

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 184

### THE BATTLE AT ARMAGEDDON

“And the *sixth angel* poured out his bowl *upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up*, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared” (Rev. 16:12).

As we approach the cataclysmic events set forth in the remaining verses of chapter sixteen of the Revelation I pray that we all can open wide the eyes of our spiritual understanding, for *where we are in the spirit determines how we see* the unfolding episodes of this book. A dear brother has spoken of this in a little tract he sent me some time ago and I find his words so beautifully instructive that I am compelled to share them with my readers.

He wrote: “When I was about six years old and started to school, I was told to learn my ABC’s. I was told that there were twenty-six of these letters to learn and that I was to learn them in rotation as they were written down. So I finally learned to say them in that order, and I learned to know each letter by itself or I could pick out a particular letter when they were scrambled. Then, one day the teacher gave me a piece of paper which had some writing on it, and asked what it said. I told her that it said ABC’s. So she asked me to read what I saw. I began to pronounce each letter in each word; but I had no idea what the letters spelled, nor could I tell her what the letters meant — yet I could tell her what each letter was in each word. I did not know what the words said, or meant. So she informed me that each word meant something else, besides ABC’s.

“Well, of course, I wanted to know what she was talking about, so I set my mind to learn what these letters meant besides ABC’s. Now, this is a pretty basic parable, but I think it should get my point across. It seems to me that this is the way most people have started out to learn the teachings of Jesus Christ! Most people, when they are taught to read the “letter” of the word, suppose that the “letters” (ABC’s) are the complete knowledge of the truth. And the whole church system is still teaching only the letter. Now, as we said, it is right and good to learn the letter or letters, but if that is all we ever learn, we will never discover the riches that we could get out of those letters. If they could only read what the “letters” really say and mean when arranged in the right manner by the Spirit of God, they would mean something else far greater than just the ABC’s of the word! Yet in their own Bible it tells them that the letter kills, but the spirit makes alive. Now, how does the letter kill? Not literally, but it kills you spiritually.

“Now it is necessary and good to know the letter or letters, but that is like starting out to follow the word made flesh, but never follow it to the death, burial, and resurrection. You see, there is no spiritual life in the flesh. It only leads to death. The life is in the resurrection! When you see only the outer, the word made flesh, you are seeing the child when he has learned all the twenty-six letters of our alphabet and is taught that those are all the letters we use. There are no more letters to learn, which is right so far, but yet he cannot use those letters. They have something to tell him, but he cannot *read the message*. And that is true of the fleshly or literal understanding of the scriptures! The literal is only the means to assist us in understanding what the teachings of God *really say*. Yet the whole world says and thinks that they understand the literal teachings of the Bible. But there is more!” — end quote.

The river Euphrates is mentioned twice in the book of Revelation — here, and in chapter nine, verse fourteen. The epithet “great” is used in both instances: “the great river Euphrates.” The literal Euphrates river begins in the Armenian Mountains and is about 1780 miles in length, by far the longest and most important river of western Asia. It is famous in Bible history and prophecy. This region was the site of the inception of human sin; here the first lie was told, the first effort of man’s own “religious works” was performed, the first murder committed, the first grave was dug, and the first confederacy for the purpose of war was assembled. It was here the vast system of Babylonian idolatry originated. Israel’s great progenitor, Abram, came from its other side into the land of Canaan. The rivers Nile and Euphrates are prophetically designated as the southern and northern boundaries of the promised land (Gen. 15:18). The region of Euphrates was the scene of the long years in which the children of Israel (both the house of Israel and the house of Judah) dragged out the wearisome days of their Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

The Euphrates river bordered Babylon and was that which had to be crossed either to enter Babylon or to leave Babylon in the direction of Canaan. Sometimes it stood for Babylon itself, sometimes for the land of Canaan, but most often as a border or separation between the two. The prophet Jeremiah revealed how the Euphrates represents Babylon when he said, *“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labor in vain...and they shall be weary. The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah...when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into (captivity in) Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words which are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said unto Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; thou shalt say, O Lord, Thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, and none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and **cast it into the midst of Euphrates**; and thou shalt say, **Thus shall Babylon sink**, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her”* (Jer. 51:58-64).

That the river of Egypt, the Nile, and the river of Babylon, the Euphrates, were the divinely determined boundaries of the land of Canaan is stated plainly by the Lord when He gave Abraham the promise, *“Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt (the Nile) unto the great river, the river Euphrates”* (Gen. 15:18). And again in Deuteronomy 1:7 we read that the children of Israel received the command: *“Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and **unto...the great river, the river Euphrates.**”* The same we read in Deuteronomy 11:24 and Joshua 1:4. We find that the promise was realized in a literal way in the time of Solomon, for of him we read that he ruled over all the kingdoms from the river (that is, Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines (I Kings 4:21). A number of other passages allude to this river as the boundary of the land of promise, and therefore I find that in its spiritual sense the river Euphrates represents the ideal and real boundary line between the spiritual and heavenly kingdom of God and the carnal and earthly kingdom of religious Babylon. That is the mystery!

As a means of preparation for the battle at Armageddon the beloved John records, *“And the sixth angel poured out his bowl **upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up**, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”* It is important to God’s elect in this hour that the Spirit of God would grant a clear understanding of what is here meant by the drying up of the great river Euphrates. The capital city of ancient Babylon was built on either side of the Euphrates. The river was also the source of water supplying a fortifying mote about the city. Its waters, from ten to thirty feet deep and from 900 to 3500 feet wide, made an obstruction that in ancient times was passable only under the greatest difficulty. Imagine the fearful state of such a great and secure city when the waters of its mighty defense are dried up! So because the Babylonians were the first to build on the banks of the Euphrates, in the book of Revelation the Spirit of God employs this term as a type of “the waters...where the whore (Mystery Babylon) sitteth” (Rev. 17:2,15). The ancient city of Babylon has not existed for long centuries, just as the word of the Lord prophesied, but there is surely that in the earth today which is characterized by the spirit and nature of the Babylon of old which sat upon, and was fortified and defended by, the waters of the great Euphrates. There

is especially a repetition today of the conditions essentially characterizing ancient Babylon in its connection with God's people — for Israel was in BONDAGE IN BABYLON. Consequently, their captivity in Babylon, the type, must find its parallel in Babylon of today, the antitype. Certainly great numbers of the Lord's people are today in captivity to the modern *spiritual Babylon!*

What the pouring out of the sixth bowl discloses prophetically is the present (in God's elect) and coming (in all the Lord's people) **destruction of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT!** What the apostle John records in chapter sixteen of the Revelation does not give the complete story of how this great religious Babylon is destroyed. There are further wonderful details revealed to him and recorded in chapters seventeen and eighteen. The plague of the seventh bowl brings the conclusion of the judgments upon religious Babylon, the carnal church systems of man, both within the Lord's people and upon the external systems. Indeed, the events recorded in chapters seventeen and eighteen are the continuation of the plague of the seventh bowl! The fact that all seven plagues have as their great purpose the destruction of Mystery Babylon is plainly stated in the call for God's people to "*come out of her...that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of HER PLAGUES*" (Rev. 18:4). Oh, yes, the *plagues* — all seven of them — are **HERS!** Can you not see the mystery? As John was set to wondering at the particulars of the continuing prophetic vision, so are we today as we see taking place in these eventful times the very things foretold to take place in connection with the pouring out of divine judgment upon that world empire of Babylonish religion. I am assured that in this very hour God's chosen and separated elect is invited by the Spirit of God to come and actually behold these wondrous things, just the same as John was invited to see a preview of them in the spirit and by the spirit.

If we have considered the matter as we ought, we will surely have realized that not only are the plagues sent to destroy Babylon, but they are also for the deliverance, correction, purification, and perfection of God's people held in captivity within the Babylonian system. This holy understanding will give much greater meaning to the fact that it is one of the seven angels which had poured out the seven last plagues of God's passion, who afterward comes to John and shows him what God has made out of His precious people who formerly dwelt in Babylon. "*And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal*" (Rev. 21:9-11).

Thus God's *wrath* or His *passion* does not stand in conflict with His *love*, but it is paired most intimately with it in Godly harmony. His wrath He pours out upon the false teachings and treacherous systems which hold His people in error and bind them in captivity; however, His love He sheds upon His people which collectively He calls His own, His beloved, His bride! Once the Lord's people are cleansed from their idols and defilement, they will be in a position to shine as His glorious light upon the nations and bring deliverance to a sin-sick and judgment-weary world, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the water covers the sea" (Isa. 11:9). What a detriment the carnal programs of the church systems and the false doctrines of condemnation, judgment, and eternal damnation have been to the cause of Christ!

Only when God's people are cleansed from their carnality and shame can they ever hope to bring deliverance to the world! And that deliverance has to come. It will come through those who have given up their all, those who have lost everything to be joined only to their Lord, and who henceforth live only unto Him. This being accomplished, the pure river of the water of life must flow from the glorious city of God to bring life and healing to the nations. But before God's people can have any part or lot in this great work, they must forsake all and follow the Lamb alone. No one can deliver men from the lies of the antichrist by continuing to embrace and declare those lies himself. This world worships her idols of false religion, materialism, and the flesh. To deliver this world the Lord's people must first get rid of their own golden calves. Jesus must be LORD! And then, "the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And THE IDOLS SHALL HE UTTERLY ABOLISH" (Isa. 2:17-18). That very work is the great purpose of the seven angels with the seven last plagues! Aren't you glad!

Now let us return to our thought about the drying up of the great river Euphrates. Some take it to mean that with the pouring out of this sixth bowl the actual river Euphrates shall be literally dried up, so that nations and armies may pass through it. We must continually keep in mind that we are touching on *spiritual realities*. And the absurdity of the *literal* interpretation of the vision is found in the fact that if the nations wish to gather for a battle, any river on earth would certainly not keep them from doing it, even if it is never dried up! In this day of helicopters, airplanes, rockets, and missiles a river serves absolutely no significance as a barrier against invasion. And therefore, the drying up of the river refers to the removal of all the obstacles and powers that hold God's people in bondage to SPIRITUAL BABYLON! Taken in context that is the subject surrounding the vision under consideration. It signifies that God is now ready to move to break the strength of Babylon's defenses and by a mighty hand and outstretched arm to lead His redeemed people *out of Babylon!* That is the mystery!

Stephen Jones expressed it so well when he wrote, "The sixth bowl prepares the way for the events of the seventh — the battle of Armageddon and the fall of Babylon. In that way, the two are closely linked, and the one becomes the direct cause of the other. While this may not be clear by reading Revelation 16, it is certainly very clear when we see the historical precedent on which this prophecy is based. That precedent is the fall of Babylon during the days of Daniel, when the kings of the east (King Cyrus of Persia and King Darius of Media) diverted the water from the river Euphrates to conquer Babylon. Thus, the drying up of the river Euphrates was the final prophetic act that led to the conquest of ancient Babylon. So also is this being repeated *on a higher level* in Revelation 16! One cannot truly understand the events of the sixth and seventh bowls in Revelation 16 without knowing some of the history of ancient Babylon and how it fell in the days of Daniel."

Let me give you the background. The great kingdom or empire of Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon) was made up of smaller kingdoms that he had conquered. As long as he lived his kingdom was strong; but as soon as he died, it began to fall apart. His son became king in his place, but was soon slain; and one king followed another quickly for some years. The last king was named Nabonidus. He made his son Belshazzar king with himself, and left Belshazzar to rule in the capital city of Babylon, while he was caring for the more distant parts of the kingdom. At that strategic point a new nation was rising to power. Far to the east were the kingdoms of Media and Persia. These two peoples had become one, and were at war with Babylon, under their great leader Cyrus. While Belshazzar was ruling in the city of Babylon, Cyrus and his Persian soldiers approached the outside of the city, around the tremendous walls, and began trying to take the city. These walls were so great and high and wide that the Persian soldiers could not break through them nor scale their heights.

On that very night King Belshazzar was holding in the palace a great feast in honor of his god. On the tables were the golden cups and vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple of the Lord at the time when he conquered the city of Jerusalem. Around the tables were the king, his many wives, and a thousand of his princes and nobles. They did not know that their city was soon to be taken and that their enemies were at the very gates of the city. While they were all drinking wine together, suddenly a strange thing was seen. On the wall appeared a great hand writing letters and words in a language no one could read. Every eye was drawn to the spot, and all saw the fingers moving on the wall and the letters written. The king was filled with fear. His face turned pale and his knees shook. He called for the wise men of Babylon, who were with him in the palace, to tell what the writing meant. He said, "Whoever can read the words on the wall shall be dressed in a purple robe and shall have a chain of gold around his neck, and he shall rank next to King Belshazzar as the third ruler in the kingdom."

But not one of the wise men could read it. At last the queen of Babylon said to Belshazzar, "O king, may you live forever! There is one man who can read this writing, a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, a man whom Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made master of all the wise men. His name is Daniel. Send for him, and he will tell you what these words are and what they mean." Daniel was now an old man; and since the time when Nebuchadnezzar died, he had been no longer in his high place as ruler and chief adviser of the king. They sent for Daniel, and he came. The king said to him, "Are you that Daniel that was brought many years ago by my father to this city? I have heard of you, that the spirit of the holy gods is upon you and that you possess wisdom and knowledge. If you can read this writing upon the wall and tell me

what it means, I will give you a purple robe and a gold chain and a place next to myself as the third ruler in the kingdom.”

Daniel answered the king. “You may keep your rewards yourself and may give your gifts to whom you please, for I do not want them; but I will read to you the writing. O king, the Most High God gave to Nebuchadnezzar this kingdom and great power and glory. But when Nebuchadnezzar became proud and boasted of his greatness, then the Lord took from him his crown and his throne and let him live among the beasts of the field until he knew that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of men. O Belshazzar, you knew all this, yet you have not been humble in heart. You have risen up against the Lord, you have taken the sacred vessels of His house, and have drunk wine in them in honor of your own gods of wood and stone; but you have not praised the Lord God who has given to you your kingdom and your power. For this reason the Most High God has sent this hand to write these words upon the wall. This is the writing — MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. And this is the meaning: Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided.

“MENE: God has counted the years of your kingdom and has brought it to an end.

“TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances and have been found wanting.

“UPHARSIN: Your kingdom is divided and taken from you, and given to the Medes and Persians.”

King Belshazzar could scarcely believe what he heard; but he commanded that the promised reward be given to Daniel. And almost while he was speaking, his end came. For even as Daniel was speaking, King Cyrus had devised a plan to capture the city of Babylon. The walls of the city were too formidable and could not be overcome. But there was a way, another way to gain entrance to the city! The hosts of Cyrus, under cover of darkness, diverted the waters of the mighty Euphrates, turning away the river from its course, leaving a dry river-bed running under the walls of Babylon. In the stillness of the night, almost before the last words of the prophet were spoken, the hosts of Cyrus rushed through the dry river-bed and came upon the palace and there Belshazzar was slain at the table where he had taken the cup of the Lord and had made it the cup of devils!

Throughout the Old Testament the Euphrates river was known as “the great river” (Gen. 15:18; Josh. 1:4). As we have seen, it flowed through historical Babylon and was the life-blood of the city. Even now in modern times rivers are still the life-force to many of the great cities of the world. Spiritually speaking, religious people who serve God out of human zeal, carnal understanding, and soulical power have one river flowing through them, their spiritual head-waters and life-flow — the Euphrates! The Euphrates bespeaks the great head or stream of human reasoning, soulish sentimentality, and traditions and philosophies of men. It has become the channel of the strength and wealth of spiritual Babylon (confusion) in the earth. Just as the rivers of earth have become polluted, so has the mind of man and the religious systems of man. But when we are called out of Babylon, and leave the precincts of the kingdom of Babylon, we are led by the spirit of truth to the river of God’s great kingdom — *the pure River of Life!* It is not far to find, for Jesus has told us where it can be found. “He who believes in me, as the scripture said, **from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.**” When that which is flowing out of us is bringing death and bondage to the people around us, we can be certain that it is not the river of life. If you attend a church meeting and you leave without being quickened by divine life, you can be certain that the river of life was not flowing there for you. Both rivers — the Euphrates and the River of Life — flow from out of our own heart and life. The head-waters of Euphrates flow, on the one hand, out of the *soul*, the *mind*, the *emotion*, and the *desires* of men. The head-waters of the River of Life flow, on the other hand, out of the *spirit*, the very *essence of God* dwelling in the deepest depths of the life. Oh, the mystery of it!

The question follows — How will this Euphrates, the religious river, be dried up? The answer is simple enough — a drought! That is what “drying up” means. Water brings life and refreshment. The lack of water brings misery and death. And turning from the pure water of the River of Life to drink from the polluted waters of the Euphrates also leads to weakness, disease, and death. The more submissive we are to the Lord, the more sensitive to the spirit, the more the Euphrates of our own carnal reasoning and religious inclination is diminished within us. The opposite is true as well. When we fail to trust the spirit, when we

disobey the way of the spirit as it is revealed to us, the more strength we give to the flesh to exert itself in the service of God and the polluted waters of Euphrates are increased. As God's elect we have been enabled by the power of Christ to actively participate in the "drying up" of the waters of Euphrates within ourselves. But for those who are helpless captives in Babylon, God Himself is moving sovereignly to dry up their waters!

Ah, even as the prophets of God are speaking in our day, just as Daniel spoke to King Belshazzar in the Babylon of old, the river of man is being diverted — the river that is being dried up is the flow of "ministry" that is coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The "anointing" of Babylon is drying up, their programs and methods are not working anymore, and God is causing a great emptiness within them and is bringing them to the end of themselves. When the river Euphrates that has nourished the Babylon church system dries up, the way will be made for the kings of the east. But this time it's not just a horde pouring into the land to devastate and conquer it, but now something is coming into the land to purge, purify, renew, and transform it! Oh, yes!

God is even now in the process of "drying up the waters" of the great Euphrates, the river of modern Babylon. God is calling out of Babylon "His people" that have so long been held captive within her walls, within her static creeds, her paganized doctrines, her empty forms, her cold rituals, her lifeless ceremonies, her man-made laws and commandments, her carnal programs, her un-spiritual methods, and her un-scriptural institutions. The Spirit of God shall accomplish such a thorough job of calling His people out "unto Himself," unto a pure and undefiled walk in the Spirit, under the absolute headship of Jesus Christ, that John is able to write, *"Rejoice over her (Babylon), thou heaven (those seated with Christ in the heavenlies), and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers (spiritual praise and worship), and trumpeters (ministries sounding forth a message from God), shall be heard no more at all IN THEE; and the sound of a millstone (the grinding of meal for bread, the living word) shall be heard no more at all IN THEE; and the light of a candle (even the little light of truth that is in Babylon) shall shine no more at all IN THEE; and the voice of the bridegroom (Christ) and of the bride (God's purged and purified people) shall be heard no more at all IN THEE: for by thy sorceries (deceptive doctrines and methods) were all nations deceived"* (Rev. 18:20-23). What a word!

As God removes all this from the midst of Babylon, the water of her river is dried up. All of the blessing of God, all of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, all of the spiritual life and even the effectiveness of her programs, liturgies, preaching, and organization is all dried up, and there is naught but death within her. She is thus left defenseless. Upon the prophetic page we may clearly read the doom of Babylon. That her destruction shall be sudden, violent, and complete is thus graphically stated: *"And a mighty angel (messenger, message, move of God) took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all"* (Rev. 18:18,21). And yet that Babylon is also to undergo a gradual consuming process is shown by the prophet Daniel: *"But the judgment (of the saints) shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end"* (Dan. 7:26). Therefore, be it clearly seen that one of the great outcomes of "the battle of the great day of God Almighty" is the total and utter destruction of religious Babylon!

## THE KINGS OF THE EAST

"And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, *that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*" (Rev. 16:12).

Among the very instructive and deeply significant illustrations given by the Holy Spirit in the visions of John we have the beautiful presentation of the conquest of Babylon by the "kings of the east." The historical backdrop is, of course, the conquest of ancient Babylon by the two kings from the east, Cyrus of Persia and Darius of Media. In the book of Revelation we first meet these "kings of the east" at the time of their anointing as kings in chapter seven. "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw *another angel ascending from the east*, having the seal (kingly

authority) of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have *sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*" (Rev. 7:2-3).

John is still wondering what the four angels holding the four winds can mean when he sees the four mighty sentinels all at once turn their eyes to the east. And behold, another messenger comes ascending out of the east as the morning sun comes, announcing God's *new day*. He comes clothed with light as with a garment; the widespread earth shines bright under his glory; and his voice is as the sound of many waters. The ascending messenger holds in his hand the *seal* of the living God! And, addressing himself to the four mighty sentinels, he speaks to them with a voice that they hear above all the commotions that arise from the earth, and the tempests that rage in the sea, saying to them that they are commanded not to hurt the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until "we" have *sealed* the servants of our God in their foreheads.

There can be no doubt that the seal in the forehead of God's bondslaves is the *mind of Christ*. I have pointed out previously in this series that no man is qualified to *judge the world, rule the world, or restore the world* until he has been sealed in his forehead with the *mind of Christ*. Only the glorious mind of Christ brings the balance between mercy and judgment! It was, then, of this Christ-mind that David prophesied when he said, "Surely His salvation is nigh...*mercy* and *truth* are met together; *righteousness* and *peace* have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:9-10). Mercy and truth are met together — praise God, what a summit meeting! These words are pregnant with meaning. When one contemplates the impossibility of such a union, it is an overwhelming thought that mercy and truth are met together. Truth is harsh, demanding, unrelenting; mercy is lenient, forgiving, lax. Truth condemns and devours; mercy covers and exonerates. Only when one has intermingled the ministries of priest, king, and judge are these incompatible forces MET TOGETHER!

Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED JUDGE, he shares in that omniscient mind that discerns the true nature of all things, and therefore judges righteously. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED KING, he shares in that dominion, that power that is in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED PRIEST, he shares that unlimited outflow of mercy, compassion, and unconditional love that is derived from the heart of our great High Priest. Only one possessed of this three-fold mind of Christ is qualified to control the four winds of judgment that blow upon the earth, the sea, and the trees! Only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with the mind of Christ will be able to *judge* the world in righteousness, *rule* the world with a rod of iron, and at the same time *reconcile* all things to God! All others would, if given a chance, pour out unbridled vengeance, wrath, and damnation upon the rebellious. And in connection with our present meditation upon the "kings of the east" who come to judge Babylon, only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with the mind of Christ can separate between the *system* of Babylon and the *people* held captive within that system, to consume and destroy the *system* while at the same time bringing deliverance, purging, purification, blessing, and glory upon the Lord's *people* within the system! What a marvelous thing!

Now, of this angel it does not say, "...*descending* from the east," but it says, "...*ascending* from the east." In the natural, it is the *sun*, the source of light and day, which *ascends* out of the east. Some translations say, "ascending from the sun rising." This is a true translation. Ezekiel beheld the glory of God coming from the east. "Afterwards he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *came from the way of the east*: and His voice was like the voice of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory" (Eze. 43:1-2). Can you not see the mystery? Is this not a similar description to the angel ascending from the east in the Revelation? This is the Lord Himself arising in His elect! The star which heralded His nativity when the firstborn Son of God came into the earth came from the *east*! The wise men came from the *east* to worship the infant Jesus. They were eminent in the science of astrology, which was considered the greatest science of that day. The east, therefore, was looked to for wise men. The Lord Jesus Himself is called, "the bright and morning star." The morning star is seen in the *east*. His glorious appearing is referred to as the "bright shining which shines *from the east* even unto the west." This "angel" ascends from the sun-rising, the quarter from whence proceeds the light of day which gilds the loftiest mountain-tops and penetrates into the darkest recesses of the valleys.

To the Hebrews the term “east” had a much more extensive signification than with us, to whom its only distinction is that it is the point of the sun’s rising. But beyond this, it was to the Israelites the cardinal point of the compass to which they naturally looked first. Their temple was built facing the east, its principle entrance being in that direction. The most powerful and enlightened kingdoms of the world lay to the east of Judea, and they included them all under the general term, sons or children of the East (that is, Orientals), and their kings were known as the kings of the East. Travelers from these countries would all enter Judea from the east, as did the wise men who came to see the newborn king of Israel. “The kings of the east,” then, employed as a symbol under this sixth bowl, is not intended to signify any persons literally from that quarter of the earth. Forget Japan! Forget China! Such nations have nothing whatever to do with “the revelation of Jesus Christ”! “The east” signifies a spiritual condition and position. It represents the bringing in of spiritual knowledge and understanding, with blessing, dominion, and glory!

The kings of the east are the kings of “the rising of the sun,” or the arising of spiritual illumination, power, and glory. Thank God that we live in the time when the defenses of religious Babylon are being broken through and when God is preparing to move in an unprecedented way to reach the hearts of literally millions of redeemed souls held in bondage there! And like the Israelites of old, when Cyrus entered the ancient Babylon through the dry river-bed of the Euphrates, they shall come out with rejoicing and make their way to Zion again! That the spiritual downfall of Babylon will be a very real “plague” to sectarians there can be no doubt, and it is plainly declared to be such by the voice John heard out of heaven declaring, “*Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord who judgeth her*” (Rev. 18:8).

We see then that the sons of God, as the overcoming body of Christ, are arising in splendor and glory over the earth. They speak with the voice as the sound of many waters! God wants His sons to rise, and we are beginning to rise as in and by the Spirit we ascend from one glory to another in Him in this great day! Yet we also know by the Spirit that our ministry to the earth-realm cannot break through *until* we have been perfectly and completely sealed in our foreheads with the mind of Christ! THIS IS TODAY A PROPHETIC WORD IN THE MOUTHS OF GOD’S SONS! THIS IS THE WORD I PROCLAIM UNTO YOU!

Let us then consider that the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates is for one purpose — that “the way of the kings of the east might be *prepared*.” Ah, the “way” of the kings, the road, the path, the highway, is being PREPARED. There is a preparation! God is making ready a road, a way, a means for the entrance into the earth of the kings of the east, the kings of the sunrise, the kings bringing the dawning of a new day — the sons of God. These sons are coming spiritually from the east — not out of eastern mysticism or New Age philosophies — but right out of the shining glory of the Lord! But notice what had to happen before they make their appearance — a road must be prepared. The preparation of the road indicates a clearing away of obstacles, rocks, trees, rubbish; the raising up of low places, the cutting down of high places, so that the way is made straight with no obstacles, barriers, hindrances, or impediments of any kind. Can you, dear one, think of any obstructions in your life that would hinder the manifestation of sonship in the fullness of the glory of the Lord? Do you need encouragement, do you need correction, do you need deliverance, do you need greater faith or purity, do you need more perfecting, change, and transformation — the faithful dealing of God in these areas bespeaks the preparation of the “way” of the kings of the east! Let God have His way that you may have part in this glorious manifestation of His sons!

Yet — before this work of the preparation of the road, there is something else that has to happen, something has to “dry up.” The river Euphrates is the stream, the flow, the current, the “anointing” of Babylon! This stream has given life to the Babylonian system in each and every facet of its expression. The Euphrates is the life-flow of that which keeps God’s people in bondage! Don’t tell me there is no life-flow, no *spirit* of Babylon, for there truly is. But the river is polluted, contaminated, and corrupted. It bespeaks an impure word, truth mixed with error, life mingled with death, anointing and gifts corrupted by flesh. Oh, yes! Jesus is preached in Babylon, people are saved in Babylon, many are even baptized in the Spirit in Babylon, there are blessings and miracles and answers to prayer in Babylon, but the anointing of the Spirit and the message of the Word of God are so contaminated with error, fleshly means and methods, man’s control and manipulation, that it is unsafe to drink the waters of this river. Because of these polluted waters

spiritual babies are born into the kingdom of God with horrible birth defects, grotesquely deformed, misshapen, gnarled, crippled, lame, bowlegged, and hunchback. The way they view their Father's heart, the way they perceive their Father's plan and purpose for humanity, the future they suppose their Father has planned for them and for the rest of mankind is so grossly distorted that it is obvious that they are either brainwashed by religion or suffering from a spiritual mental illness. Growth in the life of Christ is stunted, the saints are spiritually illiterate, spiritually sick, and many die from the waters of Babylon.

THE SONS OF GOD CAN NEVER BE MANIFESTED IN BABYLON! Something must happen so that the way of the kings of the east can be prepared. The Lord must arise "from the east" upon His called and chosen elect, and the great river Euphrates, the current that runs through Babylon, must be completely dried up, for the "way" of the kings can only begin to be prepared *after* the Euphrates has become a sand box! There is the divine order!

Not only that — the drying up of the Euphrates signals the end of Mystery Babylon the Great. In ancient Babylon in the days of Daniel, it was right while the king of Babylon was desecrating the holy vessels of God — that very night the Medes and the Persians came in and conquered Babylon. How they did it is the wonder of the ages and contains within it the seed-bed of the truth the Holy Spirit would now reveal within our hearts. As we mentioned earlier, the armies of the Medes and Persians diverted the flow of the river Euphrates and **dried it up!** They then walked right into the city on the dry river-bed and burst into the palace where the king and the whole government of Babylon were feasting; they seized King Belshazzar and killed him in the midst of his feast and overthrew the entire government and kingdom of Babylon **in one hour.**

As with ancient Babylon, the type, so with the antitypical Babylon of the Revelation. Hear the word of the Lord! "*And the kings of the earth (leaders of the carnal church systems of man), who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come...for in one hour so great riches is come to nought...and they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city...for in one hour she is made desolate*" (Rev. 18:9-10,17,19). What a picture!

When the hour comes for the final overthrow of that great city, the mystical Babylon, whether it be the Babylonian stronghold within each of us, or the external systems of man, the mystical waters, or what spiritual life and anointing there is within her which has stayed the hand of God up until this time from judging her, are dried up, to make way for the kings, "those who are of the rising of a sun" (Literal Greek). Truly, these kings of the rising sun are those of whom the prophet spoke, "*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but THE LORD SHALL ARISE UPON THEE, and His glory shall be SEEN UPON THEE. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the nations, and that their kings may be brought*" (Isa. 60:1-3, 11-12). And speaking of this great victory over Babylon that comes at the symbolic "battle at Armageddon," John wrote, "*And 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. 17:14).

Cyrus, the commander of the Persians, eventually became the king of the ancient kingdom of Babylon. It was through him that the king of Babylon ceased to exist, God's people Israel were restored to their land, Jerusalem was raised up to glory, and the temple of Yahweh was rebuilt and the priesthood restored. Concerning this great Cyrus, hear the word of the Lord! And as you read these remarkable words think of Israel as *all* the people of God; think of Jerusalem as the bride of Christ; think of ancient Babylon as Mystery Babylon the Great; and think of Cyrus and the armies with him as "the kings of the east" — the manifest sons of God! For truly that is the **spiritual meaning.** "*Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel. Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens*

*alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth for myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, that maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, that maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of His servant, and performeth the counsel of His messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: that saith to the deep, **Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel***" (Isa. 44:23-28; 45:1-3).

The great soul-gripping truth is just this. Cyrus was ordained of God as the type of Christ our Elder Brother, our Forerunner, the Captain of our salvation, the Head of the Christ-body, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the glorious One riding the white horse followed by the armies that are in heaven! Just as Cyrus and his armies diverted the waters of the great river Euphrates causing it to dry up, so shall Christ and His armies, the manifest sons of God, by their word and authority cut off the flow of the river of the mystical Babylon in order to lay siege upon it and destroy it by the power of the Spirit. God is setting the stage in this new kingdom day for the appearance of the kings of the east, He is removing the refuge of lies, and preparing the way for a ministry from the arising of the sun of righteousness with healing in His rays. If by the grace of God this true and holy vision can burst upon your spiritual consciousness and settle and penetrate deeply into your spiritual mind, you will then be able to clearly understand the precise meaning of each of these significant words penned by John on that long-ago Patmos, "*And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*"

Let me tell you something. THIS RIVER EUPHRATES IS ABOUT TO DRY UP! Even now there is less and less reality or effectiveness in any of the church systems of man! Who can deny it? And when the waters do dry up the kings of the east are coming! Jesus is *the King* of the east and the sons of God are *the kings* of the east! Jesus is the dayspring or the dawn from on High, the bright and the morning star. He is the sun of righteousness arising with healing in His rays. He is the light of the world, the resurrection and the life. He is the daystar that arises in our hearts — Christ in us the hope of glory. And because of Him, and because of us, the river of Confusion is going to dry up! Babylon is confusion. The river of Babylon is the flow, the current, the force and power of all religious confusion!

Truer words have never been written than those penned by the late George Hawtin when he wrote, "The church system of our day is in a sorry state, and it with the world is rushing headlong for judgment. *Strong delusion* has settled down upon the people making them willing to believe a lie and grasp almost anything that will attract a crowd, bring a measure of excitement, or add to prestige or prominence. In all the vast church system today there is but a handful of people whose hearts are *crying out for the will of God*. There is but a *tiny remnant* who long to be filled *with the wisdom of God* and who make the *mind of Christ* their daily, hourly quest. *Few there are who sigh and cry because of the abominations and injustices everywhere* and who wait with longing spirits for the judgment of the Lord. But there is a tiny remnant, according to the election of grace, who can say, 'At night upon my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth.' There are still a few who cry, 'Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for Thy love is better than wine.' There is still a handful who pray, 'Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where *Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flocks to rest at noon:* for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of Thy companions?' (S. of S. 1:2,7,8).

"Not only has the *spirit of delusion* settled upon the world, but the *spirit of confusion* is rampant everywhere, manifesting itself in every aspect and walk of life. Confusion reigns daily in the governments of the world. Confusion stalks like an evil specter among the nations, disrupting all their international agreements. Confusion and disorder reign in millions of homes where all authority has gone from the parents and all respect has vanished from the children. Art and music always reflect the temperament and

disposition of the people of the day. Certainly music has returned to the jungle and art to the weird grotesqueness of the kindergarten. Juvenile delinquency has attained such proportions that the Attorney-General of the United States has declared that if it cannot be beaten in ten years *it will be unbeatable*. Confusion reigns among the races and colors of people, among the majorities and minorities. It reigns between labor and management and between nations that have and nations that have not. And by no means least is the confusion that reigns in the church system, which is spiritual Babylon. *Babylon is confusion*” — end quote.

The Lordship of Christ who *is the truth* must march through our land, drying up the entire river of Babylon’s confusion! Oh, yes! All must first become reality *within us* before it can be expressed and ministered *through us*. The spirit of the Babylonish church system has tarnished and dimmed our vision so that many of us still do not see the whole truth. How proud we have become of our deep revelation and our high calling and our vast understanding in spiritual things when in reality we know *nothing yet as we ought to know!* Oh, yes, we are going to destroy Babylon in one divine hour, but first every last vestige of Babylon *must be destroyed in us*. Before we ask God to do something through us and outside of us, let us beseech Him to make the necessary changes *within us* so that *we can do it right!* The sons of God will get it right and keep it right — they are the final, only, ultimate hope for the reconciliation, redemption, deliverance, and transformation of all creation!

Let us return for a moment to the thought that to the Hebrews the primary direction in spiritual things was the east. It is an enlightening study just to look up the word east in the concordance and follow through all the passages in the Bible that speak of the east. No doubt we could spend the next five years just writing about that! What happens when you face east? Eventually you will behold the rising of the sun, the dawn of the morning, the glory of the new day! That is the supreme idea that the east represents. I am reminded of the young man in ancient days who wondered where the sun went after it set. One night he sat up all night pondering this, trying to figure out where the sun was — and finally it *dawned on him*. And that, my beloved, is the revelation and the truth of the east!

At times we experience the setting of the sun in our experience. At one time the Lord arose in our lives and revealed a glory of Himself and blessed and anointed us, but when it had accomplished its purpose and He was through with the revelation and activity of that “day” the sun set. Every day has a morning and an evening, a beginning and an end. Every revival and move of God in the history of God’s dealings has been like that. And every time God gets ready to bring in a new age and put a new revelation and order into place the sun sets on the old. What was once illumination, blessing, and glory becomes darkness, bondage, and death! That is how the walls of Babylon are built — when men settle down around a revelation or an experience after GOD HAS MOVED ON! But if we are watchful, in due time His sun arises on the new! Paul said it this way, “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 3:13-14). Those who continually “follow on to know the Lord” are KINGS OF THE EAST!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY