

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 39

THE CHURCH IN SMYRNA

(continued)

“ I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the *synagogue of Satan*” (Rev. 2:9).

There is a sharp contrast between the “synagogue of Satan” and the “church of God.” Just what is this “synagogue of Satan”? Those of the synagogue of Satan were not the true church, but of the false church. Now the word for synagogue is not the same word we use for church. In the scriptures, church means the “called out ones” or the “summoned ones.” The Psalmist said about these elect people, “Blessed is the man whom THOU CHOOSEST, and CAUSEST to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts” (Ps. 65:4). But the meaning of synagogue is “assembly” or “gathering.” This can be good or bad, but in this case it is bad, for these are they whose assembling is not of God but of their own selves. Isaiah said of them, “Behold, they shall surely gather together, but NOT BY ME: whosoever shall gather against thee shall fall for thy sake” (Isa. 54:15).

The two names, “Satan” and “Devil” are employed in the book of Revelation with correctness and precision. “Satan” means *adversary*, that which is *against* or *opposed to*. “Devil,” on the other hand, means *slanderer* or *accuser*. To the people of God, that ancient serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, is **both!**

Now let us look at the typical setting and background of this term “*synagogue* of Satan.” In the days of ancient Israel, the priesthood at Jerusalem was the accepted spiritual authority. Then in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, demolished the great temple of Solomon, and carried the Jews into exile in Babylon. With their temple and their priesthood gone, the Jews found themselves in strange new communities where they formed voluntary assemblages for common worship and study of the law. These congregations were called *synagogues* or *assemblies*. This institution proved so valuable that it has been continued to this day. It also provided the basic pattern for the churches which, after Paul, the Christians set up and developed along more organized lines. Among the Jews, however, the synagogue has survived in its pristine form. Any ten adult male Jews today can establish a congregation. The congregation’s rabbi is a teacher, not a priest. He has no ecclesiastical authority except as an expounder of the law. In fact, he is not even necessary to the functioning of the synagogue. Any male Jew with sufficient knowledge of the prayers and the laws can conduct a religious service.

Thus, the synagogue is an “assembly” of Jewish people, just as the church is thought of today as an “assembly” of believers in Jesus Christ (although that is not the real meaning of church!). The synagogue of Satan is, therefore, the *assembly of the adversaries, opponents, slanderers, and accusers!* Those of the synagogue of Satan are the opponents of the Truth and the slanderers of the spirit of Christ! Everyone and everything, especially every *religious* thing that

stands in opposition or resistance to the spiritual life of your inner son is truly of the synagogue of Satan!

Remember, my beloved, the term “synagogue of Satan” is a *type*, a *symbol* in the book of Revelation! The *type* is found in the persecutors of the early believers — preeminently the Jews. Among all the stormy, fiery declarations of condemnation and judgment found in the letters to the seven churches, none is more striking than the Holy Spirit’s identification of the “synagogue of Satan.” The synagogue of the Adversary! He doesn’t call the temple of Bacchus the synagogue of Satan. He doesn’t call the temple of Diana the synagogue of Satan. He doesn’t call the temple of Zeus the synagogue of Satan. Only the Jews had a *synagogue*! Religion that *opposes* the Spirit of God, the purpose of God, the truth of God, and the kingdom of God is the adversary of God, and the system, temple, synagogue, or assembly of those adversaries is simply the “synagogue of Satan.”

Permit me to point out the apostle Paul’s incredible indictment of his own former activities in the religion of Judaism. “For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers” (Gal. 1:13-14). “Though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might have confidence in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Phil. 3:4-6).

That was the same spirit of Judaism that operated in Smyrna! The church in Smyrna was bitterly opposed by the Jews of the city, who prided themselves on being God’s chosen people. Actually, they were the tools of Satan, the organized religious opposers, persecutors, and

condemners of those who were the Lord's people after the spirit! The synagogue which had once served as the springboard for the preaching of the gospel, fast became the bitter enemy of the new church. Throughout the world in the days of the early church the Jews moved against the believers with lies and malice. When Paul was preaching in the synagogue in Antioch we read, "And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming" (Acts 13:44-45).

The accusations against the believers were so devilish, and the smears so insidious, that the believers were styled as the dregs of society and blamed for every tragedy and disaster that struck. "But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people" (Acts 17:5). The Jews worked with cunning, even inciting the normally tolerant Roman government to attack the new religion. The Jewish-Roman cartel instigated the wholesale slaughter of those who followed Jesus.

The Roman empire made politics a religion. The Emperor was proclaimed to be a god to whom homage was to be given. Throughout the Roman empire people were free to worship any god or as many gods as they desired. There was freedom of religion. But all subjects of the Roman empire were required to recognize Caesar as Lord and God over the Empire. In essence what they did was once a year all the people would come with a small pinch of incense and all that was required was that they cast it into a fire and say, "Caesar is Lord!" The cities recognized this merely as a political exercise, you were simply saying that Caesar is Lord, and that means that he is Lord or Ruler over the Empire. When one fulfilled his annual obligation in the worship of

Caesar, he was given a treaty which granted him the right for the next year to worship any god or gods in any religion he chose.

For the believers in Jesus this was a problem! They could not acknowledge anyone as LORD other than Jesus Christ! For them Jesus had been raised up and given all power in heaven and in earth, principalities and powers being made subject to HIM. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, the Prince (ruler) of the kings of the earth! The Christians were renegades. They were rebels. All they needed to do was throw some incense into the fire and repeat the words, "Caesar is Lord," and a bill or decree was given to them releasing their family. For the year they could go back home and worship Jesus all they wanted to!

What did it mean to be an enemy of Rome? It meant that if anybody turned you in, all your property and possessions could be confiscated — Rome got 90% of what you owned and the person that turned you in got 10%. So the city was filled with informants and bounty hunters. Let me tell you who the informants were. The informants were the Jews! The Jews went looking for Christians. They would often infiltrate church services. They would sit there during the praise and worship and ministry of the word, all the while making a note of the best dressed and most prosperous looking people. They would spot those who had possessions; after the meeting they would get their names and go report them to the government as rebels against the Empire. Soon government officials would appear at their home or business; if they could not produce their treaty they would then confiscate their property in the name of the Empire, and the informant was paid his ten percent.

The above is the historical background behind the Lord's words to the church at Smyrna, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." Great poverty was in the church at Smyrna. For a person to confess Jesus Christ as Lord meant not only that they committed their life to Him, but they could lose all of their property, business, and possessions. One of the

ministers in the church at Smyrna was one of the most famous of the church in those early years, a man by the name of Polycarp, who had been a disciple of John who wrote the book of Revelation. His story has come down to us because of his unswerving faithfulness to the name of Jesus — even unto death. He refused to burn incense to Caesar or to confess him as Lord.

Because of his gentle and kindly spirit the Roman officials entreated him, “What harm can it do you to sacrifice to the emperor? Have pity on your great age.” Upon his repeated refusal Polycarp was taken to the coliseum, where an official said, “Swear, curse Christ, and I will set you free.” The serene Polycarp replied as he was led to the stake to be burned, “Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and He has never done me wrong: how, then, can I curse Him, my King and Saviour?” Having resisted every promise and threat, which they hoped would cause him to recant, it was announced, “Polycarp confessed himself a Christian.” This was the signal for death! And renegade Jews from “the synagogue of Satan” with pagan Gentiles, rushed in fury to gather the firewood for his cremation. Taking his place in the midst of the fuel, Polycarp assured them that it was unnecessary to chain him, and the fire was kindled. His suffering was prolonged by a high wind that blew the flames aside, and he was at length executed by the executioner’s sword.

Incredible as these facts are, the truth is that the Jews, persecuting the early believers, are *not* the synagogue of Satan! They are merely the *type*, the *symbol*! Never forget, dear ones, the book of Revelation is a book of *symbols*! Spiritually, the Jews in Smyrna were not the synagogue of Satan. What they *represent* is the synagogue of Satan! They remind us of people today, as well as thoughts, ideas, and spirits right within ourselves, which oppose God’s spirit, God’s message, God’s will, God’s work, and God’s people *in the name of religion*. The synagogue of Satan has always existed and is active in this day, although

it changes form from generation to generation. It is the congregation of the *adversaries*, the congregation of the *opposers*, the congregation of the *slanderers*, the congregation of the *accusers* — both **within** and **without**! The opposition of religion against God's truth, God's Spirit, and God's elect is a synagogue of Satan — an adversary! That doesn't mean they are sinister or evil, for many of the people in the church systems today truly love God and think they are doing His will. They are just God's ordained "opposition party" to test and try His elect! Like the Jews of old, they just don't realize that GOD HAS MOVED ON! They have no idea that this is a new Day and God is doing a new and greater and more wonderful thing!

Satan is the adversary, the Devil is the accuser! When the great dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, is cast out of the spiritual heavens of our minds and consciousness and understanding, the scripture states, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the *power of His Christ*: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (Rev. 12:10-11).

There is only one accuser, only one — Satan. Of course he accuses us within ourselves as well as through religion. God is not bringing up your sins, your weakness, your failures, no matter who you are: you, me, Judas, or Hitler. If Jesus paid the penalty of your sins, He doesn't deal with your sins anymore, they are paid for and gone, taken away, the account is closed. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation." What does that mean? It means that because of Jesus all men are free! And I have to accept that. I must now view all men in that light! I must bear the

GOOD NEWS to them! If I then turn around and bring up somebody else's sins because I don't like them, or they did something against me, then I become their opposer from the synagogue of Satan. You see, the synagogue of Satan is not so much an institution as it is an **attitude!**

After a person is forgiven we cannot lay any charge against him. Nearly all Christians know John 3:16, but very few know, let alone live as if they believe, John 3:17: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved." It's shocking! It's shameful! It's surprising how many of us think God would condemn us. Why? Where do we pick up these notions? GOD does not condemn people! If God was in the condemning business, He could have done that quite easily through Jesus when He sent Him to earth. With one omnipotent breath from His mouth He could have slain all the sinners and rebels! But He didn't. He spoke not a word against any sinner! *God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world.*

We find it difficult to understand such a loving reaction from a Holy God. We are often quick to find faults and shortcomings when we find someone falling short of our standards or expectations. When someone says they forgive you your trespasses, but they continue to remind you of them, they are preaching from the pulpit of the synagogue of Satan! Ah, God will not condemn any soul! I believe that with all of my heart! God has a great and unconditional and unfathomable love for every man! His only desire is to help, to bless, to deliver, to transform and make beautiful every life! He seeks to save *everyone!* He sees every person through those eyes of love and intense and yearning desire for them. He plans better and greater things for every man, woman, and child in the world. Does that mean that nobody is punished? Not at all! Every man still reaps what he sows — in this world and in the world to come. But every man reaps what HE sows — not the condemnation and vindictive wrath of God preached by the

churches! God does not condemn. He does not condemn us who are His children. He corrects us, purges and purifies us in love and everlasting faithfulness. But He does not *condemn!* Furthermore, He doesn't condemn **the world!** God is *not* a charter member of the synagogue of Satan — the Opposer!

The synagogue of Satan has many different denominations, divisions, departments, and operations. Some are without while others are deep on the inside of us. You know as well as I do that the church systems have always taught that the God of exacting justice and undiminished wrath must be appeased, soothed, turned aside from His furious vengeance, and that this feat can only be accomplished by the bold and insistent intercession of the compassionate SON, our wonderful Lord and elder brother, standing opposite Satan, before the judgment-throne of the Father, as our Advocate, our Lawyer, pleading our cause, beseeching God to be kind to us for His sake, to commute our sentence, and begging for our lives on the ground that He paid the price for the forgiveness of our sins. According to this crude hypothesis the anger of God can only be appeased by looking upon the bloody sweat and cruel, ugly death of His Son, as He stands there interceding for us.

I do not hesitate to tell you that such a teaching is utter rubbish and the brashest sort of nonsense! It springs from the Romish tradition that likens God the Father to a fearful and offended despot, spoiling for the blood of the offenders, and it makes Christ to be the one who pleads with God on behalf of the victim until the Father is consoled and placated. And if it weren't for our Advocate, Jesus, God would listen to the Devil's accusations and really lay it on to us. We could even lose our salvation because of the Devil's accusations, if it weren't that the merciful Jesus is there to prevent God from casting us into hell, by presenting His blood on our behalf. Such is a gross caricature of the truth! More than that, it is a stupid absurdity and a horrible blasphemy! It was GOD HIMSELF who *so loved* the world that He gave

His only begotten Son that men might not perish! It was GOD HIMSELF that was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them!* It is GOD HIMSELF who *is love!* “Behold, what manner of *love* THE FATHER hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God” (I Jn. 3:1). Praise God, the Spirit is unfolding Truth in ever-increasing dimensions of glory which magnifies God’s glorious nature of love and mercy, His wisdom and power, His goodness and the prudence of all His plans and purposes — completely and forever delivering us from the pews of the *synagogue of Satan!*

It is my conviction that not even Satan is senseless enough to believe that He could approach OUR FATHER and convince Him to condemn us because of our weaknesses and failures. Nowhere does the scripture state that Satan accuses the saints to God. What it *does* say is that “the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them **BEFORE** our God day and night” (Rev. 12:10). It is one thing to be accused **before**, that is, in the presence of, or in front of another person, and another thing altogether for the accuser to accuse us **TO** the other one. It should be abundantly evident that Satan does not accuse us **to** God, He merely accuses us **before** God. It is not the almighty and omniscient God, my brother, my sister, whom Satan wishes to convince of your unworthiness — it is **YOU!** Satan has no misconceptions about his ability to persuade God of your weakness and worthlessness, but if he can influence **YOU** to believe that you are unworthy of God’s love and calling, that you cannot overcome to reign with Christ, that you are a failure, that you are hopeless, that it is impossible for you to attain to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus, that it is beyond the realm of possibility for you to lay hold upon life and immortality — he is thereby able to rob you of your hope, faith, confidence, joy, peace, and victory!

We have been taught in the past to flee from the great red dragon that lumbers through the heavens of our minds, causing us to err and to stumble day and night. It is this dragon that has been accusing us day

and night before God in the temple of God which we are! You see, Satan never comes as some hideous fire-breathing monster with horns, a forked tail, and a pitchfork. He doesn't blare at you through a loudspeaker. He speaks in your own thoughts, understanding, perceptions, intuitions, feelings, emotions, and desires! The battle rages in the MIND — concepts, temptations, accusations shout at you *from within!*

The Self-life, the human consciousness, the carnal mind, the flesh — all these are a synagogue of Satan! It is there he comes and worships, it is there he comes and preaches, it is there he comes and counsels, it is there he comes and persuades. You may go to church meetings three times on Sunday and every night of the week, but if you are not dead to the Self-life, if you have not ascended into the mind of Christ above your human consciousness, if you have not silenced the carnal mind, if you have not mortified your members which are upon the earth, Satan has a little synagogue in you, a place where he has the right to come and set up his service, teach his ideas and doctrines, appear as an angel of light — illumination and revelation — express his desires and emotions, and perform some of his works.

The called out elect of God are casting Satan out of the heavens — the high places — of their minds by the swift and powerful sword of the Spirit! The sword of the Spirit used in this heavenly warfare is the word of God, the *living word of God*, and the *present truth* and *reality* raised up within our lives by the Holy Spirit! There are millions of people in the religious systems of man today who are synagogues of Satan. There is only a small called and chosen remnant who are becoming temples of the Holy Ghost. God is mightily moving in our lives in this Day to smash that synagogue of Satan within us by the hammer of Truth, raze it to the ground, and upon it erect within ourselves a temple of the Holy Ghost that God may be glorified in His sons. We are being brought to the place where we say with Jesus, "The

prince of this world cometh, and hath *nothing in me*" — nothing in me that responds or corresponds to him in any way or measure!

I want to tell you where everything is — everything is right where you are — WITHIN YOU! *Everything!* On the positive side — God is *in you*, Christ is *in you* your hope of glory, the word of Christ dwells *in your heart* by faith, your body is the *temple* of the Holy Ghost which is *in you*, the wonderful mind of Christ is *in your mind* by the renewing of your mind, and the kingdom of God is *within you*. On the negative side — the spirit of antichrist is *in you*; the man of sin sits *in the temple of God* which is *your body*; the beast rages *in the sea* of humanity, *in the ravenous emotions of the body*; the image of the beast is seen *in you* by your outer actions of fleshly life; the nature of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters (peoples) is *in you*, the woman of your own soulish life; and the serpent is *within you*, enthroned in

the carnal mind which is enmity against God.

Men dream of a devil — a hideous and obscene monster in human form; a short, skinny elf in a red body suit, with impish face, horns, pointed ears, a spade beard, thin mustache, having a long forked tale and a pitchfork in his hand. If you ask one thousand church-going Christians to describe for you the *Devil*, would not all of them describe him in the fashion portrayed above? Or would they describe him to you as a *snake*? Millions of Christians suppose they would recognize the Devil *instantly!* But *would they*, really? I have no hesitation whatever in telling you that the Devil of Christianity is a *myth!*

Jesus, on many occasions, drew the analogy of men as serpents — devils. In my mind, when Jesus uttered the following parabolic phrase, He was revealing one of the most important and foundational truths of all time. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Ye *serpents*, ye generation of *vipers*, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mat. 23:25,33). John the Baptist used the same terminology, "But when

he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of *vipers*, who hath warned you to flee the wrath to come?" (Mat. 3:7).

As in Christ's day, so today, the churches are full of *devils!* Well does this enemy of God, enthroned in the human heart, this adversary of redemption and all righteousness, know that, in the blessed hour when the "I" is crucified, all his power and all his authority and sway in that life is broken forever. His appetite is denied, his desires rejected, his plans thwarted, his suggestions repudiated, his power ignored, his base of operation is destroyed, and his work is abolished in the life of every son of God who has become identified with Christ in the cross. Once a man has embraced fully the cross of Christ and *Self* has become forever dead with Him, then it is with him even as the firstborn Son in triumph declared, "I will not talk with you much more, for the prince of the world is coming. And he has no claim on me, there is nothing in me that belongs to him, he has no power over me" (Jn. 14:30, Amplified).

Satan has no power at all when SELF is gone! His synagogue is destroyed! His pews are broken down, his pulpit demolished, his service ended! There is no platform to preach upon! There are no congregants to listen! Then he has no more power in your life or mine than he had in the life of our Lord Jesus the Christ. How unspeakably wonderful the hour for any man when Satan shall find *nothing* in him upon which he can feed or lay hold, *nothing* that responds or corresponds to him. When Self is crucified with Christ the lust of the flesh is mortified, the lust of the eyes is slain, the pride of life is put to death, all cunning, deception, and error is silenced, and the synagogue of Satan closed in that life.

The synagogue of Satan is both individual and corporate. John the Revelator sees the Adversary, the Accuser, embodied in a people, an assembly, a congregation, a system, a synagogue, to oppose, slander, and intimidate the called and chosen elect of the Lord! One dimension

of the synagogue of Satan that the elect of God have experienced are those they run into today who say they serve Jesus, but who persecute those who are pressing on into deeper realms in God. As one brother shared with us, “The Jews have never persecuted me, the world has never persecuted me, but the Christians of the church systems have persecuted me. There have been many Christians who have never persecuted me, for the spirit of Christ ruled in their lives. But those who did persecute me were of the synagogue of Satan — they were *adversaries* to me!”

There is nothing more challenging than going into some denominational church and begin to share with them. If you are *very careful* you might get to visit them three or four times, because you seem to be agreeing with what they see in God. But then as you perceive the bondage of tradition and the spiritual darkness they are in, your heart of compassion goes out to them. So you begin to open the truth of God just a step beyond the realm where they dwell, that you might begin to lead them out of their darkness. As you share the treasures of truth from the storehouse of your spirit, a cloud soon passes over their countenances and they become agitated and fearful. Should you continue they then rise up against you and commence to retaliate, and should you dare to speak any further words of revelation they will eventually cast you out. Ere many days have passed the whole religious realm in your city will be warned against you and your name will become *anathema* to all the Lord’s people in all the church systems!

You shared out of love, but soon discovered who they were, because what upset them was the *light*. But if you were on the right mission, led by the Spirit, you will discover by and by that a little of the light penetrated their darkness and some precious soul was illumined thereby and began to awaken out of the deep sleep of tradition. Let me admonish you, my beloved — if *we* in turn abuse and persecute even the Lord’s people in Babylon, instead of loving them, praying for them, and

seeking only to help them, then *we place ourselves* in the synagogue of Satan, becoming an adversary to them.

A brother wrote to me some time ago quite concerned because I continually warn people about the harlot church systems of man. He said, “Brother Eby, how could you ever reach any of the people in the church systems when all the time you are criticizing and condemning them? Don’t you think it would be better to present the truth to them without all the negativity?” Now, that sounds logical — on the surface! I could not agree more — should the Father send me to the church systems I would certainly go in humility, compassion, mercy, and love. But you see, dear ones, my writings are not intended for them! We do not mail our messages to either the preachers or the members of First Baptist Church, St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Calvary Bible Church, First Pentecostal Church, or any other denomination! We are not criticizing them *to them!* Our message is sent to God’s called out elect, to those are being called out of the religious systems by the Spirit of God! It is those God is calling out of the systems of man to know Him in deeper measures that we are commissioned to admonish, counsel, exhort, and warn to separate themselves from the blinding errors and fleshly bondage of religion. The elect of the Lord are being thoroughly purged and purified from all the doctrines, programs, methods, and spirit of Mystery Babylon! Those who profess to be called to sonship while continuing a promiscuous relationship with the lewd religious harlot, are certainly bastards, and not sons.

YET — we are not called to become adversaries to any man, but to be saviours on mount Zion, the priesthood of the Lord to *bless* and *reconcile* and *lead* all men into the kingdom of Life, Light, and Love! I tell you the truth, I know by experience that these things are so! Well do I know the heartache of *trying to awaken sleeping brethren* only to have them turn on me, despise me, hate me, and fall asleep again. Well do I know what it is to be *attacked* by the

congregation of the adversaries, the synagogue of Satan. But I know as well the judgment of God in my own spirit, teaching me not to despise or strike out against any man held in the fetters of ignorance, sin, hell, or Babylon. We are called to be gentle, kind, gracious, tender-hearted, compassionate, and loving even with our enemies! We are ordained to bless them that curse us and pray for those who despitefully use us, and persecute us, that we may be the sons of our Father who is in heaven! He sends His rain upon the just and the unjust! It is here, and here alone, that we begin to tread the ground of true sonship, for the sons of God are the *priests* of the Most High God after the order of Melchizedek!

Concerning those of the synagogue of Satan the Lord tells the church at Philadelphia, which, together with Smyrna, is a type of God's called out elect, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before *thy* feet, and to know that I have loved *thee*" (Rev. 3:9). We should note that this promise is not given in a jeering or vindictive spirit! It rather means that the day will come when those who now misunderstand, condemn, denounce, persecute, and cast out and despise God's elect who walk in the Spirit and in the Truth will themselves come to the knowledge of the truth, of the love of the Lord for those who follow on to know Him, and God's great plan and purpose for His people on the earth and throughout all the unbounded heavens! Thank God — ALL shall know Him, from the least to the greatest; and ALL shall see and be blessed by His wise and wonderful purpose. Then even the synagogue of Satan will at last — UNDERSTAND! That is what happened to Saul of Tarsus in that long ago on the Damascus road; and that is what will happen to all the adversaries. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

Let your heart consider what I now say, for there is another synagogue of Satan that plagues many of the Lord's people. This to

which I refer is the assembly of carnal-minded, self-righteous, *law keepers* who burden the Lord's people with external commandments, rules, and regulations. It is *legalism!* Legalism is so bad because it places a person under heavy bondage, which is hard to get rid of. The law is the instrument of sin-consciousness! "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "Do this, do that," is the constant theme of the preachers while the next time they tell us, "Don't do this, don't do that." Legalism forces everything into a pattern of *works, external observances, and performance*. The ultimate fate of those who break these traditions of the elders and commandments of men is, "God will get you if you don't do what we say!" Legalism is a mark of spiritual immaturity and carnal-minded religiosity. It is an adversary to the inner spiritual life, indeed, a synagogue of Satan!

When Jesus came to redeem us, He came to redeem us not only from sin and death, but to redeem us from the **law** which gave us the consciousness of sin and is itself the very strength and power of sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7; I Cor. 15:56; Gal. 4:4-5). Paul tells us that when Jesus came into the world He came subject to the law. "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made *under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*" (Gal. 4:4-5). We have to realize that for thirty years Jesus lived on this earth without ever manifesting His sonship to God! He was sent into the world as the Son of God, but He did not manifest His sonship until after He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan river. He was "made of a woman" — born of a woman, speaking of His true humanity.

The Father sent the Son in the likeness of sinful flesh by giving Him a human body. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. In this likeness of sinful flesh He looked like everybody else! He didn't look like a superman — six feet tall with a rugged, handsome face, piercing blue eyes, flaxen hair, bronze complexion, bulging muscles, and a Mr.

America physique. Oh, no! He looked so much like any other Jew that He never stood out in a crowd. No one in Nazareth thought He would amount to anything beyond the norm, and when men sought for Him, He had to be pointed out to them. Nothing credible is written of Him, from the time He was twelve years old, until the day He came to John to be baptized. He operated within the limitations of the flesh. He didn't use any special powers or, except on one brief occasion, display any unusual wisdom. He worked, ate, slept, and bathed like every man. He hungered, grew weary, knew weakness, and experienced doubts, frustrations, perplexities, pain, and sorrow, for, "He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Notice further that when Jesus came He was "made under the law" — and therefore was in subjection under the law. God sent forth His Son from His throne on high, from the estate of His heavenly glory, to be made under the law with all its restrictions, requirements, and demands. He was not merely *born* under the law as a Jew, but "made" by His Father's appointment, and His own will, subject to the law to keep it all, ceremonial and moral; to perfectly fulfill it for all who were under it! Although He was the Lord of the law and its divine Author, He took His place under the law, that He might accomplish an important purpose for those who were under it. He made Himself subject to it that He might become one of them, and *secure their release!* And, praise God, He established a perfect record in that He kept the law fully. We know very little of His life while He was under the law. Only one incident when He was twelve years old is recorded. When Jesus walked under the law He was circumcised; He sacrificed; He paid tithes; He observed the Sabbath; He kept the feast days; He attended synagogue; and in all His dealings He kept every tenet and precept of the law!

Jesus was sent into the *bondage of legalism* and required to wear that *legalistic yoke* in order that He might **shatter it to pieces with His full and free redemption!** I am absolutely certain that includes all the

religious folk today who are held captive under the legalistic demands of church systems with their myriad man-made commandments of “do’s” and “don’ts” laid upon people in order to make them pleasing to God. Matters not whether it is an Old Testament law about not muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, sowing mixed seed in one’s field, stoning an adulteress, washing hands before eating, kosher food laws, holy day laws, or more modern day prohibitions against women wearing make-up and jewelry, dress codes, meats and drinks, amusements, coverings, or a thousand other laws, old and new, that the religious Pharisees impose upon the Lord’s people.

The law is very *insidious*! I hear preachers, even preachers in this kingdom message, quoting Malachi 3:7-10 and laying the **law** of tithing upon God’s people. Oh! How they love to use verse nine, “Ye are *cursed* with a *curse*: for ye have *robbed me*, even this whole nation.” But that is a *lie*! Someone says, “Now, wait just a minute, brother Eby, are you calling the word of God a lie?” I do not hesitate to tell you that it is a lie to lay that *curse* of the *law* upon God’s redeemed people because the Holy Spirit testifies that “As many as are of the *works of the law* are under the *curse*: for it is written, *Cursed* is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. The law is *not of faith*: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them. CHRIST HATH REDEEMED US FROM THE **CURSE OF THE LAW**, BEING MADE A **CURSE** FOR US: for it is written, *Cursed* is everyone that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3:10,12-13).

God’s redeemed people are NOT under any CURSE of the law! The *law* of tithing was for the nation of Israel under the Old Covenant! Only certain *commodities* were tithed — not *money*! Only Levites could receive tithes. It was used for administering their office and to help the poor, widows, and orphans. There is no Levitical priesthood today! There was a *first* tithe that was required (Lev. 27:30). Then there was a *second* tithe for the feast days (Deut.

14:22). At the end of every three years there was a *third* tithe for the fatherless, widows, etc. But the requirements of the law, the Old Covenant, have been abolished! The laws of Moses are now — **illegal!** Paul and the other apostles NEVER taught the Gentiles to tithe! I do not live under some *divine curse* for not tithing!

The New Covenant is not a covenant of **blessing and cursing** as was the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is only a covenant of **blessing!** Jesus says, “Give, and it shall be *given unto you*; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall *men give into your bosom*. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” The New Covenant is a covenant of **blessing and not cursing!** Under the New Covenant great **blessing** is promised to those who **give liberally!** If I am not being blessed, if I can’t pay my bills, if I am living in poverty and want, if I am struggling to make ends meet, if my needs are not being met, it is not because I am under a curse from the law! It may be only because I have not availed myself of God’s WONDERFUL PROVISION of the BLESSING that comes with GIVING!

You see, beloved, there *is* a difference between these two concepts — law and grace. Now, it may not make much difference to *me* whether I suffer lack because I’m not getting the *blessing*, or whether it’s because I’m under a *curse*. But it does make a big difference to GOD! God is not in the *cursing business!* He only seeks to *bless* us! That is the New Covenant! We cannot charge God with cursing us! It is wicked to do so! If we are not being blessed it is not God’s curse; it is *our fault*, not *His!* It is divinely true — you **can’t outgive God!** Where does the scripture say, “God *loveth* a cheerful *tithe-payer*”? Paul never said that. What Paul said was, “But this I say, He which *soweth sparingly* shall *reap also sparingly*; and he which *soweth bountifully* shall *reap also bountifully*. Every man as he hath purposed in his heart, *so let him give*; not *grudgingly*, or of *necessity*: for

God **loveth** a **cheerful giver**. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, **always having all sufficiency in all things**, may abound to every good work” (II Cor. 9:6-8). That is the same thing Jesus said, but in different words! God has promised to bless us abundantly and meet all our needs bountifully when we are liberal, cheerful *givers!*

While we are not under the *law* of tithing, we *are* under the awesome and unbounded provision of grace — we will be incredibly, munificently, richly, lavishly, luxuriantly, profusely, plentifully, and super-abundantly **blessed** for **GIVING!** We are exhorted to give liberally in a number of New Testament scriptures — not to put us under law, but for our good, for our blessing, to unlock the treasure houses of God’s blessings!

God has made a glorious provision for our blessing in all things — yet we must not *give to get*, for that motive is selfish and wrong too, but give out of a heart of love, out of the **giving nature of Christ**. I testify to you that the sons of God are the most *giving people* in the world! And they give not out of constraint, nor as under law, nor yet in response to impassioned appeals from the ministries, nor merely to receive in return, but they truly give out of the heart of the Christ within! That is the *very spirit of sonship!* Those who receive from our ministry know that we have *never* sent out a letter or notice of any kind stating a need or asking for a dime from anyone. The expenses are enormous each and every month, yet no bill has gone unpaid and we have never failed to have food on our table. I tell you, only the sons of God truly give by the Spirit! Many Christians give vast sums to various ministries, but usually it is in response to a steady drum-beat of appeals, sob stories, promotions, and gimmicks of all kinds. The sons of God give without being asked! Aren’t you glad! Isn’t it wonderful! You can’t beat God’s way!

My beloved brethren, **never** preach tithing out of the book of Malachi. That is law, and not grace! It is Old Covenant, not New Covenant! It is an abomination to lay *curses* upon God’s people, to

threaten them with God's judgment if they don't tithe. THAT IS THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN! I try to give far more than a tithe, and I am convinced that most of God's called and chosen elect do the same. Teach the Lord's people the wonderful opportunity for blessing through giving as Jesus taught! That, dear ones, is sonship! Multitudes of preachers and churches still want to lay the law on you. They *demand* tithes under the law. They enforce either Saturday or Sunday as the "Sabbath." They forbid you to eat pork or other meats that were unclean under the law. When men proclaim law they are preaching from the pulpit of the synagogue of Satan!

Paul makes this very clear when he says, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; *blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us*, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath: which are a *shadow* of things to come; but the *body* (substance, reality) is of Christ" (Col. 2:13-17). You see, beloved, if we keep one law we are bound to keep the whole law, for to break one law makes one just as guilty and condemned as the man who breaks them all. That is why Christ has redeemed us from the *curse* of the law! The law is a *curse*! I tell you, it is a CURSE! Paul says that the law was *contrary to us* — an ADVERSARY! It is the doctrine of the synagogue of Satan!

If I am under the law of the sabbath, the law of tithing, the law of not eating pork, then I am under the whole law. I should burn a bull on the altar of sacrifice so it will be a pleasing odor for the Lord (Lev. 1:9). I would be able to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7 — I would only need to determine what would be a fair price for her! If my neighbor works on the sabbath, Exodus 35:2 clearly states that he should be put to death. We have lots of stones out here in West

Texas, so it would be an easy thing to stone him! Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Leviticus 19:27. We would need to search the scriptures to see how they should die! I know from Leviticus 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, so I would have a real problem passing a football to my grandkids! Everyone who wears a garment made of different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend) is under the curse of the law — I would be required to get all my neighbors together and stone them to death! Does this sound ridiculous? PAUL SAYS THAT IF YOU KEEP ONE LAW YOU ARE BOUND TO KEEP THEM ALL!

Christ has “redeemed us from the curse of the law!” The Greek word for “redeem” is an especially beautiful term. The concept is of one going into the slave market and purchasing the slave and then taking him out of the market, setting him free. Redeemed from the law! Redeemed to be no longer a slave, serving under rules, regulations, and commandments that govern the flesh. Redeemed that we might “receive the adoption of sons!” “As many as are *led by the Spirit* of God, they are the *sons of God*” (Rom. 8:14). Hallelujah! We have received placement as sons of God who fulfill the nature of the Father by the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus!

Jesus does not drive people with the lash of the law, but He draws them with the cords of love! I never like to see God’s children whipped with rods gathered from the thorny sides of Sinai. We have not come to mount Sinai, but to mount Zion! When a man tries to pummel me to my duty by the demands of the law, I kick at the goad like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; and rightly so, for we are not under the law, but under grace. The motive which propels a free-born heir of the kingdom is born of grace, not from the law; from Jesus, not from

Moses. The law is *bondage* and therefore stands in *opposition* to our walk in the spirit and by the spirit! Law keeping is one of the cardinal doctrines of the synagogue of Satan!

All who *minister condemnation* are preaching from the pulpit of the synagogue of Satan. I was raised on this doctrine of the synagogue of Satan! As a child I was told in church that God so hated sin, that God could not look upon sin, could not excuse sin; so if I fell, if I slipped into sin, if I made a mistake, if I disobeyed the Lord, if I cussed or lusted or cheated or told a lie, and didn't confess my sin to God and get it "under the blood" before I went to bed, should I die in my sleep before the sun rose I would certainly burst hell wide open! According to the *doctrine of condemnation* living holy keeps you saved, whereas sin in your life causes you to *lose your salvation*. Thus, you are not saved by grace through faith — you are saved by *holy living*! Some preach what is called "eternal security," but the so-called gospel in the church I was raised in was the doctrine of NO SECURITY. And that was no "gospel" at all because it certainly was *not* GOOD NEWS!

If I "got saved" once as a child I suppose I got saved a thousand times! Because every time I got mad, said a bad word, slipped off to a movie, told a lie, or failed in any way to measure up to the church's standard of "holiness" I was lost again. I had to "get saved" all over! Oh, they didn't put it that way, but it was true anyhow, because if God cannot excuse sin, if sin *separates* us from God, if sin sends us to hell, then when you sin you are *lost*! I tell you today — there is no **hell** anywhere worse than **that one**! To live under condemnation is **hell**! The doctrine of condemnation is from the pit of hell itself, it is preached from the pulpit of the synagogue of Satan. It is preached from the same Bible the Devil quoted from when he quoted scripture to Jesus in the wilderness — the *letter of the word*! The doctrine of condemnation opposes the truth of God's unconditional love and

forgiveness, it is an adversary to the fact of our reconciliation, it contradicts the word of our reconciliation which declares that God does not impute our trespasses unto us, and denies that we are justified by *grace* through *faith alone*, not of works, lest any man should boast!

Now, someone may think that this gospel of grace is going to give you the liberty to sin, for your flesh to go wild. Let me tell you something. People say that God cannot excuse sin. Well, maybe He can't, but the scripture is clear that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, **not imputing their trespasses unto them!** God has forgiven us all our trespasses! But He has also *quicken*ed us and made us *alive in Christ*. I will not come to perfection, maturity, the image of Christ, and sonship by trying to make my Adamic life live more godly. Adam can't do it! But there is a Life, even Christ, flowing from the very essence of my being that has absolutely nothing to do with my natural character, the Adamic life. It is a power greater than all! It is Christ who must be raised up in me, to be my life, my righteousness, my reality. Christ isn't formed in us in one day, one month, or one year. But Christ is growing up in all the elect who have received the call to sonship! Our Father does not condemn us while we are going from victory to victory, but still fall short of His holiness. All our sins are covered until we have FULLY OVERCOME! No license to sin here, just *grace, mercy, love, and great faithfulness* UNTIL WE REACH PERFECTION. Aren't you glad!