

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 193

MYSTERY BABYLON (continued)

“So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a *scarlet colored beast...having seven heads and ten horns*” (Rev. 17:3).

In oriental symbolism a horn or horns stands for power and strength with their attendant glory and honor. The ancients thought of the horns of animals as being the focal point of their power, as well as their adornment or glory. They remind us of the rhinoceros, unicorn, bull, etc. Therefore majesty and might were often adorned with various horns, such as the turbans of the Magoi of Persia which were twisted into the shape of great horns, to indicate their power and glory. Furthermore, since animals used their horns in acts of aggression and defense, the horn was also used symbolically to speak of war and defiance. More than once the scriptures speak of the horns, or power, of God's enemies. On the positive side, the scriptures speak of the horn, or power, of God's judgments, and the horn, or power, of His salvation within His people. Not only are horns used symbolically to speak of military strength, of a proud and arrogant spirit blasphemously exalted against God, and of the saving power of the Lord towards His elect, but they are also used as Bible symbols for kings and their kingdoms. Of course this is in keeping with the horn as a symbol for strength and majesty as already noted.

The beast has seven heads and ten horns. Some have questioned the relative position of the seven heads and the ten horns — how many horns were upon each head? Were there one horn upon four heads and two upon each of the remaining heads — or one of several other possible configurations? The question is actually irrelevant. John tells us nothing about their relative position, so the way they are arranged on the beast is not the point and therefore has nothing to do with any spiritual truth. Rather, it is the *fact* of the “heads” and the “horns” together with their “number” or quantity that is significant to us. That is what the Holy Spirit is impressing upon us! The numbers *seven* and *ten* are symbolical numbers. They do not refer to ten kingdoms, or ten kings, or to seven kings literally; but they denote the *authority* and *power* of the carnal nature and the carnal church systems of man. Heads are the symbol of *authority*. When the scripture says that Christ is the “Head” of the church, and that the man is the “head” of the woman, it bespeaks a headship which expresses itself through a sphere of authority. Christ is the AUTHORITY over the church! He is the Leader, the Chief, the Commander, the Captain, the Controller, the Administrator, the Master — the LORD! That makes Him the Head of this body! The seven heads represent the realm of thoughts, plans, and designs. The seven heads of the beast bespeak the usurpation of the mind of Christ and the plans and purposes of God as the carnal mind within the Lord's people and within the carnal church systems of man seeks to dominate their thinking and their spiritual life. The powers of man's spiritual thoughts, desires, and plans are prostituted to the purposes of the great whore!

The Lord gave to Israel a covenant of AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS when He said to them, *“The Lord shall open upon thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be*

beneath...” (Deut. 28:12-13). This is also why prophets, priests, and kings were both anointed and crowned upon their heads — it signified the absoluteness and supremeness of their **authority**!

Horns, on the other hand, are the symbol of *might, strength, and power*. The beast carrying the harlot has seven heads of authority and ten horns of power! Seven and ten are both complete numbers. Seven is a sacred number in this respect, that it generally is used of the perfection of spiritual realities and the completeness of God’s purposes and kingdom. It denotes *fullness* in the things of God. In our text, however, it is used with a negative application, signifying the fullness of that authority which *purports* to be, *claims* to be, *pretends* to be the authority of Christ, but is in reality the fullness of the carnal mind usurping the place of Christ’s authority in the church!

Now, the number ten denotes the measure of time or space or power as it is allotted and limited to any creature by God’s decree. It is a full number, denoting that which is *complete*, yet of *limited duration*. It is completeness or fullness on the human, worldly level, the limit of man’s power within himself. Ten stands for the maximum limit to which man can reach — ten fingers, ten toes, ten commandments — fullness in a limited realm! Ten is a number which is frequently employed in scripture, and it often occurs in the book of Revelation. Ten horns is the fullness of power, yet it is a power that is limited — it can only reach so far and continue so long according to God’s allotment. The ten horns of power signify that the beast carrying (thus including) the woman has just exactly as much power as God has allowed him — no more and no less. They are not ten separate, literal kingdoms anywhere on earth at any time, but bespeak the usurpation of the might and power of the Holy Spirit by the strength of the flesh in any man or in any movement of the Lord’s people! And when God’s time comes for Great Babylon to fall within us and within the world, ***fall she will!***

It is not in the gross sins of the flesh that the harlot is known, for she has a name written in her forehead — MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT. She is very mystical, so that indeed, upon the workings of her mind and the intent of her soul there is written “MYSTERY”. This whore works in a mystery, that is, in an enigma, a puzzle, a riddle, in ambiguousness — inscrutableness. You find her where you don’t expect and in a way that seemeth right, and therein lies the deception!

Now, as we consider this truth, we should especially notice these significant statements made a little further on in chapter seventeen concerning these same ten horns. “*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet: but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their **power and strength** unto the beast. These shall **make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them:** for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful*” (Rev. 17:12-14). Some portions of this passage we will address later, but at this time I would draw your reverent attention to the statement, “*These shall make war with the Lamb.*” Now I query this of you: How do these “kings” make war against Christ, the Lamb of God? Do they make war against Him in the flesh, as the Jews did? Are they literal armies of nations coming against the Lamb of God with tanks and guns and bullets and bombs? They cannot, of course, seeing He is risen and ascended up far above all heavens! Everywhere in the Revelation the Lamb is seen *only* in heaven and upon the heavenly mount Zion! Therefore, I would ask you, how these ten kings make war against the Lamb, unless it be ***in the spirit — against His light, against His truth, against His life, against His spirit, against His nature, and against His will, way, and purpose!***

If these ten symbolical kings cannot war against the Lamb in the flesh, if you confess that He is exalted high above all principalities and powers, then do not such war against Him in His life, and against Him in His light, and against Him in His purpose, and against Him *within His people*? Indeed, the powers of the flesh and the carnal mind warring against the spirit of Christ, and against the spiritual mind, and against the spiritual life, bringing a man into captivity to the flesh, and to the fleshly mind, and to the fleshly life, with its law of sin and death — just there the battle rages! Obviously these kings are not outward kings of literal nations on earth! Obviously they have nothing to do with the outward warfare of military machines! Nearly all expositors of the book of Revelation assert that they *are* earthly rulers — either historical characters, or future rulers still to arise at the end of time. Many have been the efforts to identify them historically, or to speculate who they will be in some future “end-time” scheme of things. The revealing fact is that there are as many opinions about their identities as there are expositors!

The same crowd is all about us today. They look for an outward warfare between the kings and the Lamb, with an outward victory. They want deliverance from the government, from persecution, from socialism, from the antichrist, from terrorism, from the Jews, from the Moslems, from the Catholics, from the banking system, from the abortionists, from liberal politicians, and from all kinds of political conspiracies that are steadily pushing our nation and the world down into the dark abyss and nightmare of godlessness and tyranny. But I do not hesitate to tell you that none of these are the problem! The most powerful kings that rule in the world today are those that rule *inwardly* — and it is only as the kingdom of God takes its rightful place in our lives, that these kings are subdued and deposed. In the soul-realm we have the dominant king of self-will which has usurped control and ridden roughshod over the ways of God. There are religious kings of static creeds, false doctrines, traditions, commandments of men, carnal-minded methods, and sectarianism. There are kings of passion and desire, bringing the dominion of the flesh. There are kings of emotion which usurp unholy sway over people of God. There are kings of ruling thoughts and imaginations which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. There are kings of doubt and fear that destroy faith and rob men of victory. But, praise God! There is a Lamb upon the throne in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord and He is mighty within — King of kings, Lord of lords — and He arises within us in the power of righteous conquest and dominion. This means victory! The old Roman conquerors, when celebrating a brilliant conquest, rode down the avenues of the Imperial City upon a snow-white steed, and received the plaudits of the people. And so Jesus Christ, in the spirit and by the spirit, astride a snow-white charger of righteousness and power rides in swiftness and strength into our earth, into our inner land. I have heard the hoofs of His horse thundering through the corridors of my soul as He has marched into my land conquering and to conquer, bringing all into submission to Him. The harlot's beast with his ten horns of fleshly power, might, and strength are no match for the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

How easy it should be for the devout mind to understand that the Revelation was sent and given from Christ *to His church* — His body on earth. How easy it should be for the devout mind to understand that the Lord's message to His people does not concern itself with such unspiritual things as the kings of Europe, past, present, or future, but with *spiritual realities* and *divine dealings* of God in the lives of His called and separated people! The great truth that I pray may grip your hearts, my brethren, is simply this: these seven heads and these ten horns will exert their carnal wisdom and fleshly powers right in the exercise of your spiritual performances and sacrifices to the Lord! If you can discern, you will see them appear in prayer, in humiliation, in fasting, in service, in giving, in preaching, yea, in all your efforts to fulfill the will of God and perform the work of God. You will see your desire for recognition, the pride of ego, arise right in your giving and service to the Lord. You will see your own desires and they will exert themselves right in your praying, asking, and seeking. You will see your own wisdom and abilities subtly steal your heart from the Lord, by enticing you to walk after your own reasonings, ingenuity, and strength, rather than by the mind of Christ and the power of the spirit. Ah, therein lies the deception of the whore within us, in those things where we would not expect her she deceives us, and herein is plainly seen her *mystical apparition*. This whore and her beast with his heads and horns meet you, precious friend of mine, in the walking out of your spiritual life, and there she attributes all the goodness that is done to her self, usurping the glory, and you give consent to it, and thereby commit fornication with her.

All the way from the moment of our new birth to glorification and exaltation this inner antagonist — the seven heads and the ten horns — is present. This is why every revival that God has sent through the ages ended in apostasy. The flesh — that inward devil of fleshly wisdom, carnal understanding, sense-knowledge, soulish zeal, and spiritual pride has a subtle way of identifying himself with every move of the Spirit of God, so as to corrupt it from within. Many years ago F. J. Huegel wrote: "Students of the great Welsh revival (1900 — 1903) say that the wonderful stream of divine life little by little lost its saving efficacy, as another stream from a very different source, naturally very filthy, began to mingle with the river of the water of life proceeding from the throne and from the Lamb. *'Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.'* Beware the false fire! Beware the counterfeit glow! When the *soulish* takes the place of the pure working of the Holy Spirit, you have a 'revival' whose fires, though they purport to be from heaven, are more likely to be kindled in hell."

From the mists of the long ago Eden we read, "Now the *serpent* was more *subtle* than any *beast* of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat

of every tree of the garden?” (Gen. 3:1). The word “serpent” in our language comes from the Latin *serpo* meaning “to creep,” but the Hebrew term has no relation to the form or motion of any external attribute of a serpent. The word used here for serpent is the Hebrew word *nachash* which is a primitive root meaning “to hiss or whisper.” It, furthermore, means “to search or scrutinize closely, to find out by experiment, to practice divination, augury, incantation, or enchantment.” According to Webster incantation means “the chanting of special words or a formula in magic spells or rites.” Incantation may speak in addition to hypnotism. The serpent, then, is a HISSER, a WHISPERER, a DIVINER, an EXPERIMENTOR, an ENCHANTER, a MAGICIAN, and a HYPNOTIST! And all this activity takes place from *within!* Now we understand how it was so easy for mother Eve to be *deceived!* The “inner voice,” the “carnal reasonings,” the “soulical suggestions” of the natural mind, yea, the religious mind, *sounded* so plausible, so logical, so *spiritual*, so *divine* — it just *had* to be the word of God and the way of the Lord! It *had* to be the *very highest truth!* As she listened to this voice Eve was enchanted, hypnotized, mesmerized — by this *high revelation!*

We do well to consider also the word translated “subtle” in this passage. “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field...” The Hebrew word for “naked” in Genesis 2:25 is *arom*. The English word that describes the serpent’s nature is “subtle,” and the Hebrew word for this is *arum*. Both *arom* (naked) and *arum* (subtle) are derived from *aram* which means “to be *bare*, to be *cunning*.” Hebrew scholars say that originally these three words were the same word. Now, why should the expression “naked” and the term “cunning” be the same word? What is the connection? We can answer with only one word: SEDUCTIVE. By way of illustration, a *naked* woman may be a *seductive* woman! There is a close connection between the two. The ideas of *naked* and *cunning* come together in the words SEDUCTIVE and SEDUCE. Can we not see by this that the serpent was actually more *seductive* than anything in the bestial (fleshly) realm! Ah, when Satan transforms himself into an *angel of light*, he is the *most seductive* thing in the world! Under a different figure, that of the cunning serpent, even in that long ago Eden the lewd, alluring, tempting, enticing, tantalizing, bewitching, seductive harlot of CARNAL REASONING AND MAN-MADE RELIGION came riding upon her beast with the seven heads and the ten horns!

“And the ten horns which thou sawest are *ten kings*, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings *one hour* with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (Rev. 17:12-13).

From these statements of divine revelation we learn the great truth that the ten-fold powers of the flesh have no kingdom in their own right. It is only as they are given expression through the life of the *bestial system* of man that they truly have power. As an example, let us suppose a man who is possessed of a carnal desire to build a little religious kingdom over which he can be the ruler. Now that carnal desire has no kingdom as yet, nor *can* it have one *of itself*. It is a king without a kingdom! Only when the man goes out and is successful in gathering around him some people whom he can form into a movement, and then dominate them, does his desire for kingship “receive power.” It is only as the “kings” within are given expression through the system that they have power. These have one mind — the ego — and give their power and strength “unto the beast” of the worldly system. Thus they “receive power as kings” — but, notice, how limited is their power! “They...receive power as kings *one hour* with the beast.” The “ten horns” and the “one hour” taken together express *absolute limitation!*

The word “hour” appears various times throughout the book of Revelation. To the church in Philadelphia the Spirit says, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the *hour of temptation*, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). Does the “hour” of temptation mean that the testing will last literally for one hour? Not at all! “The hour of temptation” is a metaphor indicating something of limited duration — it comes and soon it passes, with no indication whether the actual time is short or long, as man conceives time. In relation to a man’s life ten years of hardship might define the “hour of testing,” whereas in the history of a nation a hundred years or even more could bespeak their “hour of trial.”

Later we read, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth...saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the

hour of His judgment is come...” (Rev. 14:6-7). “The *hour* of His judgment is come.” Does this signify that God’s judgment lasts only for *one hour*? Certainly not! Again, the expression indicates something of limited duration — the “hour” is simply the *time period* during which God’s judgments are manifest and apparent to the consciousness of men. Can we not see by this that the bestial systems of man, and the rule of the flesh in the lives of God’s people, is of limited scope and duration — it shall not last forever, it is not an eternal, indestructible, undefeatable, unchangeable, unending state or condition. Oh, no! O that men might see that the significance of the “one hour” of the rule of the flesh is explained by the verse which follows our text: “These (the ten horns) *shall make war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings!*” (vs. 14). That is how and when their “one hour” of fame ends — with the triumph of the Lamb within! Isn’t it wonderful!

THE ATTIRE OF THE HARLOT

“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. 17:4).

This passage gives us the picture of a prostitute in the days when the Revelation was written. She is not clothed in white (as is the bride of the Lamb), but her dress is the same color as that of the animal which she rides, showing both her connection to the “beast nature,” and the origin of her pollution. Let us, then, meditate upon her pretentious appearance as a woman. The text makes a distinction between her outward appearance and her essential character, a distinction which comes down to this, that she appears as a woman, but that her essential character is that of a prostitute. She is richly and beautifully arrayed with all that is glittering and luxurious in the world, decked with precious stones and pearls and arrayed in purple and scarlet, while holding in her hand a golden cup. Purple and scarlet were colors of royalty and magnificence in Bible times. The dyes were extremely expensive, and only the wealthy could afford them. Thus the woman’s clothes and all her adornments speak of all the external signs of success that the worldly church seeks.

Yet — purple is a mixed color — it is compounded of blue and red. And what a revelation that is! In its spiritual significance it represents the mixture or confusion of the *heavenly* blue with the *earthly* red of Edom. And at this time all the church systems of man unite the earthly and the heavenly, joining flesh with spirit, mingling the anointing with carnal efforts and methods, mixing truth with error. False doctrine is for the most part a corruption of divine truth — error overlaid with a thin layer of truth, like base metal gilded. That very mixture yields a royal purple which is so awe-inspiring, powerful, and captivating to the souls of men! Gold, precious stones, and pearls are emblematic of spiritual truths and of the wondrous revelations of the riches in Christ Jesus. And who can deny that all the believers in all the churches have truly received from the Lord gifts of grace, truth, and salvation! Oh, yes, God Himself has enriched them with multiplied blessings according to their faith. The problem is, however, that *even these* are now employed by this woman, along with her other attire of the harlot, to attract people to her lewdness, thus *prostituting* even those beautiful truths and graces she has received and proclaims!

As we examine the rich and luxurious attire of this woman it is plain to see that this is no cheap street whore — she is beyond question what we would call today a *high-class call girl*! Her services would demand *thousands* of dollars per night! The message is just this: both the flesh nature and fleshly religious systems will *take everything you’ve got*! She certainly makes the impression of being rich and powerful, enveloped in a halo of worldly glory. The rich, beautiful, royal colors, with their attraction for the eye skillfully woven into her overall seductive appeal, reveal that she certainly knows her business well, how to make herself appear desirable! A woman in her profession often commands the finest jewelry, usually as gifts from her lovers. Her personal physical beauty of face or form is not mentioned. Her power to entice is pictured as lying in outward finery designed to capture the eye, the mind, the emotion, the imagination, the passion, and the heart of men. She is indeed a very rich, powerful, and successful woman!

The harlot religious systems have indeed been phenomenally successful when measured in terms of untold millions of members, inestimable wealth, costly buildings and ornate temples, impressive rituals and

ceremonies, pomp, splendor, and worldly honor. It is successful because it is worldly minded; it loves pleasure more than it loves God; it loves feasting more than it loves fasting; it loves entertainment more than it loves repentance and waiting upon the Lord. It compasses land and sea to make one proselyte and frequently the proselytes are two-fold more the children of the devil than they were in the beginning. Previously they were *sinner*s; now they have become *deceivers*. Caught in her web of enchantment, those whom the harlot system “wins to the Lord” by teaching them the word of God according to the precepts of men, these babes are imprisoned within her fortress of forms, traditions, religious works, and organizational structures until they become hideously dwarfed and but grotesque caricatures of what a child of the living God should be like!

The entire church system is full of professional beggars who will fleece your money and steal your time and consume your talent in the name of their program just as a street beggar will beg in the name of his infirmity. From time to time through the years I have received these *lying letters* from men I have never met nor seen nor known, who tell me how the Lord has laid *me* and *my family* upon their hearts, how they are praying for me, personally, every day, and what wonderful things will happen to me if I will just send them an offering for their work. One dear friend shared a letter with me from a well known evangelist in which he informed her that he had seen a vision of her house with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. He was scheduled to be in Africa within a few days for a great healing campaign, but the Lord had told him, he said, to postpone the campaign until he could write to her and get her most urgent prayer requests to take with him to Africa. If she would only *send an offering of \$20.00* along with her prayer requests, he would carry them to Africa where they would be prayed over during the great crusade and she could expect miraculous results...as though God answers prayer more effectively from Africa than in the United States of America! These letters are mailed out by the thousands, monthly and weekly, all making the same claims. At my friend's query I suggested to her that she write to this so-called evangelist and tell him that she had her \$20.00 ready to send just as soon as he would describe to her what her house looks like and what color it is — since he had *seen it in a vision!* More than one widely known evangelist of our day has become a multi-millionaire, and that by peddling the whore's religious con-games to gullible Christians devoid of understanding, and deceived by their religious guile, though their wicked devices should be evident to the simplest mind.

Cursed be such wicked men! Cursed be the whore upon her beast! Cursed be the seven heads and the ten horns! Cursed be her gaudy garments of seductive enticement! The churches today are filled to overflowing with programs hatched out of carnal minds. It is not easy to write these things, my beloved, for I would rather share out of the storehouse of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in Christ Jesus. Yet, were it not necessary to establish these truths in the hearts of all hungry men who sense a call to something deeper in God, and who hear within themselves the call to come up higher to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus where sons of God follow the Lamb to the heights of mount Zion, then the Holy Spirit would not have dwelt for two whole chapters of the Revelation upon this important theme. Ah, wicked Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth! She professes to know God, and in a measure she has known Him, but in works she denies Him, being abominable and to all the true riches reprobate. No wonder Jesus said, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from me ye that work iniquity (lawlessness, that which I have not commanded)” (Mat. 7:22-23). No wonder the Spirit inspired John the beloved to pronounce *destructive judgment* against the great whore and all her filthy daughters!

This woman *isn't* gold (as is the New Jerusalem bride of the Lamb) but she is decked out with gold. All her appearances of godliness are external things. The adornment is only on the surface, and her character is the opposite of the beauty that she presents to the world that is under her influence. She is decorating herself, and none can doubt that the church systems of today are gaudily bedecked with external works of righteousness, with pomp and ritual and ceremony and program and music and preachings and outreaches of all kinds which appear as godliness but in truth are not born of God at all. In our past religiousness have we not all been there! We decked ourselves with gold and precious stones and pearls and had all the appearance of the wealth and riches of God by the Spirit, but like the Pharisees of old we were impoverished in spirit and full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness. Only the deep dealings of God can strip away the

garish adornment of the whore and transform us into the pure gold of HIS DIVINE NATURE. Of the beautiful bride of Christ it is written, "...and the city was *pure gold*, like unto clear glass" (Rev. 21:18). The harlot **wears** gold. The bride **is** gold. The harlot puts on an appearance, a façade. The bride exists as a **state of being** — in the gold of divine nature and the dazzling glory of incorruption. That is the mystery!

In the days of the Old Testament prophets the supreme mission of the prophet Elisha was to destroy that which had destroyed the anointing and work of God in the land of Israel. So Jehu (the king) went into Jezreel and the scripture says that when he arrived Queen Jezebel got her face all painted, her hair tired, and looked out of the window high upon the wall. The painted face wasn't what made her Jezebel — she was Jezebel before she put the paint on and had already done great damage by killing the prophets of God and leading the people of Israel into abominable idolatries. But she had herself all made up this day because she heard that something was going to happen in town. The painting of the face has the meaning of painting the eyes. Painting the eyes has the meaning "to allure, to look more appealing." What Jezebel was actually doing was appearing at the window high upon the wall with the tawdry appearance of a harlot. She counted on Jehu being a *man*, and she thought she could *seduce* her way out of her problems. Jezebel tried all her alluring and deceptive ways to dissuade Jehu from his appointed task! King Jehu, whom Elisha had anointed, was on his way to get her! Jezebel hoped to flatter her way out of King Jehu's advance to take her captive or destroy her! She plotted to get into a high place, up on the wall of the city, into a high and elevated position in the church, as it were, where she could see all that was going on and manipulate and control and create a resistance to the thing the prophet of God had said he was going to accomplish. But Jehu was on a mission for Yahweh and he wasn't having any of it!

Terry Crisp wrote once about the marks of harlotry. "In the natural, the spirit of harlotry was generally evidenced in a woman's countenance, and in her attire. It was easy to spot a prostitute by her appearance; by the way she excessively painted her face, and seductively dressed herself, the message she sought to convey was unmistakable. This is why the Lord admonished Israel to 'clear her face of the marks of harlotry.' He knew that as long as she adorned the countenance of an available woman, seeking to enhance her features in order to attract the attention of others than her husband, she would not be true to Him. No matter what she told Him, or how she tried to convince Him that she was doing it all for Him, the intents of her heart were obvious; the *image she projected* told the story! It was a manifest token that she was **not** committed to a monogamous relationship; and she was **not** ready to settle down and become **one** with Him. The underlying truth was that she sought *independence* from her Husband!"

THE CUP OF ABOMINATIONS

"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. 17:4).

The blessing of chapter seventeen lies to a great extent in the contrasts which it suggests. One can hardly think of the cup in the harlot's hand without being reminded of "the cup of the Lord." His cup is full of new covenant blessings, the divine and spiritual inheritance of His elect. It speaks of the remission of sins, and the knowledge of God revealed in love through the sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the firstborn Son of God. It is filled with heavenly, spiritual blessings, poured out upon all who are raised up to sit in union with Christ in the heavenly sphere. It ministers cleansing to the heart, peace to the conscience, joy to the soul, righteousness to the life, transformation to the mind, redemption to the body, and glory and power beyond comprehension to all who overcome to share His throne. But the harlot's cup is "full of abominations" — the common scripture word for what is idolatrous; that is, it is "the cup of demons" (I Cor. 10:14-21). And it also contains "the unclean things of her fornication." Being unfaithful and corrupt herself, prostituting the holy things of God, she can only bring men under the influence of unholy intimacy with the religious spirit of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Instead of offering the world the cup of salvation, she offers carnal satisfaction in the name of religion.

A *golden cup* entices to drink; for one expects the most precious drink from such a vessel. This is a figurative expression that means the apostate church systems use every device possible to entice all men to

partake of her false doctrines and practice her flesh-oriented programs and promotions. The cup contains corrupt and false teachings, fleshly and perverted practices, pagan rituals, sacraments, and holy days, fittingly represented by harlotry. Many writers reveal the way the transference from pagan Rome to papal Rome was made. Eusebius in his *Life of Constantine* declares, "In order to render Christianity more attractive to the Gentiles, the priests adopted the exterior vestments and ornaments used in the pagan cults." Pope Gregory, instructing Augustine, is credited with saying, "Destroy the idols, never the temples. Sprinkle them with holy water, place in them relics, and let the nations worship in the places they are accustomed to." Cardinal Baronius is said to have made the statement, "The Holy Church was permitted to appropriate the rites and ceremonies used by the pagans in their idolatrous cult since she (the church) expiated them by her consecration."

Many works have been written revealing and documenting the pagan roots of practically every custom associated with both Christmas and Easter. The method of the church was simply to adopt the pagan customs, "Christianize" the pagan holy days, keeping the same old feasts with their rituals and ceremonies, under the new face of now employing them to honor and worship the Lord Jesus. Our text characterizes them as "filthy things," comparable to the disgusting activities of a man lying with a whore. The figurative speech is an allusion to a cup of drugged wine with which lewd women inflame the passions of their lovers. Jeremiah the prophet used the same metaphor in describing the ancient kingdom of Babylon, saying, "The nations have drunken her wine; therefore the nations are *mad*" (Jer. 51:7).

What an awful stink! What a horrible stench! That which is corrupt, rotting, having no life working in it. Her golden cup is full of *abominations* — *putridness*, beautiful on the outside, golden, appearing as something divine, but inwardly abhorrent. Ah, yes, this whore is alluring on the outside, she is indeed drop-dead gorgeous, a head-turning, sensuous knock-out, but inwardly full of disease and loathsomeness, signifying the holy things of God profaned by her. Think of it!

BABYLON — MIXTURE AND CONFUSION

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:5).

Let us not pass from this thought of Babylon's "cup of abominations" without also noting another of the characteristics of the Babylon system. I do not believe there is any way to fully explain, imagine, or understand all the ways this MYSTERY BABYLON works. The word "Babylon" means *confusion*. When we consider the vast array of church denominations with their varied organizational systems, creeds, liturgies, disciplines, and methods there is one title that can be written across the whole — MYSTERY CONFUSION. It is the *mixture* of good and evil, of truth and error, of flesh and spirit that brings such confusion. So interwoven is truth with error, endeavoring to uplift and bless mankind while building a kingdom for self, good works that are a blessing to many, while promoting one's own name, reputation, and power, that it becomes difficult to discern which is right and which is wrong.

Ray Prinzing has wisely written: "Yet, even while we acknowledge all this confusion, be it remembered, Babylon is still in the sovereign hand of God who controls all. Therefore even Babylon, in spite of all of its corruption, has been used by God for a purpose. '*Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken*' (Jer. 51:7). And it is when her purpose is finished, that God has decreed her end. It is a prophetic word guaranteed of fulfillment! Genesis 11 gives the record of how the people found a plain in the land of Shinar, and proceeded to build a city and a tower, but God intervened, confounded their language, and scattered them. '*Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth*' (Gen. 11:9). The Hebrew word for 'confound' used here is '*babal*' meaning: to mix, to mingle, and thus literally to mix self in. The more self-centered each man became, with his own expression, the less they could communicate with others, so frustration took over, and they left off building, and went every one his own way. Though self had been in evidence beforehand, now it was turned inward, and thus caused greater confusion."

Another word from my friend Connie Asbill is so very pertinent and vital right here. She writes, “Fortunately for righteousness, there is a division in the camp of Babylon, for regardless of how many organizations she binds her people together with, regardless of how many council tables she gathers around, regardless of her clubs, and parties, and treaties, and pacts, and covenants, each man is out for himself in her ranks and thereby is our hope and her sure destruction. ‘*A house divided against itself cannot stand.*’ SOUL can unite with soul in every conceivable manner — but it is a false peace — a false unity — for true unity is *in the spirit* and where there is not that unity, through the cross, *every man stands alone*, regardless of surface appearances. God, knowing that in unity of spirit, nothing would be ‘restrained from them to do,’ confused the tongues, confounded the speech (mixing it with SELF) — and thereby brought division in the psychic realm so that although there is a cosmic mind, it is loosely thrown together, lacking the cohesiveness of *love*. Every man has self as his center, and because of that, even when he taps into his own psychic resources, his power will be over-ridden and swallowed up by any man who is moving after the power of ‘*an united life*’, for that UNITED LIFE is God’s ELOHIM and is the very person of God Himself.”

Can we not see by all this that Babylon is the spirit of harlotry — mixture. Mixing the truth of God with the carnal philosophies of the world; mixing the revelation of Jesus Christ with pagan eastern religions or other strange voices; mixing the move of the Spirit of God with the promotions of man; mixing the work of God with the efforts of the flesh; mixing the light of Christ with the darkness of the carnal mind. It is the soul joined to anything — except the spirit! It is harlotry. It is the place 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 so 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. Bigger crowds, bigger buildings, bigger television ministries, bigger, bigger, bigger — not *better*! Not more *godly*! Not more *mature*! 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!

As we consider this truth we should especially notice the words of the apostle Paul to the saints at Corinth. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. 6:14-18).

To live for God’s approval, to walk before Him as sons and daughters of the most high, is not possible unless we too come out of all wicked, worldly, and religious mixture. Mixture first leads to confusion, then to corruption. Under the Old Covenant the children of Israel were taught and instructed by the object lessons of the external law to distinguish between the clean and the unclean in God’s sight. In one of these object lessons they were warned, “Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers (two kinds of) seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers (mingled) sorts, as of wool and linen together” (Deut. 22:9-11).

Let us recall that it was the *mixed multitude* who accompanied the Israelites out of Egypt that later caused them to sin in the wilderness by craving for the food of Egypt to satisfy the flesh (Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4-6). Centuries later, Daniel and his companions, taken to Babylon as exiles, resolved not to defile themselves with Nebuchadnezzar’s rich food and drink. Though young in age and exposed to many corruptive influences of a worldly and pagan environment, they understood that they could not eat from two tables — man’s and God’s — without defiling their soul and spirit (Dan. 1:5-8). What is of the flesh will eventually defile the spirit! That explains powerfully why God *hates* mixture! The early church was also assailed by mixture not only from within but also from without. While Gnosticism tried to corrupt the gospel with its admixture of Jewish, Greek, and Oriental mysticism, Judaizers within the church sought to

corrupt the gospel of free grace by their insistence on preserving the legalistic rites of the Mosaic Law — such as circumcision, the feast days, the seventh-day sabbath, and abstaining from certain foods.

Alas! how few of the Lord's precious people at this significant hour in the revelation of Jesus Christ can distinguish between soul and spirit, between the life of the flesh and the life of the spirit, between man's righteousness and God's righteousness, between darkness and light, between truth and error, between religious zeal and the unction of the spirit, between the temple of idols and the temple of God, between man-made doctrine and divine revelation, between religion and spirituality, between those who serve God for self and those who live for God's approval!

In contrast to this, in one of his articles Bob Torango wrote of God's called and chosen elect in these descriptive words: "We must, like Abraham, look for a city, dear hearts. A city with foundations, a rich heritage in God, a place where our children and our children's children can learn of the ways of the Lord without fear and confusion. No more mixture, no more flesh, no more wanton money grabbing and fleecing, but righteous priests and honorable kings of the most high God that dispense the riches of His kingdom to all that are hungry and thirsty. A city with walls upon which the watchmen of the Lord cry out, 'The King is in Jerusalem and all is well!' In Babylon all is ruined and inwardly corrupt. In Babylon the priests are there for profit and fame. In Babylon it is business operated by cutthroats and crooks. But I see another city, the mother of all that are born from above, whose children are free. We are that city, and God sits upon the throne of our hearts. Reign O mighty King in Righteousness and Peace!"

There is no Old Testament type or shadow that more graphically illustrates God's demand for purity — that which is *unmixed* — than the Lord's commandment to Aaron the high priest concerning the making of the *holy anointing oil* and the subsequent *anointing of the priesthood*. The Lord's word was very concise and to the point. "*Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy (separated, unmixed) unto you*" (Ex. 30:32). This holy anointing oil was not to be poured upon man's flesh. It was poured on Aaron's HEAD after the miter and holy crown had been placed on him. Although the Aaronic priesthood was in reality a priesthood in the flesh (a natural order), for Aaron was "taken from among men," yet there is a mysterious intimation of another priesthood given in this precept, which was not to be in the flesh, but in the reality of the spirit and after the power of an endless life. Flesh, human flesh, is sinful and corrupt beyond explanation! There can be no congeniality between it and the graces of the Holy Spirit. The flesh must ever war against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, for they are contrary the one to the other and they cannot agree together. As the scripture declares, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwells in you" (Rom. 8:9). In the flesh dwelleth no good thing, the apostle declares. No one therefore can have the Holy Spirit, unless he reaches beyond the outer realm of the flesh to that inmost sphere where he is born of God.

The commandment to Aaron that the holy anointing oil was not to be poured upon man's flesh was given to reveal to us the great truth that God *does not anoint flesh* — *His anointing is upon the inner man of the spirit!* Deep within every man there is a secret sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of being. This inmost reality is that part of man which separates him from every other living creature and makes him uniquely mankind. This deep hidden power is what it is of itself independent of any other part of man's complex nature. It is the man's "I Am," a gift from the I AM who created him. The deep-in human entity of which we speak is called in the scriptures *the spirit of man*. "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the *spirit of man* which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the *Spirit of God*" (I Cor. 2:11). As God's self-knowledge lies in the eternal Spirit, so man's self-knowledge is by his own spirit, and his knowledge of God is by the direct union of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man. "He that is joined unto the Lord *is one spirit*" (I Cor. 6:17). I cannot over emphasize the importance of this in our forward walk into our destiny as sons of God! This truth denies that man is an earthly, physical being having a spirit and declares, rather, that he is *a spirit having a physical body*.

Most people on earth have forgotten their beginning. Wonderful words were spoken at the very dawn of civilization, recorded in the oldest book of the Bible, which state simply and powerfully the reality of man. "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding" (Job 32:8). It is something great in man, Elihu conceives, that he is *spirit*, and because he is, is capable of being *inspired*.

He is not here speaking of Adam as he was in the primordial glory of Eden, nor yet of regenerated man in this wonderful age of the Holy Spirit; but, speaking thousands of years ago in the present tense, he magnifies man as being able to be inspired, just because he *is spirit*. And it is God, who likewise is spirit, that inspires him!

The word “spirit” means literally, breath, and denotes a quality of life because, in the case of the spirit of man, God is able to breathe Himself into it and through it. The word “inspiration,” as used here, denotes the act of *inbreathing*. Anyone who is inspired is “breathed into,” visited internally by the power of life, and so quickened in mind, raised in intelligence, ennobled in nature, and empowered in ability. In this way Bezaleel was inspired when he “was filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving timber” (Ex. 31:3-5). Anyone is inspired just as far as he is raised internally, in thought, feeling, perception, or action, by a divine movement within! It is *God’s Spirit* quickening — anointing — *our spirit*, and thus bringing a change, a release, a raising so that our spirit may function as it was designed to function.

This is what Jesus described as being “born again,” the spirit that already existed as the offspring of God being brought forth into the world, into a new realm, a new level of identity, a new consciousness, a new expression, a new ability, a new standing, new rights and privileges and inheritance! We all understand that a baby’s life does not *begin* at the moment of birth — it is simply *released* into a new dimension where it can attain to its full potential in that realm. That is what the new birth is! Our spirit did not originate at the moment of our new birth — it had to already exist in our experience or it could not have been *born*! That which is thus “born” of the Spirit is *spirit*! It is this capacity of *being spirit* that qualifies man as an *inspirable creature*. And in the Old Testament type, God’s holy anointing oil — the anointing of His Spirit — is not upon *man’s flesh*, the outer man, but upon *the inward man of spirit*!

Thus, “*the (God’s) Spirit* beareth witness with *our spirit* that we are the children (offspring) of God!” (Rom. 8:16). Oh, the mystery of it! From these statements of holy scripture we are pointed to the deep mystery of our sonship to God. And “*because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son *into your hearts (spirit)*, crying, Abba, Father!” (Gal. 4:6). The message is both clear and startling — we are not given the Holy Spirit to *make* us sons of God. Oh, no! Rather, “*because ye are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.” Because YE **ARE SONS**! It is the pre-existing fact of our sonship to God that prompts the Spirit of the Son to be sent into our hearts! The Spirit of God does not come into us to give us sonship, but to quicken our spirit, anoint our spirit, bringing that release or “birth” by which the inner man is raised up within us to be, express, and manifest all that he is! Only because you already *are* a son, the offspring of God, does God pour His holy anointing oil upon that “hidden man of the heart (spirit)” dwelling deep within the inner sanctum of your being! By that anointing the HOLY PRIESTHOOD WITHIN YOU IS DESIGNATED, APPOINTED, ORDAINED, CONSECRATED, AND EMPOWERED TO EXPRESS GOD IN THE EARTH! That is the mystery.

The only “mixture” acceptable to God is the mingling of His Spirit with our spirit! The holy anointing cannot be connected with man or man’s works. In Babylon men plan, devise, and scheme ways to accomplish a work for God and then ask God to bless and anoint their plans and efforts. But this holy oil of God’s anointing cannot be poured upon man’s flesh! It is a *holy* oil and can only be poured upon that which *is holy*. It is not given to add something to man after the flesh to improve or empower him, but on the ground that that man is entirely set aside and His work is God’s work in the spirit and by the spirit. It is not given to bless or to quicken or to increase or to glorify or to sanctify or to make holy the actions or works of men after the flesh — out of the natural mind. God will not, cannot, and does not ANOINT FLESH! It is so easy to miss this point! Millions of people are zealous toward God, as was Saul of Tarsus in the Jew’s religion before he encountered the Christ, serving God outwardly in their own soulish excitement and fleshly strength in a very zealous manner. Most of the Lord’s people fail to understand that zealously serving God after the traditions and commandments of religious systems is *wholly unrelated to the anointing*. Feverish religious activity does not indicate one iota the call of God or the condition of a person’s spiritual life. All that is not of the Spirit IS OF THE FLESH!

I can tell you of a truth that the vast majority of the “power” in the modern “revival meeting” or “crusade” is nothing at all but soul power — flesh! Have you not noticed yourself that in many revival meetings and church services a kind of “atmosphere” is first created to make the people feel warm and excited? A chorus is repeated again and again to warm up the audience. “Peppy” music is most often employed to accomplish this. The people are urged to “get into the spirit” of the meeting. Some stirring testimonies are given. Special music is sung. When the atmosphere is thoroughly heated up, the preacher will then stand up and preach. He has various strategies ready to stimulate and maneuver the people. If he does his job skillfully he can anticipate a large “altar call.” These are methods and tactics, but they are not the power of the Holy Spirit! Many preachers today think they have power; but they are merely employing psychological *soul power* to influence people.

Spiritual development comes from the spiritual man’s partaking of spiritual life and truth and thereby growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The outer man, the flesh man may well enjoy a peppy chorus, a rousing choir piece, or a humorous sermon. The flesh man may well enjoy the church socials, the outings, the programs, and the froth that so often accompany the activities in Babylon. The flesh man may well enjoy sentimentalism and sensationalism, the excitement of great numbers of people, and great appeals that bring tears to the eyes. The flesh man may go so far as to enjoy an interesting message from the Bible, as long as there is no attack on him. **BUT NONE OF THOSE THINGS CONTRIBUTE ONE BIT TO THE SPIRITUAL MAN!** There may be nothing wrong with any of those things in their place, but God will not pour His holy anointing oil upon them because He righteously *hates mixture!*

How we praise God today for that holy priesthood which HE is preparing in the earth, whom HE is teaching His precepts and His ways; purging, processing, refining, perfecting, strengthening, enabling, and anointing to exhibit the precious effects of His grace and glory. May all who read these lines experience the full working and power of this anointing! Amen!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY