature of the bestial system of the world operates independently of the whole. The entire world system of man, whether it be in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Cuba, the Gaza Strip, Europe, America, Japan, China, or elsewhere, is organized, compacted together, and so fitted together under the inspiration and direction of the great red dragon. Whether it be political, or economic, or social, or artistic, or educational, or commercial, or religious in nature, you will find the world to be one vastly organized, interrelated, and interdependent network. The world may exhibit itself in the form of wealth, fame, position, or power; or in the form of control, tyranny, ruthlessness, wrath, persecution; or in the form of beauty, entertainment, attraction, enticement, allurements, pleasure; or in the form of provision, safety, security, even religion. Whatever its form, beneath the carefully fabricated façade lurks the bestial nature of the dragon intent on *swallowing you up* like a wild beast! Hence we are continually being exposed to a vast and formidable array of manifestations of the world system of man as a coherent mass. And though it may express itself in many different forms and on various levels, the fact remains that all its parts are merely functional members of the one corporate body of the one great beast out of the sea!

This beast does not have your best interests at heart! The beast is *wild*. The beast is *predatory*, *ravenous*, *fierce*, *ferocious*, *savage*, and *bloodthirsty*. The beast is *mad*. There are many species of insanity. All sin is insanity, in different degrees. The carnal mind is an insane mind given wholly to destructive delusions. It is a mind that has taken flight from reality. The natural man is mentally ill beyond comprehension. He is a beast. The carnal mind is spared from this classification in our world, only because the vast majority of the inmates in this vast asylum called “society” are the ones making the rules and writing the definitions! There is a universal insanity of the so-called wisdom of this world, but the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God — the Spirit. The mortal, sinful, sick, warring, confused, bigoted, proud, self-conceited, hateful, murderous, deceiving, coercing, sorrowing, imperfect, carnally minded children of men are counterfeits, to be laid aside for the pure reality — *man in the image of God!* This mortal, this deranged mind of old Adam, must be put off, and the new man, or real man, the sane man in the heavenly mind of Christ, must be put on! ***“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him” (Col. 3:9-10).***

Have you ever incurred the anger of men? It is just as unreasonable, fierce, savage, and untamed as a wild beast! And the wrath of the world system is a thousand times *more ruthless* than the anger of one man, for it is a very tightly organized network which has risen out of the sea of mankind’s corrupt heart, and the dragon has given this bestial system his power, and throne, and great authority! It should be evident that when the dragon gives the beast his power, his throne, and his authority, it is not a free grant to the wild

beast! You can be sure that the beast is required to give the dragon something in return. We can see what the dragon requires of the wild beast when we read what the devil demanded of Jesus when trying to seduce Him with the gift of all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. The devil (dragon) said to Him, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore *wilt worship me, all shall be thine!*" (Lk. 4:6-7). So the "throne of the wild beast" depended upon the worship, or the homage, that the beast would give to the dragon. There is its location, its resting-place. Can we not see by this that the location of the throne of the beast has never changed? It has always been based or made to stand upon the worship and subjection the beast pays to the dragon! The meaning is just this: if you will bow to, obey, become subservient to the dictates, desires, ambitions, ways, methods, and purposes of the Adamic mind, the carnal nature — **YOU CAN GET ANY AND EVERYTHING YOU WANT! THE "WORLD" WITH ALL ITS WEALTH, POWER, AND GLORY CAN BE YOURS! JUST DO THINGS THE WORLD'S WAY AND YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL!** It is a coherent order organized under the dominion of the god of this world! That is the mystery.

Beloved brethren, would you understand the nature of this beast? Here is what the Holy Spirit has taught us concerning it. "*If the world **hate you**, ye know that it **hated me** before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are **not of the world**, but I have chosen you out of the world, **therefore the world hateth you***" (Jn. 15:18-19). "*Marvel not, my brethren, if the world **hate you***" (I Jn. 3:13). "*I have given them Thy word; and the world **hath hated them**, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil*" (Jn. 17:14-15).

As one has written, "Brethren, since we have accepted the word of God, since we have followed Christ, since we have sought Him whom it hates, therefore, the world hates us. Why? Because we do not belong to the world. The world may be attractive, the world may project an excellent facade, the world may appear refined, civilized, and cultured; but brothers and sisters, once you incur the wrath of man *then* you will know what the world is. If you go along with it all the time the world may seem to be very civilized and quite refined; but once its wrath is kindled, once you attempt to break away from its tradition, customs, ways, and thought, what then do you find? The *real* nature of this world is revealed, and it is the nature of a wild beast! The wrath of man is like a savage, uncontrollable animal. It is so covetous that it has hardly the patience to chew you, it instead wants to *swallow* you! It is as greedy and insatiable as hell, and as cruel as hades! In figure it is not unlike that incident in the Old Testament of the earth being opened and swallowing up all which belonged to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num. 16:32). Let us recognize the world for what it is: it is like a wild irrational beast: it is trying to devour you, to swallow you, to kill you — spiritually. Is it not true? Is it not true? But thank God, the Lord is on our side. Now if the Lord is for us, the world *cannot* swallow us! No matter how it may try, it cannot swallow us up!"

We see, then, that we're not looking for some future, coming antichrist; the beast is already here, and he is the bestial system of the world. Christians everywhere are busy looking for a mad superman like Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Gorbachev, or some other; but men such as these are but small cogs in the great wheel of the real beast. It's not a single person we're looking for! The beast is everywhere and we've all been contaminated by that system. People don't even realize that they're being contaminated as they give heed to the thinking of the world's political, economic, educational, media, entertainment, military, and social leaders. They're receiving the system into their minds, then doing the works of the devil because they're unknowingly adopting his values and agendas.

The beast has so deceived the world, including the church. These days, sin is just as rampant in the church as it is in the world! Whatever society is doing, that is what the church members are also doing. Whatever values Dr. Phil or Oprah Winfrey are espousing, these become the values of the Christian community. Whatever standards the government legislates or the courts mandate, the church migrates to those standards. The beastly system has invaded the church, and the ways of the world have stamped their mark upon it. The system has become such a part of us! The churches operate in the same "professionalized" manner as the world. Religion has become big business, hyped just as the world hypes their wares. If the world has its rock concerts, the church changes the words to Christian words and entertains their children with the same beat and the same appearance. The church has not influenced the world, the world has shaped the church! Christians get all involved in politics, rooting for this candidate and

that, for this proposition and the other, supposing that they can somehow legislate righteousness in the land. Somehow they have failed to comprehend the awful truth that nearly *all* politicians are opportunists, strategists, deceivers, and liars! They say one thing to get your vote, and then do another. Nor do they understand the solemn truth that the *gospel* is the *power of God unto salvation* — NOT the power of God *unto legislation!* Laws do not change any man's heart, they merely bring the vengeance of the law down upon the heads of the evil-doers. **THAT IS NOT THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST! THAT IS THE POWER OF THE WORLD! THE MINISTRY OF THE SON OF GOD AND THE SONS OF GOD IS TO REDEEM MEN, CHANGE MEN, TRANSFORM MEN, GIVE MEN A NEW HEART, AND MAKE THEM A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS!** Oh, how the church has sold out to the world — yea, the church has been *captured* by the beast! *“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them”* (Rev. 13:7)

Now if you join yourself to the world and its value system, and live by its spirit, you can live out a robotic existence. Someone once asked the great Indian Christian mystic, Sadhu Sundar Singh, following his trip to Europe and America, what he thought of Western civilization. He told them, “I did not see real civilization but animalism. The people do not know Christ, do not live with Him. They have learned how to dress, eat, be punctual, they are trained animals; that is not civilization. If we only know our relationship with God then our life will be a true life. ‘Man, *know thyself*.’ If we have real life in Jesus Christ, then we shall know many other things. In order to know it is not necessary to be a learned man. A very simple man may know real life in Christ. Learned people cannot understand.”

If you are one with the world, you will not be bothered, for the world accepts you and you fulfill its expectations. But just you try to be separated from the world, just you try to break away from its entangling spirit, ways, values, requirements, and organization and instantly you will find that the world will *hate* you: because now you no longer *belong!* Dear saint of God, if we are to attain the prize of sonship, we must heed the exhortation of the inspired apostle who has admonished us, *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not”* (I Jn. 2:15-17; 3:1).

Oh, how we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory that the Lord has delivered us *from* the world and has transferred us into another world, another realm, a new society, a higher kingdom — the kingdom of God and His sons! Because we no longer belong to that old, disintegrating and passing order of the Adamic man, therefore the world, including the religious world, hates us; it rises up in contempt, in wrath, in fury, in persecution, trying to devour us, to overwhelm us, trying to entrap us in its snare. But blessed be God, every member of God's called and chosen elect has been thoroughly dealt with by God and has *escaped the snare of the fowler!* Isn't it wonderful!

Now we come to an amazing word which may be hard for the natural mind to interpret, but when men seek the face of the Lord He sends His Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness of the carnal mind that He may reveal the things that pertain to the kingdom of God. The promise is made, “In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish *leviathan the piercing serpent*, even *leviathan that crooked serpent*, and He SHALL SLAY THE DRAGON THAT IS IN THE SEA” (Isa. 27:1). Truly this is the serpent that dwells within all mankind, the bestial nature within the Adamic man, the inner force which opposes the spirit and tries to bind us to earthly things, keeping us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Oh, how I rejoice in the blessed knowledge that God has promised deliverance for *all mankind* as this *sea-dwelling beast* is slain with the mighty, strong sword of the Lord — **THE WORD OF GOD!** As surely as the raging sea represents multitudes of restless, clamoring, surging, sinning humanity (Rev. 17:15), so does the beast in the sea signify the nature that generates all the evil created by man. It is this mighty beast within that agitates the waters of the sea and makes them turbulent, as the prophet has said, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (Isa. 57:20). He speaks of the troubled sea of wicked men *“when it cannot rest.”* Is it not true that this sea of humanity cannot rest *because of the beast that swims in the sea!* When the beast is slain by the mighty, strong sword of the Lord, wielded by the overcoming sons of God, the waters of every

sea will become calm and serene, tranquil and quiet, transformed “even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” The sea-dwelling beast will have been dealt with! The inner nature of man shall have been transformed and the sea will become a “sea of glass”! No beast will again clamber up out of this sea, for the throne of God is seen upon its shore! “And *before* the throne there was a *sea of glass* like unto crystal...” (Rev. 4:6).

The sword of the Lord is the word of God, the living and energetic word, the omnipotent word by which He slays the *beast in the sea*. When the bestial nature which once brought forth raging waves of the sea is conquered, the sea of man becomes peaceful and serene, expressing the peace of the kingdom of God. In the earth today there are two companies of “sea people” — those of the *troubled sea* and those of the *sea of glass*. Thank God, amidst all the trouble, distress, sorrow, problems, and pressures of the world system there is a *sea of glass people*, a people abiding in the peace of the kingdom of heaven on earth! But the day is coming when the whole great beast shall be slain and all the waters of earth shall become wondrously calm and tranquil before the majesty of the Lord! Oh, yes! When the beast is dead all men will be willing subjects of the Lordship of the indwelling Spirit. The whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord and the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea! That is the word of the Lord!

NAMES OF BLESPEMERY

“I...saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and *upon his heads the name of blasphemy*” (Rev. 13:1).

Here we are informed that this beast has upon his heads the “names of blasphemy.” The King James Bible has the singular form “name,” but in the Greek text the word is “names” — plural. It is not one name but seven names, for there are seven heads. The message is just this — upon his heads of authority are inscribed the seven-fold name of blasphemy — the nature of *absolute blasphemy*! This word “blasphemy” requires special translation, or decoding. It was a familiar word in the New Testament era. It is not used so much today, but it does have its modern counterpart. Why did the Jews of Jesus’ day call Him a blasphemer? That was always their charge against Him! It was because He dared to call God His Father and to call Himself the Son of God. Therefore, they called Him a blasphemer because He was not teaching and operating according to the rules and regulations which *they* had set down — His doctrine was not that of the scribes and Pharisees, but He said that He spoke only what He heard personally from His Father. His entire message and ministry was outside of the “box” constructed by the religious leaders of the Jews. Today if a lawyer is not operating according to the rules laid down by the Bar Association he is called non-ethical or a *malpractitioner*. Just so, if a physician is not following the rules laid down by the Medical Association, he is labeled a *malpractitioner*. This gives you our modern counterpart of *blasphemy*.

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

The word “world,” as I have pointed out, translates the Greek word *kosmos* meaning order, arrangement, system of things. The world is a negative thing in relation to God because it is a system organized outside of the anointing, life, and will of God. Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the world is the movie theater, the dance hall, ball games, stylish clothing, jewelry, makeup, and such like. Others confuse the world with the *earth*. But the world is the present system of things upon this earth conceived by the carnal mind and generated by the natural man. The world consists of *all* that man has instituted that replaces God in his life. The present political, economic, educational, and religious *systems* are not of God, but of the world. When people, activities, or things — whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly — enslave man and usurp God, they comprise the world. Anything that causes man to disregard the spirit, be removed from the anointing, stop making progress onward and upward, or be independent of God is the world. All that does not come from the Father, all that originates from any source other than the mind

of Christ, all that man institutes by his own carnal wisdom and fleshly activity is of the world. It is not according to God's purpose for man to *be subject* to any system that *he himself creates!* Nor is it according to God's purpose for His people to *be subject* to religious systems that *they themselves form!* All are outside of the life, nature, word, and ways of God and are therefore of the world.

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

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

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

Yet even sweet men of God allow themselves to be addressed as "Reverend" or "Father" or "Bishop" or "Teacher" or "Leader" or some other name of blasphemy. I have known precious men of God who for years were my "brother" in Christ, until suddenly one day I discover that my brother is now called "Doctor"! And now I am expected to recognize him as "Dr. So-in-so." Do you know what "Doctor" means? In the Greek, it is *didaskalos*. *Didaskalos* means "Master." One of its Greek synonyms is the word *kathegetes* from which the words "Rabbi" and "Master" are translated in the verse quoted above from Matthew 23:8. Both Greek words have the same identical meaning and usage in scripture. Both words mean guide, teacher, instructor, leader, master — *doctor!* It is the same as Rabbi! It is instructive to note that the words Rabbi, Master, and Doctor disappear from the New Testament after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. None of the apostles or ministries of the early church were addressed by these titles! So do you know what it means when a man says that he is a "D.D"? You know, the boys used to tease them and say, "Dead Dog," and I even heard someone say, "Devil Doctor." But it means Doctor of Divinity. And my dictionary defines one holding the degree of Doctor of Divinity as "*a teacher of religion!*" Oh, yes! It is a title of Babylon — of THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF MAN! There is no denying it. I must ask, Who made my

brother my brother? God made him my brother by the power of regeneration and calling to sonship! The question follows: Who made him a “Doctor”? Did the Holy Spirit confer that title upon him? Was it given to him by prophecy with the laying on of hands? Did an angel from heaven appear one night to inform him that God was now making him a Doctor? Is “Doctor” a gift of the Spirit or one of the five-fold ministries? In fact, was it not a man-made *system* or *organization* or *institution* that granted him his degree, his *doctorate*, whether it be earned or honorary? Now “*Brother Brown*” is become “*Doctor Brown!*” Does that make him more spiritual? Does it give him a greater anointing or greater *spiritual* authority? Does it have anything at all to do with sonship ministry or the kingdom of God? Or is it not one of the names of blasphemy borne by the beast carrying the harlot! (Rev. 17:1-5).

My heart is full today and I could passionately plead the cause of this issue, but I doubt that I, or many others, could express the penetrating truth of it more powerfully than brother Larry Hodges did some years ago in one of his *Shofar Letters* wherein he wrote, “There is no point in mentioning names here, but men and women you would think should know better have begun to aspire to titles, theological degrees, and recognition of men. The reasoning is, as I was told by one of them, that ‘*a doctor’s degree will open doors for us that would never open otherwise, and too, it is felt that our work, over the years, should receive notice and recognition.*’ I must tell you, I was almost speechless at first upon hearing this, for as I said, these are not brethren who just lately came to the kingdom. These men are very deep in revelatory knowledge and are very much in demand among the Body of Christ throughout the United States and the world.

“I definitely felt the urging of the Holy Spirit to tell them my feelings even though I detest confrontation. I said to them, ‘Brothers, I want you to know that I love you and appreciate your spirit and what I believe is an honest sincerity, but I must tell you that I believe you are missing God in this matter. Jesus, our Pattern, never sought the recognition of men or their approbation. You may indeed find that you are able to gain entrance through certain doors with these credentials that would otherwise be closed to you, but a *crowbar* will do as much for a burglar. What need have we to find a way to open doors that God has not opened to us? Paul didn’t return to the feet of Gamaliel for more status through recognized credentials, but rather counted all such things but *dung!* Never has any move of God had the acceptance of the world *and* the power of God at the same time. Rather, what has repeatedly happened is that in every case when men have grown weary of rejection, shame, and obscurity, and have sought the acceptance of man, it has cost in life, power, and spiritual reality. So far as I know, there has not been a *single* exception. I would caution you brethren to seek the Lord further about this before going on.’ I was told, ‘We are so completely identified with the Lord and His will now that *we are the will of God*, so whatever we do is the will of God.’ At this word the inner urging I had previously had from the Holy Spirit abruptly ceased.

“Please understand that I have no quarrel with anyone who has gone to college and has earned a doctorate, or any other degree required to do his work. Nor do I believe that God places a premium on ignorance or that a lack of knowledge is somehow a virtue. What I’m saying here is that such things are in an altogether *other realm* than the kingdom of God! They have absolutely *nothing* to do with the kingdom of heaven or its authority! What is a man to do who finds himself with access to multitudes of people, gained only with a crowbar and authority of his *man-issued* doctorate? Is God now somehow obligated to anoint his message with life? Or must he not now minister in the same authority by which he gained entrance — the authority of that doctorate — *human authority*. It seems that some have so much revelation knowledge that they are able to minister out of this great reservoir rather than to depend on the enablement and unction of the Spirit. Such is soulish and often sounds very good and goes a long way in tickling the ears and pleasing those in the soulish realm, *but it is not a living word which brings change in one’s life!* And brother, sister, if we are not ministering life, we are ministering death!

“While some in the ministry are succumbing to the allure of fame and recognition: to the titles, collars, and garb of man’s religion: and to the money, popularity, and acceptance of approval; many others, most of whom are not even involved in what has come to be known as *pulpit ministry*, are quietly going about their Father’s business in some out of the way, *back-water* place designed of the Lord just for them. Little do they realize that just as Moses must have his backside of the desert experience prior to setting God’s people free, so must God’s sons in the making have theirs’ prior to setting creation free! The sons will not come on the scene from an accredited institution of higher learning. They will not be thrust forth from the stained-glassed, deep-piled carpeting of the air-conditioned Cathedrals of Babylon. Nor will they burst on

the scene from among the vaunted ranks of the well-known. This I declare to you without equivocation! When the sons of God step out on the world stage for the first time, they will have nothing else to recommend them in any way whatsoever except the *nature, power, and authority* of the Lamb!

"I recently picked up a Christian magazine, probably one of the very best out, and began reading an article on dying to self and what it means. Please believe me when I tell you that I have no bone to pick with the author on a personal level. I don't even know the man. I am simply speaking of facts and of a condition which prevails throughout 'Christendom.' As I read the article, I became aware that my spirit was Amening everything. *'This is great!'* I thought to myself. *'Thank God, the idea that it's **not** in greatness but in nothingness is finally getting through.'* I found that as I read, I could say Amen to every paragraph, every sentence, every word. It was truly on the mark and very encouraging to me. Then, at the end of the article, the publisher or someone with the authority to do so, had footnoted the article with the man's *credentials*. Indeed, every article in the magazine was validated with a similar footnote. *'Dr. _____ is an internationally known and dynamic speaker and teacher of the church government and spiritual order. Wisely esteemed as an apostle to the ministry and the church at large, he has traveled in over 50 countries and 6 continents.'*

"*'So what's wrong with that?'* you may ask. IT ISN'T ACCORDING TO THE MIND OF CHRIST OR TO THE MESSAGE THE MAN HAD WRITTEN! Do you realize what this means, saints of God? It means that there is a mentality in the church in this hour, and *especially in the ministry*, that has all the right words, all the right phrases, understands the doctrine, has an anointing, believes what it is teaching...up to a point, *but is still locked into another (Babylonian) mode of thinking and expression*. I heard one famous preacher preaching that there are no famous preachers in Zion! What he was *saying* was true, but he was preaching one thing and living another. Jesus said of the scribes and Pharisees, *'...do ye not after their works, for they say and do not.'* They laud and commend one another before the congregation of the Lord, giving flattering titles of credentials — Dr. So-in-so, Prophet So-in-so, Reverend So-in-so. It is a spiritual caste system! *'...be ye not called Rabbi...Master...Father...for One is your Master...and...Father...and ye are all brethren. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant'* (Mat. 23:8-11). Why can we not say with Job, *'Let me not, I pray you, accept **any** man's person, **neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away'*** (Job 32:21-22). I have said it before and will repeat it here — *the only proof of what we say we believe is **our life!*** God's elect in this hour have come to some age and maturity. They do not need to see a man's credentials, the hem of his garment, or his ring, in order to know whether he is true and anointed or not. We are not told to beware of false prophecy but of false *prophets* — meaning that the message can be true and the man false. It is quite possible to have revelation and not walk in it. What a loss!

"It is not possible to come into what God is about to do, that is, come into fullness, while still retaining the old life with its pattern, structure, and methods. There are some in ministry in this hour which see the handwriting on the wall but *cannot* bring themselves to actually fall into the ground and *become nothing*, to become hidden in obscurity and die! They cannot bring themselves to let go of the fame, the recognition, the adulation, the money, the life of an order that they know is passing away. They know it is passing away but seem to somehow believe that if they can just say the right things and present themselves in the light of *present truth*, that they will be able somehow to come into what they know God is now doing *without loss or a real death to self*. King Saul thought this also. It didn't work then and it won't work now.

"They know, as well as king Saul knew, that God will not establish the present order as His kingdom. They know that the command has been given by God to *slay Amelek* (flesh-self) utterly and spare him not, and they even preach it. If you ask them if they are making war with Amelek *in utterness* they will tell you, 'Yea, I have performed the commandment of the Lord' (I Sam. 15). If that is so, then what meaneth this bleating of the sheep in mine ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? What is this odious, sickening stench which comes to our nostrils if it is not the very king of Amelek himself — the well-named Agag!

"These have *spared* the king alive and the *best* of the sheep and oxen *to sacrifice to the Lord!* Even though God is asking for obedience and not sacrifice, they are intent on bringing over into the kingdom of God the very best of flesh and of self: their oratorical abilities, their writing skills, their charismatic personalities, their skill in manipulating the people as they dramatically glare and glower at them in a

supposed divine authority, their talent in singing and playing of musical instruments and of entertainment, their gift for gab, etc., etc. They cannot part with that life in which there has been a measure of anointing, a measure of success, a measure of blessing, a measure of victory, and drink in its place *the cup of nothingness* that they might come into fullness. Like king Saul, they are terrified that the people will leave them and scatter even more. The sad fact is that regardless of what they do to attempt to hold onto the kingdom they have built and continue to build, the people of God will continue to scatter from the Saul ministry as they gather more and more unto *David* the true king!

“There are a great many precious brethren who are laboring in obscurity and are not seeking to be seen and known of men. Some of them have at one time been well-known and have willingly let go of it or are taking steps to curtail that method of *ministry*. We have no axe to grind with individuals as such. It is with this corrupting method which steals from the glory of Christ and wrongly attaches the attention to man that we now take issue. This is a warning to all who have ears to hear, that Saul’s house shall continue to wax weaker and weaker as *David’s* house waxes stronger and stronger, and that we are to align ourselves not with Saul, but with *David* while *David* is still in obscurity. We have no malice toward those brethren who are caught in such a hateful trap as described here. We truly love them. We really do, and pray for the day of their release and know that it is certainly coming. But, love them though we surely do, and pray for them though we surely do, we cannot take part with them in that which God shall not establish. We do not take issue with the men but with that stifling system and its methods and structure which seek (unwittingly, I believe and hope) to offer through man-made Christianity, an alternative to the *whole* Christ. God has something much better in store for those who will truly lay their lives down than a warmed-over version of the same old thing!” — end quote.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY