

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

### Part 190

#### MYSTERY BABYLON (continued)

“And there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of *the great whore* that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a *woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast*, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication” (Rev. 17:1-4).

The book of Revelation is without doubt one of the most important and wonderful books ever written! It is difficult for many people to understand because it is written in highly symbolic language, understandable only to the spiritual mind. Long millenniums ago Joseph spoke a significant truth when he asked the burning question, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” (Gen. 40:8). Moses said, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may DO all the words of this law” (Deut. 29:29). Many preachers spend far too much time delving into future speculations about world events. Time invariably repudiates their futile predictions. God did not give us a heavenly version of *Newsweek* magazine, but the *Revelation of Jesus Christ*!

The ministers of God were not meant to be soothsayers but truth-sayers. We were not called to predict all the changing events in the kingdoms of this world, nor to be the heralds of a future antichrist, but to proclaim the ETERNAL PRESENT CHRIST. The book of Revelation is not primarily intended to teach world events. It is intended to teach *the purposes of God* and *spiritual realities*. The principal pictures deal with two churches — the true church and the false church — and the spiritual laws and activities represented by these two. The false church is “Mystery Babylon,” the “scarlet-clad woman,” who has apostatized from her true husband and is now committing fornication with the world. If she had not one time walked with Christ she would not be known as a “church,” nor would her fling with the world constitute “fornication.” What is a harlot? The harlot is a woman who sells that which is her characteristic honor and glory and lives in dissipation, a woman without honor, who lives in most intimate relation and intercourse with men outside of the sacred bond of marriage. In union with her many lovers this woman brings forth a vast company of *harlot daughters* like unto herself, filling the whole world with the filthiness and abominations of her lewdness and fornication. The true church is the “Heavenly Jerusalem,” the “sun-clad woman,” who brings forth a *manchild* who is destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. These two churches are in the world together and the world cannot tell the difference, but the destiny of them is very different. Babylon is utterly destroyed, and the true church becomes a kingdom of priests, reigning with Christ over all things; the nations of them that are saved shall walk in its light and the kings of the whole earth shall bring their glory and honor into it. Great is the mystery!

Have you heard about the Sunday school class studying the ten commandments? The teacher asked the class if anyone knew what adultery was. One child put up his hand and guessed: “It’s the sin of pretending to be an *adult* when you’re still a little kid.” That definition may cause us to smile (if we get it!),

but when we look at it closely, we can see that the child's answer touches on something significant. Adultery is about a devastating form of *pretending!* The most common definition of adultery is sexual unfaithfulness in marriage. But that's not really at the heart of adultery, because marriage is not first of all about sex. The heart of a marriage relationship is about sharing love, pledging faithfulness, giving trust to someone and then, in return, receiving those same gifts from your spouse. When people play around with that trust and yet act as if things are okay with their spouse and with Christ, they are pretending to honor commitments that are being broken.

In the words of our text, therefore, we have a picture of the harlot church, the false church, the counterfeit church. The true church is the spiritual bride of Christ, engrafted into Him by a divine union of soul and spirit, by which we are made one in Him. But that counterfeit church is the church that still bears the name of church, still appears as the church in the world, still claims or pretends to be the church in the world, outwardly also looks like the church, has its ministers and sacraments, the preaching of scripture and teaching, hymns of praise and worship, and all kinds of institutions and societies besides, but employs all the blessings she has outwardly received in the service of antichrist. The officebearers work for antichrist. Publicly she displays all the signs of antichrist, and all her members she educates to work for the beast and his kingdom. She enjoys the favor, goodwill, and intimate attention of the world, of the great and the mighty and the strong and the rich and the accomplished in the world. And they bless and deck her with all kinds of precious jewels and gold. She becomes great and powerful, even underwritten by the government of the world with her charters, tax-exempt status, and governmental favors. And the more she labors in the interest of the antichristian kingdom, the further she rides that wild beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, the more she enjoys the favor of the dragon: for she is nothing but his whore, and allows herself to be the instrument of antichrist.

It is interesting to note that the American Banking Association has a training program to help bank tellers detect counterfeit bills. There is a two week training program in Washington, D.C. They do not listen to long lectures explaining and denouncing counterfeit money. Nor do they even touch it. Instead the trainees handle only authentic currency day after day, hour after hour, until they are so familiar with the real thing that they cannot possibly be fooled. This is also the apostolic approach to the spiritual counterfeits! To spot a counterfeit, one only needs to know and be thoroughly familiar with the true. Christ Himself is the true! Let us henceforth know that in all the universe there is no truth, no reality, and no life apart from Christ Himself. He is Himself the way, the truth, and the life, and He is the Lord and lifegiver of all, and there is no church apart from intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him and no kingdom apart from the kingdom of which He is the sovereign King. This is the only true ruling authority that men are called to give absolute allegiance to. God has allowed religious organizations and political organizations to exist for a time, and some measure of good has been accomplished through them. But when men look to these organizations and systems for truth and life and eternal reality they are going to be deceived by counterfeit words and activities.

You will understand a great mystery when you understand how all truth in the book of Revelation is *germinative in the seven churches in chapters two and three*. A great mistake that many have in their minds is the notion that the seven churches are one thing and the events described through the seals, trumpets, and vials are something else. Such is not the case! The messages to the seven churches are given first because **the church is the seed-plot for the development of the seed — both the wheat and the tares!** Oh, yes! The church is the seed-bed of everything else that happens throughout the whole book of Revelation! It all begins there! The beasts, the women, the cities, the shakings, the judgments, the glory — all these things and many more are found in seed form in the seven churches. All the mighty things that manifest out of the sea, the earth, and the heavens are there in the seven churches in their embryonic form. As a plant grows and develops, and the blossoms and fruit come, so does every seed of good and evil in the seven churches become full grown and full blown in the chapters that follow! Chapters two and three are not about the church, while the rest of the book is about China, Russia, Israel, Europe, America, and an antichrist in Jerusalem. Oh, no! The whole book is written *to the church* and IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CHURCH!

Notice how it is that the little seed of Jezebel, the fornicating false prophetess in the church at Thyatira, grows and increases in numbers, organization, and stature until *she becomes* "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. 17:1-2). Consider how the little

seed of the doctrine of Balaam in the church at Pergamos, increases and intensifies until it brings forth in the earth the corporate beast of the false prophet who has “two horns like a lamb, and speaks as a dragon” (Rev. 13:11).

Then there is the little seed of the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes by which the Lord’s people are brought under the fleshly dominion of men who set themselves up as lords over God’s flock; and this click of pastors, bishops, overseers, superintendents, etc. these usurpers of Christ’s Headship over His body grows and aggrandizes until it *becomes* “that great city Babylon, that mighty city,” which “is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird...which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Then the seed of the struggling little “overcomer” in each of the seven churches, to whom such glorious promises are given, increases in wisdom, stature, and authority in the Spirit until *he becomes* 144,000 sons of God standing upon the heavenly mount Zion, the very pinnacle of power and dominion in the kingdom of God!

John sees the seven golden candlesticks — the church — later on in the Revelation, this time no longer a flickering light in the secluded darkness of the Holy Place of the Tabernacle (the church age), but now become a glorious wonder in the heavens of God’s Spirit, a city coming down from God out of heaven, having the glory of God: and her light is like a stone most precious...and the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it (Rev. 21:10-11,23-24). The little seed of the candlestick has now *become* the glorious City of God, which is also the bride of the Lamb! Within that city is the throne — and the little seed of the overcomer has *become* the manchild *upon the throne* that rules the nations! Oh, the wonder of it!

God has only one church, not one thousand and one. We nowhere read in scripture of “Christ and His churches.” No, no! It is always Christ and “the church.” Of course this one church is of necessity divided up into many local assemblies for the purpose of gathering together for worship, ministry, and fellowship. These various locales of gathering are called “churches,” just as we have the “seven churches which are in Asia” in the book of Revelation. But God does not have a “Baptist Church” and a “Methodist Church” and a “Pentecostal Church” and a “Catholic Church” and a “Seventh Day Adventist Church” which refuse to have anything to do with one another! The Holy Spirit gave the world but one body, one faith, and one spirit (Eph. 4:4-6), with the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole legislator. The many bodies, and many faiths, and many creeds, and many legislators of the present day, constitute nothing more than spiritual prostitution, they are harlots one and all, who are living apart from their one and only lawful Husband and in love with and in intimate union with many lovers!

When I write these things, unveiling the apostasies of the various portions of the fallen church, they are not railing accusations. They are not the mere brawlings of an envious, unfriendly and unreasoning critic. They are not wholesale and unfounded recriminations hurled at these organizations in malicious and impotent fury. They are not charges brought in ignorance or in total disregard of the facts. On the contrary, they are the result of long years of experience and patient, painstaking and exhaustive study of the men and times out of which the various sects grew, and of a close, careful and unbiased observation of present conditions in all parts of the world. They are unsparing of evil and error, but they are inspired, not by envy, malice, or an inflated ego, but by Divine Love. There is, indeed, an intensity of hatred for the false teachings and practices into which the so-called churches have fallen, but that very intensity is a measure of Christ’s love for the people who have been deceived and led astray. It is this same love which motivates the sound of the Spirit of God Himself when He cries, “*COME OUT of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!*”

We are not unmindful that a merciful and compassionate God has used all these in the salvation of souls and in bringing blessings to humanity. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead men to the Saviour. Some of these have found the blessing of the Holy Spirit and His gifts. Occasionally some of their number receive miraculous answers to prayer. But from here on, practically everything that is taught and done is nothing but carnality and flesh, defilement and shame: nothing but the precepts of the elders, the traditions of men, and the lies and

deceptions of the antichrist. But there is a higher walk, an undefiled way, to which all must commit who would know the full blessings and favor of their sovereign Lord, and who would serve Him acceptably and know the joy of the ultimate in attainment and accomplishment in His glorious kingdom of Life, Light, and Love!

We have heard many so-called Gospels. The world is full of poor, deluded souls who are trying to establish their own particular creed of imaginings and mistakes. Today, everyone with a little bit of preacher's "itch" is attempting to get themselves a little congregation, a little following, trying to build a little kingdom. But a new day has dawned! A day when the pure and unadulterated gospel of the kingdom must go forth to the whole world! Religionists have tried in vain to lift the world out of its shame by preaching their own ideas and promoting their own programs. It simply would not work. The world has grown steadily worse! Right in the face of so-called "great revivals" and "outpourings of the Spirit" both the church and the world have slipped further and further into carnality, moral decay, ungodliness, licentiousness, unbelief, and religious errors of all kinds. Their lofty phrases, and text-book prayers, and apologetic platitudes, and flesh-oriented programs, and fraudulent claims, and lying signs and wonders, have utterly failed.

While the harlot has been on her wild ride upon her dust-stomping beast the Lord has been quietly, secretly, unobtrusively, and unobserved by the world, calling a people into union with Himself. There in the secret place of the most High the Bridegroom has impregnated his woman with an incorruptible seed, and that woman is even now in travail to bring forth a manchild — a mature SON! Now a new company is to go forth with a burning message of truth direct from the throne, a message stripped of all the ineffectual absurdities that have been preached throughout the years. The sons of God shall go forth in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost and they shall minister to mankind in the power of incorruption. Religionists have side-stepped, and mollicoddled, and pussy-footed, and backslapped too long. Their day is done. "Come hither: I will show thee the *judgment* of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." A new army is being prepared, an army of the sons of God perfected in His image, radiating His glory, and manifesting His power. And there will be an exultant victory! For now the day is dawning when "A-L-L nations shall come and worship before Thee" (Rev. 15:4).

The following words by Joyce Morris add a depth of understanding to this contrast between the betrothed wife of the Lamb and the wanton harlot riding the scarlet colored beast. "Whatever you are having union with is what you are *becoming* (or producing)! If you choose to have a union with your soul, then it is impossible for you to produce anything except the flesh. If you are having a union with the Lamb, you cannot become anything else but the Lamb — Christ in the earth. There are, however, a lot of people who want a marriage with the Lord in name only. They want His name, and the benefits and blessings that go along with His name — but they do not want to make a commitment and *become His name* — *His nature*.

"I remember very clearly one day many years ago, while I was getting ready to go out and minister at a Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship meeting, the Lord spoke to me loudly and clearly about this. The Lord said, 'My people want my name, but they don't want to *become my name*. My people want my name so that their reproach will be removed and their sins forgiven — but they don't want to become my name. They want a relationship with me — but they don't want to marry me, because if they marry me that means they will have to make a commitment. They don't want the responsibility that comes with marriage. Just like Israel, my people still want to continue on in fornication and adultery. They want to have other lovers, and continue in idol worship. They love their families, relationships, money, homes, possessions, and businesses more than me! They want the things of the world more than they want me! They want their religions, doctrines, traditions, and beliefs more than me! They are not willing to love me *first* in their life! They are not willing to let me *be Lord* in their life! They desire my blessings more than the One who blesses them! They want the gifts that I give them, more than the Giver of the gifts. They want their ministries, knowledge, and revelations of me — but they do not want the responsibility and

commitment that should come with them! They do not want to come to the marriage of the Lamb, because they still want to live separate and apart from me! Many in the body of Christ, and even many who call themselves my sons have sought to build their own kingdoms, rather than live as *one with me in my kingdom!* They want my name to open doors before them — but they do not want to enter in, through a

union with The Door. They do not want to come to the marriage that I have prepared for my Son! They do not want to take their responsibility and *be* what I have called them to *be* — which is *my name* — *my nature!* They do not want to be one with me!’ These are strong statements indeed — but they are true. This is what has been going on in the body of Christ and even in God’s sons today! We still want the great revelations, the knowledge, and understanding — but we do not always want the responsibility and commitment that comes with them.

“Now we read in Isaiah 4:1, ‘*And in that day (the day of the Lord) seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.*’ This speaks of seven women, and the seven women are the seven churches which are the body of Christ! It says that in that Day they shall take hold of one man — which is Christ. But the problem is that they still haven’t buried their first husband! They’re still holding on to their old man, Adam, and if they take hold of another man (husband) they are committing adultery. Right in this great Day of the Lord they are coming to Christ saying, ‘Let us be called by your name to take away our reproach, but we still want to eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.’ In other words they’re saying, ‘Lord, we want to be called by your name, but we don’t want to *become your name!* We want a marriage with you in name only, where we can continue to feed on our carnal (soulish) thoughts. We want to keep our religious traditions, doctrines, and ways, and be clothed in our own righteousness, according to our religious works. We want to continue doing our own thing to satisfy the lusts (desires) of our flesh (self will/our first husband — Adam). But Lord, we also want the benefits and blessings that come with your name. Lord, WE REALLY WANT IT BOTH WAYS!’ — end quote.

### THE HARLOT...IS US!

Many interpretations have been put upon the scarlet-clad harlot riding the wild beast having seven heads and ten horns. The two most common interpretations are that the harlot is either Pagan Rome in the days of the early church, or Papal Rome from the time of the rise of the Papacy until the present time. If the interpretation be that this lewd, garishly attired woman, holding in her hand the golden cup full of the abominations and filthiness of her fornication, be either Pagan or Papal Rome, at once the whole scene has little or nothing to do with the vast majority of those who read these lines. It has no concern with us; we can contentedly study the vision with the comfortable assurance that we, at any rate, have no connection with it in any way. If the scarlet woman be simply a representation of the Roman Catholic Church, then every member of the Protestant Churches can, as many so frequently do, gaze complacently on the picture and feel that of a certainty it has no spiritual application to themselves.

Once our spiritual mind is able to grasp the truth that the Revelation sets forth great *spiritual principles* rather than identifying specific institutions, governments, movements, etc., then this vision takes on an entirely new dimension with a far wider and truer view than any of the commentators have put upon it. Let us see clearly the deeply solemn truth that the woman on the beast *is to be found in every church, and that this vision of her reaches to all the existing church systems with all their vaunted orthodoxy, and then beyond that, this vision of her discloses a peril that besets every believer in Christ right down to the person penning these words and the one now reading these words.* Wherever the church allies herself with the world, and wherever the individual believer allows the spirit of the world to invade his spiritual life, there the vision of this chapter materializes anew. Yet, it is not alone the world *without* that creates the issue, but the *world within* as well! In fact I must repeat and reiterate with all the emphasis possible that the greatest danger to any man’s spiritual life is not the world outside of himself, but truly the world *within!*

It is very necessary that we be able to see the great truth that individually the great harlot *is our very own soul.* Our soul does not want to be faithful to our man — Christ within our spirit! From the time of our birth into this fallen state our soul has sought union with the flesh. Can we not see by this that the root of Mystery Babylon lies right within each of us! The great harlot sits upon many waters — peoples, multitudes, kindreds, tongues, and nations. Every man has a soul, matters not who he is, where he is, what nationality he is, what race he pertains to, what culture he comes from, and every soul has departed from Christ and joined itself to the desires, passions, emotions, lusts, and all motions of the flesh. In regeneration Christ, the spirit within, our true man in the image and likeness of God, is woken and quickened and arises within us

and begins to woo the soul unto Himself. This is a new experience for the soul! And as the soul vacillates back and forth between spirit and flesh, between Christ and Self, the soul becomes manifested as the great harlot when she joins the things of God with the spirit and ways of the world within herself.

The great whore, at her deepest root and in her inmost reality, is indeed our very own *soul*. This is the internal reality of that which we see in the external world of the carnal church systems of man. God is an internal God, though we behold His works and manifestations in the external world. The only way He dwells in any corporate expression or body is by His *indwelling in each individual member of that body*. Thus God's first and primary concern is not with the harlot church systems out in the world, but above all He's concerned with the Babylon whore within each of us! This whore is the unfaithful woman of the soul! My woman (not my wife, Lorain, but my soul), the feminine side of my life, was never faithful to the God who dwells in my spirit. She was never faithful to her husband, the Christ, until HE brought love into her heart. And when my man, Christ, stood up in my life, and showed love to my woman who was unfaithful, by the mighty working of grace and power, thanks be unto God, she *became faithful* because of His great love for her. He didn't cast her out, He didn't give her a bill of divorcement, He didn't condemn her, rebuke her, fight with her, or destroy her. Oh, no! With a divine and eternal love He wooed her, turned her around, and redeemed her, for love never fails and love conquers all!

*"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to that husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of that husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man"* (Rom. 7:1-3).

Now here is the key verse, because many preachers have used the scripture quoted above to abuse people who have been divorced and remarried, yet the truth is this scripture is not dealing with divorce and remarriage. Paul explains that he is speaking to people who know the law, and it is true that there are beautiful types, illustrations, and shadows of spiritual realities in the Old Testament law; yet the fact is that when it comes to the law, WE who are under the New Covenant of grace and truth ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW. Therefore, Paul's subject here has nothing to do with divorce and remarriage — he is clearly and unmistakably pointing to a higher truth. So he continues on by saying, *"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God"* (Rom. 7:4).

This fourth verse tells us who the second husband is — the second husband is He that has been raised from the dead, as God's called and separated elect we have been espoused to Him, and we shall yet enter into the fullest union with Him as His bride. Can we not understand that if our first husband was not dead Christ would never have espoused us unto Himself! The central truth here is that this is not about divorce and remarriage in the natural, but this is about our union with Christ in our spirit! He's the second husband! And the woman, His bride, is our soul! There have only ever been two men in the earth, as it is written, *"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven"* (I Cor. 15:45,47). Can the natural mind ever fathom the depths of the eternal truth that there has never been in the history of the world but *two men*? There is a deep and hidden meaning in the words, *"The first man Adam"* and *"the last Adam."* The natural mind would conclude that, if there were two Adams coming four millenniums apart, the first of these being the *first Adam*, it would logically follow that the next Adam would be the *second Adam*. The Lord Jesus Christ is here called *the last Adam*. But He who is called the *first Adam* is also called the *first man*. And He who is called *the last Adam* is also called *the second man*. It should be clear to every thinking mind that the *first Adam* is the *first man*, and the *last Adam* is the *second man*, therefore the *second man* is also the *last man*.

These simple statements, which on the surface seem so insignificant and scarcely worth our notice, are in fact pregnant with meaning, and full of wisdom and understanding. The *first Adam* is said to be the *first man*. The *last Adam* is declared to be the *second man*. If the *second man* is also the *last Adam*, He is also the *last man*. Now if the *first Adam* is the *first man*, it would of necessity follow that there were no men

on earth before him, for he was the *first*. And if the *last Adam* is the *second man*, then there were no men on earth between the first Adam and the last Adam, for the *last Adam* is the *second man*, and there can be no men between the *first* man and the *second man*. If there were even one other man between the first man and the second man, obviously the second man could not BE the second man; he would be the third man, the one hundredth man, the five billionth man, or something else. And since the second man is also the LAST MAN, there can not have been any men since Him, for if others have followed Him, He is not then the *last* man. So then, the first man was the first man, the second man was the second man, and the second man is also the *last man*, so that there have been only TWO MEN who have ever lived upon this planet — Adam and Christ! There were none before Adam, none between Adam and Christ, and none since Jesus Christ. Only two men. No more. No less. These simple statements portray as nothing else can the great truth that all men who have ever lived ARE INCLUDED IN THESE TWO MEN. These two men are *corporate men*, many-membered men.

Since all men are *contained in* these two men, what happens to these two men happens to us ALL. The first man is our flesh man who is also under the law! The second man is our quickened spirit in which the Christ, who is our life, dwells! And we have, *in our soul*, been married to both of them! Oh, the mystery of it! Our soul-woman has been torn between two lovers and our whorish vacillation back and forth between the two has made a great spiritual soap opera! I do not hesitate to tell you that our first husband is a wife beater and if we stay with him he will kill us eventually. Like many abused wives, we're afraid we can't make it without him and we're afraid to break the ties with him. So we compromise our spiritual life in an effort to placate him. That compromise is called — *religion*! In religion the flesh man and the spirit man are mingled, thus creating the Great Whore — Mystery Babylon!

I understand that Babylon is a system — but the root of the system is the mother of harlots, man's own soul. On a day in the long ago an apostle by the name of Paul penned these telling words: "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent *beguiled* (*seduced*) *Eve* through his subtilty, so *your minds* (*souls*) should be corrupted (seduced) from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:2-3). In this significant passage Eve in the garden of Eden is contrasted with two things: the *bride of Christ* and the *mind* or *soul* (*psuche*). The mind is a function of the soul. The vision of the bride of Christ pervades the whole of scripture, from Eden onward, with ever-increasing clearness. Eve, the mother of the human race, is the first type of this great mystery! Let us not underestimate this remarkable woman from whom the whole human race has sprung!

In that ancient shadow Adam stands as a type of man's spirit, Eve is a type of the soul, and the garden of Eden is a type of the body, which Adam was to "dress and keep." Thus we see our tri-partite being symbolically portrayed in the Adam-Eve-Garden story. The Garden was the earth, the land, the habitation; and Adam and Eve were the inhabitants, in the same way that our spirit and soul are the inhabitants of the physical body. It is through our "Eve," our soulical mind, desires, will, and emotions, that we who have been espoused to Christ the bridegroom in our spirit, can be "beguiled" or "seduced" and turned away from our single and pure devotion to Christ, entering instead into intimate associations with things of the earth realm — the flesh, the world, and the devil. When the soul-bride is turned from the spirit-husband to fornicate with the flesh and fleshly things (including religion), we become disqualified from being presented to Christ as a chaste virgin! Paul shows that just as Eve was seduced from her singleness to Christ, so those espoused to Christ can be corrupted IN OUR MINDS from singleness to Christ.

I would now draw your reverent attention to a very significant point in the garden of Eden experience. The serpent can only speak to the woman! The serpent never spoke to Adam. The serpent cannot tempt the spirit, for the spirit speaks of the pureness of Christ. Let me state that again. The serpent can only speak to the woman! It was Eve who was "beguiled." It was Eve who was "deceived" and was "in the transgression" (I Tim. 2:14). Can you not see the mystery? The serpent cannot deceive the spiritual man! The serpent can only deceive that which is less than the spiritual man — that which comes out of the man — the woman, the soul. The spirit of a man cannot be deceived, that is why scripture declares that the woman was deceived. The serpent cannot be where the spirit dwells! There is war in heaven, and Michael



and his angels, that is, Christ and His many brethren, cast him out! The serpent can only speak to, prophesy to, teach and control those who settle for less than the spirit!

Thus, the woman, the soul, who hearkens unto the serpent, is deceived in all facets possible. The spiritual person is above the fray, but the woman is totally immersed into it. When the serpent spoke, the woman could have asked direction of the spirit, but she did not. The woman had not experienced God, was not conscious of God, did not know the life of God, as the man had. The woman needed to depend on the man, to consult with the man, to walk in union with the man, just as the soul needs to depend on the spirit! The woman, the soul, can hear two voices. It can hear the call of the spirit, but can also hear the call of the serpent. The woman, the soul, can rule over the flesh (body), but cannot rule over the spirit (Christ)! So the serpent seeks to make the soul, the woman, a *priestess* and a *queen* over the flesh through carnal religious activities, creeds, laws, and rituals. The soulish person must have a kingdom even if it is not truly real. So the serpent deceives the woman with the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil — *religion*! In Genesis it is the little serpent and the woman, Eve. In the book of Revelation it is the great red dragon and the scarlet-clad woman — individually, the soul, and corporately the carnal church systems of man! That is the mystery.

When we recognize what kind of person is soulish, it is not difficult to realize what kind of person is spiritual. Since a soulish person lives by the mind, emotion, will, and desire, a spiritual person is one who does not live by any of these! A spiritual person must live in the spirit, act by the spirit, speak out of the spirit and not the soul. He allows the spirit to be the master and source of all his action and behavior. The spirit in him occupies the preeminent position; it is the source of his behavior and the starting point of his action. The soul in this person is in the position of submission, under the government of the spirit, dominated by the spirit, and in loving union with the spirit. Thus he allows the spirit to be LORD in him! He allows the spirit to direct his whole being so that he becomes the expression of the spirit. Whenever he encounters a situation he does not consult his mind nor draw from his mind, desire, will, or emotion to deal with it; rather he draws from his spirit to comprehend and understand it, seeking first in the spirit for the Lord's wisdom and purpose in the matter. This is the spiritual man, living by the life of the spirit, and the soul is but a vehicle of expression for the spirit. Isn't it wonderful! It is the *one spirit*, our spirit joined to His Spirit, that ultimately is joined to the soul — receives the soul unto itself — the marriage of the Lamb within ourselves!

The woman Jezebel in the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-24), like Delilah in the book of Judges, was a harlot. The name Jezebel means "one without a husband" or "one that can't be touched." Jezebel represents that soul that will not allow the Spirit of God in our spirit to touch her, or be a husband unto her. She will not enter into union with the spirit! She spurns the purposes of God and rejects the living word of the Lord, and will stone literally or figuratively any prophet who would speak the word of the Lord. She has multitudes of lovers, she follows after men and man's way, man's methods, man's programs, man's promotions, man's organizations, man's entertainment, but she seeks no intimacy with the Christ of God, nor does she submit to the spirit's lordship.

Furthermore, Jezebel relates to the "strange woman" of the book of Proverbs, which speaks of a soul or a mind that is perverted and twisted and needs to change. Jezebel is your soul before it is transformed! Let me talk to you about an attitude. Let us explore that attitude, that mind-set, that soulish condition in your life that would seduce you away from the headship of Christ in your spirit. This seduction is carried out by Jezebel! Jezebel speaks of the soul-life and ever since Eve she is a woman who wants to do her own thing. She will not allow the spirit to touch her. She cannot enter into a mature relationship with the Christ within. She cannot be subject to One as her head. She cannot love and be faithful to one husband. She cannot walk only in the Spirit of God, for she is lusting after carnal, fleshly, man-centered, need-oriented, religious ways, involvements, and activities. She has roving eyes and a lustful, flirtatious, wild, rebellious nature. She wants blessings, chills, and thrills — a religious *good time* — not marriage!

Let us look at this "strange woman." The wise man said, *"My son, keep my words...and live. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart...that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For at the window of my house I looked*

*through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones (spiritually ignorant), I discerned among the youths (immature ones), a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner (church on every corner); and he went the way to her house (denomination). In the twilight, in the evening, in the dark of night (darkened fleshly understanding); and behold, there met him a woman (the untransformed soul, soulful church system) with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart. She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: now is she without (seeking fleshly things), now in the streets, and lieth wait at every corner. So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows (I am very religious, I go to church, pray, pay tithes, and serve God in all kinds of programs and activities). Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face (to invite you to church, get you involved), and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry (creeds, doctrines), with carved works (images, programs, rituals, ceremonies), with fine linen of Egypt (self-righteousness, works). I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon (false anointing, soulful worship, emotional appeals). Come, let us take our fill of love (soulful emotional thrills and chills, blessings, excitement, good times, fun, play) until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves" (Prov. 7:1-18).*

You will find in the book of Revelation that there is a true church and there is a false church. You will find in the book of Proverbs that there is a true church and there is a false church. In the book of Revelation they are called the bride of Christ and the whore. In the book of Proverbs the bride of Christ and the Jezebel spirit are presented under the figures of the virtuous woman and the strange woman. Proverbs chapter thirty-one gives you the characteristics of the virtuous woman, and Proverbs chapter seven gives you the essence of the strange woman. Here's how you can identify a soulful or false ministry. First of all they will flatter you! Then they will substitute emotion and religious fervor for the anointing to seduce you. The main way this harlot's "anointing" is seducing the church is by preachers going forth in an entertainment-based, man-centered, need-oriented thrust, keeping the Lord's people in constant need so that they can come back every week and deliver them. The constant "altar calls" in which the same people go down front time after time to be prayed for for the same things, to dedicate, rededicate, and then rededicate again and again, to get all encouraged and blessed, to receive their weekly "fix" so they can make it through to the next meeting, is simply the young man *void of understanding* returning over and over and over again to the harlot's house for his fill of loves! Think of it!

A true ministry will grow you up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ! A true ministry will bring you to know God for yourself, and work himself out of a job! A true ministry will not desire to rule you or dominate you! A true ministry will support you and *serve* you, not control or manipulate you! A true ministry will give you the word of God by the Spirit and then commit you into the faithful hands of the Father to learn by your own experience the ways and dealings of the Lord! A true ministry will encourage you to hear from God by the Spirit out of the anointing that abides *within* you through the Christ in you, your hope of glory!

The mark of a harlot is that she *sells* her affections. To receive her love you must pay. With a harlot nothing is free. There is always a price. And let me say it kindly brethren, but let me also make it clear — one of the first marks of a ministry slipping back into the precincts of Babylonian religion is when they begin to *sell* the word God has so freely given them. When a price is put on their books, CDs, seminars, etc. — if you look closely you will soon begin to see other marks of Babylon upon them. True men of God minister the word and place no price, make no demands, seek no control, nor do they use any gimmicks, for their trust is in the Lord who called them and sent them. Putting a price on God's word is *spiritual wickedness*. It is wicked to put a price on that for which God Himself charged you nothing! Sure, it costs money to print and send out the word, and yes, even a minister of the Lord has to live. But if a man is doing *God's work* the Father Himself will see that it is supported in whatever fashion He chooses to supply. The moment a *price* is set, the poor among God's people, the widows, the unemployed, the elderly on fixed incomes, the prisoner, the little family struggling just to get the bills paid and put food on the table for the children, are all at once *denied* the word of God due to their inability to *pay for it*! And *that is criminal*! Can you imagine, dear heart, the apostle Paul sending a notice to the dear saints in Corinth stating that he had penned an epistle from Christ for their edification, and would also be writing further epistles which he would

make available to any of them who would pay the annual subscription price of \$90.00! No check — no epistle!

Ray Prinzing stated it so well when he wrote, “Sad, but true, we also find present day fulfillment of Peter’s statement, ‘And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...’ (2 Pet. 2:3). Feigned words — from the Greek word *plastos* from which we get our word ‘plastic.’ They bespeak words that are shaped, formed, sculptured, all for one purpose — to make merchandise of you — to use you for their own ends. They have a sales pitch that will coax you into buying their new book, their set of tapes, to support their cause, because somehow all this will make you more spiritual. They traffic religion and have a form of godliness, but they are trading your soul for present enhancement of their own schemes” — end quote.

It pains me to say it, but vast multitudes of the Lord’s people today have been seduced by an imitation anointing. The land is filled with lying signs, wonders, miracles, and prophesying by those who will one day come before the Lord, saying, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?” Then will the Lord profess unto them, “*I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (lawlessness)*” (Mat. 7:22-23). That’s not a heaven or hell issue! The Lord is saying, “*I never knew you as being your Husband, I never knew you in intimacy of fellowship and in vital union, I never knew you as a man knows a woman. You did all those works, but you did those things in my name. You did things you wanted to do and you did it as by my authority and at my word — but I had nothing to do with it! I never knew you as Adam ‘knew’ Eve when she conceived and brought forth a son! Nothing that you did led to sonship! Everything that you have done ‘in my name’ that didn’t originate out of union with me, will go up in smoke for all the world to see! Depart from me — there is a place for you, but it is not by my side, you cannot share my throne — for you worked iniquity, lawlessness, unauthorized activities!*” Can we not see by this that within these folks the *innately religious soul* is acting independently of the *spirit*. It is the spirit of Jezebel!

Now, dear saints of God, this brings us to an important thought. I must confess that I have often been distressed by the lack of *understanding* among the Lord’s people. Somehow so many seem to *miss the point*. And nowhere is this more true than when we come to the harlot church systems of man! Let me make this point as clearly as I can. *The mother of harlots is not the Roman Catholic Church*. The *mother* of harlots is a lot closer home! The *mother* of harlots is still birthing her children! The *mother* of harlots is the soulish dimension of man’s life that through her carnal sense-consciousness and human logic and reasoning and soulish zeal *births* what *she believes* is pleasing to God, what *she feels* is the worship of God, what *she perceives* to be the work of God, and what *she determines* to be the way of God. The *mother* of harlots is our own soul — our very own *religious* mind, will, emotion, and desire! Where did the Roman Catholic Church with all her false doctrines, pagan practices, and carnal rituals, ceremonies, and sacraments come from? Did It not proceed right out of the soulish heart of man? You see, beloved, carnal church systems, creeds, rituals, methods, programs, and hierarchies are not really birthed out of the other carnal church systems at all — they are, one and all, birthed out of the *mother* of them all — the *soulish heart of man*!

God’s people have been walking after the mother of harlots too long. We have been deceived by her prophecies, misled by her teachings, enticed by her attractiveness, seduced by her wantonness; we have been betrayed by the spirit of Mystery Babylon right within the midst of us! We have walked by the direction of the soulish nature rather than by the leadership of the spirit. It is time for “our woman” to keep silence in the church! I do not hesitate to tell you that most of the men I have met in my life-time who were concerned about “women preachers” were themselves under the control of the loudest-mouthed woman of all — their own soul! They were so stuck in their soulish dead-letter-of-the-word understanding that they could never hear the spirit! It is high time for “our woman” to be brought under subjection! This is one of the vital *keys* to overcoming! It is time for the spirit to BE LORD in the house of God! When we reach the place where we willingly refuse to accept as spiritual that which thrills and chills and *seems right* to the soulish realm, where we willingly refuse to identify with that outer world that stimulates the soulish affections, casting ourselves upon Jesus Christ who Himself *is* the truth, the light, the reality — then the spirit takes the throne of our life to reveal out of our innermost being the wisdom and the power of God.

The scarlet-clad harlot riding swiftly upon her powerful beast is the symbol of corrupt self-proclaimed ministry. They can't wait on God to develop something in them. They must be *saying* something and *doing* something *for* God! They will prostitute the life of God in them with anything which will be to their benefit. They care nothing about purity and will accept any mixture as long as they can profit by it. They receive their "life force" from more than one source. They seek out many lovers — join themselves to many causes, trying to receive life from each. What they receive is not life, it is purple and scarlet raiment, gold and precious stones and pearls, and the golden cup in the whore's hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. What they seek is bigger crowds, bigger programs, bigger buildings, bigger television ministries, bigger offerings, bigger, bigger, bigger — not ***better!*** Not more godly! Not more mature! Not more pure! Not after God's own heart! All the works of man are soulish; man's works exist in this world for the sensual, for the sole purpose of gratifying the desires of the carnal souls of all mankind. Religious soulishness is for the same purpose!

God has now called His elect to *overcome* this whorish spirit! Every son of God *has* overcome the nature of the harlot! Our spirit can only be satisfied by communion with our Father in the spirit! And our soul must find its life in the spirit, for God is the Father of our spirit! The carnal soul, on the other hand, rejoices at the sound of a man's voice, for the soul is fed and sustained by many voices of man. The soul is always playing the harlot, but those who are now growing up in Christ are wooing their souls, courting their souls, speaking life into their souls, delivering their souls, saving their souls, taking their souls by the arm and walking together down the isle of God's purpose unto the marriage of the Lamb! It is indeed wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY