

An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages

Chapter Five The Pergamean Church Age

Revelation 2:12-17

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith He Which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Pergamos

Pergamum (ancient name) was situated in Mysia, in a district watered by three rivers, by one of which it communicated to the sea. It was described as the most illustrious city in Asia. It was a city of culture with a library second only to that in Alexandria. Yet it was a city of great sin, given over to licentious rites of the worship of Aesculapius, whom they worshipped in the form of a living serpent which was housed and fed in the temple. In this beautiful city of irrigated groves, public walks and parks lived a small group of dedicated believers who were not fooled by the veneer of beauty, and abhorred the Satanic worship that filled the place.

The Age

The Pergamean Age lasted about three hundred years, from 312 to 606 A.D.

The Messenger

Using our God-given rule for choosing the messenger to each age, that is, we choose the one whose ministry most closely approximates that of the first messenger, Paul, we unhesitatingly declare the Pergamean messenger to be Martin. Martin was born in 315 in Hungary. However, his life work was in France where he labored in and around Tours as a bishop. He died in 399. This great saint was the uncle of another wonderful Christian, St. Patrick of Ireland.

Martin was converted to Christ while he was following a career as a professional soldier. It was while he was still engaged in this occupation that a most remarkable miracle occurred. It is recorded that a beggar lay sick in the streets of the town where Martin was posted. The winter cold was more than he could bear for he was poorly clad. No one paid any attention to his needs until Martin came by. Seeing this poor man's plight, but not having an extra garment, he took off his outer cloak, cut it in two with his sword, and wrapped the cloth around the freezing man. He attended him the best he could and went on his way. That night the Lord Jesus appeared unto him in a vision. There He stood, like a beggar, wrapped in the half of Martin's garment. He spoke to him and said, "Martin, though he is only a catechumen has clothed Me with this garment." From that time on Martin sought to serve the Lord with all his heart. His life became a series of miracles manifesting the power of God.

After having left the army and having become a leader in the church, he took a very

militant stand against idolatry. He cut down the groves, broke up the images and pulled down the altars. When confronted by the pagans for his deeds he challenged them in much the same manner that Elijah did the prophets of Baal. He offered to be tied to a tree on its underside so that when it was cut down it would crush him unless God intervened and turned the tree around while it fell. The wily heathen tied him to a tree that was growing on the side of a hill, assured that the natural pull of gravity would cause the tree to so fall as to crush him. Just as the tree began to fall, God swung it around and uphill, contrary to all natural laws. The fleeing heathen were crushed as the tree fell on several of them.

Historians acknowledged that on at least three occasions he raised the dead by faith in Jesus' Name. In one instance he prayed for a dead baby. Like Elisha, he stretched himself upon the babe and prayed. It came back to life and health. On another occasion he was called to help deliver a brother who was being carried away to his death in a time of great persecution. By the time he arrived the poor man was already dead. They had hanged him upon a tree. His body was lifeless and his eyes protruded from the sockets. But Martin took him down, and when he had prayed the man was restored to life and to his rejoicing family.

Martin never did fear the enemy regardless of who it was. Thus he went to personally face a wicked emperor who was responsible for the death of many Spirit-filled saints. The emperor would not grant an audience, so Martin went to see a friend of the emperor, one Damasus, a cruel bishop of Rome. But the bishop, being a nominal Christian of the false vine would not intercede. Martin went back to the palace, but by now the gates had been locked and they would not allow him to enter. He lay down on his face before the Lord and prayed that he be able to get into the palace. He heard a voice bidding him arise. When he did so, he saw the gates open of their own accord. He walked into the court. But the arrogant ruler would not turn his head and speak to him. Martin again prayed. Suddenly a fire came spontaneously from the seat of the throne and the unhappy emperor vacated speedily. Surely the Lord humbles the proud and exalts the lowly.

Such was his ardour in serving the Lord that the devil was mightily aroused. The enemies of truth hired assassins to kill Martin. They came by stealth to his home and as they were about to kill him, he stood erect and bared his throat to the sword. As they leaped forward, the power of God suddenly hurled them back across the room. So overcome were they in that holy and fearful atmosphere that they crawled upon their hands and knees and begged forgiveness for the attempt upon his life.

Too often when men are signally used of the Lord they become lifted up with pride. But not so with Martin. He ever remained the humble servant of God. One night as he was preparing himself to enter the pulpit, a beggar came to his study and asked for some clothing. Martin referred the beggar to his head deacon. The haughty deacon commanded him to leave. Thereupon he went back to see Martin. Martin arose and gave the beggar his own fine robe, and bade the deacon bring him another robe which was of lesser quality. That night as Martin preached the Word, the flock of God saw a soft white glow of light around his person.

Surely this was a great man, a true messenger to that age. Never desirous of aught but to please God he lived a most consecrated life. Never could he be induced to preach until he had first prayed and was in such spiritual frame as to know and deliver the full counsel of God by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Often he would keep the people waiting while he prayed for full assurance.

Just to know about Martin and his mighty ministry might make one think that the persecution of the saints had abated. Not so. They were still being destroyed by the devil through the instrumentality of the wicked. They were burned at the stake. They were nailed to logs face down and wild dogs were turned loose upon them, so that the dogs would tear away the flesh and bowels, leaving the victims to die in terrible torture. Babies were ripped from expectant mothers and thrown to the hogs. Women's breasts were cut away, and they were forced to stand erect while each heart throb poured out the blood until they crumpled in death. And the tragedy was even greater to think about when one realizes that this was not solely the work of the heathen, but many times it was caused by so-called Christians who felt that they did God a favor in exterminating these loyal soldiers of the cross who stood for the Word and obedience to the Holy Spirit.

John 16:2,

"They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

Matthew 24:9,

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My Name's sake."

By signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit, Martin was truly vindicated as the messenger to that age. But not only was he gifted by a great ministry, he himself was forever true to the Word of God. He fought organization. He withstood sin in high places. He championed the truth in word and deed and lived out a full life of Christian victory.

A biographer wrote of him on this wise. "No one ever saw him angry, or disturbed, or grieving, or laughing. He was always one and the same, and seemed something beyond mortal, wearing on his countenance a sort of celestial joy. Never was anything on his lips but Christ, never anything in his heart but piety, peace and pity. Often did he weep for the sins even of those his detractors, who when he was quiet and absent attacked him with viperous lips and poisoned tongues. Many hated him for virtues they themselves did not possess and could not imitate; and alas! his bitterest assailants were bishops."

The Salutation

Revelation 2:12b

"These thing saith He Which hath the sharp sword with the two edges."

The message to the third church age is about to come forth. The third scene of this unfolding drama of "Christ in the midst of His church" is about to be revealed. With trumpet-like voice, the Spirit presents the Matchless One, "He Which hath the sharp sword with the two edges!" How vastly different is this presentation from the time when Pilate introduced the Lamb of God, clothed in mocking robes of purple, smitten and thorn crowned, saying, "Behold your King!" Now, regal robed and crowned with glory stands the risen Lord, 'Christ, the power of God.'

In these words, 'He Which hath the sharp sword with two edges' lies another revelation of Godhead. In the Ephesian Age, you will recall, He was set forth as the Unchanging God. In the Smyrnaean Age we saw Him as the ONE TRUE God and beside Him there was no other. Now in this Pergamean Age there is a further revelation of His Godhead, set forth by His association with the sharp two edged sword, which is the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12

"For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Ephesians 6:17

"And take the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God."

Revelation 19:13 & 15a,

"And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His Name is called the Word of God. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword."

John 1:1-3,

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Same (Word) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made which was made."

I John 5:7,

"For there are three that bear record in Heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE."

Now we can see His association with the Word. HE IS THE WORD. That is Who He is. THE WORD IN HIS NAME.

In John 1:1 where it says *"In the beginning was the Word,"* the root from which we get our translation for 'Word' is 'Logos' which means 'the thought or concept.' It has the double meaning of 'thought' and 'speech.' Now a 'thought expressed' is a 'word', 'or words.' Isn't that wonderful and beautiful? John says the concept of God was expressed

in Jesus.

And Paul says the very same thing in Hebrews 1:1-3,

"God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, (Logos) Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

God became expressed in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus was the Express Image of God.

Again in John 1:14,

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

The very substance of God was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. The great Spirit-God unto Which no man could approach, Which no man had seen or could behold was now tabernacled in flesh and dwelt among men, expressing the fullness of God to men.

John 1:18,

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

God, Who on occasions would manifest His presence by the cloud or pillar of fire that struck fear in the hearts of men; this God, Whose heart characteristics were made known only by revelation of words through the prophets, now became Emmanuel (God with us) declaring Himself. The word, 'declare,' is taken from the Greek root which we often interpret as exegesis, which means to thoroughly explain and make clear. That is what the Living WORD, Jesus, did. He brought God to us, for He was God.

He revealed God to us with such perfect clarity that John could say about Him in I John 1:1-3

"That Which was from the beginning, Which we have heard, (Logos means speech) Which we have seen with our eyes, Which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life;

(For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life, Which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

That Which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

When God was truly revealed, He was manifested in the flesh. *"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."*

Now back in Hebrews 1:1-3 we made note that Jesus was the express image of God. He was God expressing Himself in man to man. But there is something else to note in these verses, especially verses one and two.

"God Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."

I want you to notice here in the margin of your Bible you will see a correction. The word, 'by' is not a correct translation. It should be 'IN.' Not 'by.' It then reads correctly, *"God spake in times past unto the fathers IN the prophets by means of the Word".*

I Samuel 3:21b,

"For the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord."

That brings out I John 5:7 perfectly, "The Spirit and Word are ONE." Jesus revealed the Father. The Word revealed the Father. Jesus was the Living Word. Praise God, today He is still that Living Word.

When Jesus was upon earth He said,

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." (John. 14:10)

Here it is most evidently set forth that the perfect manifestation of God in the Son was by the indwelling Spirit manifesting in Word and works. That is exactly what we have

been teaching all along. When the bride will get back to being a Word bride, she will produce the very works that Jesus produced. The Word is God. The Spirit is God. They are all ONE. One cannot work apart from the other. If one truly has the Spirit of God, he will have the Word of God. That is how it was with the prophets. They had the indwelling Spirit of God and the Word came to them. That is how it was with Jesus. In Him was the Spirit without measure and the Word came to Him. (Jesus both began to do and TEACH. My doctrine is not My own, but the Father's That sent Me. Acts 1:1, John. 7:16.)

Remember now, John the Baptist was both the prophet and the messenger of his day. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. When he was baptizing in Jordan the Word of God (Jesus) came to him. The Word always comes to the truly Spirit-filled. That is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Ghost. That is what Jesus said would be the evidence. He said, "And I will pray the Father and He will send you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive." Now we know what Truth is.

"Thy Word is Truth." (John 17:17b)

Again in John 8:43,

"Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My Word."

Did you notice that Jesus said that the world could not receive the Holy Ghost? Well, in this verse I just read, neither could they receive the Word. Why? Because the Spirit and the Word are one, and if you have the Holy Spirit as the prophets, the Word would come to you. You would receive it.

In John 14:26,

"But the Comforter, Which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall TEACH you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Here again we find the Word coming because of the Spirit of God.

Again in John 16:13

"Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth (Word) is come, He will guide you into all truth, (Thy Word is truth), and He shall not speak of Himself: but whatsoever He shall hear (Word of God), that shall He speak (Word): and He will show you things to come." (Spirit bringing the Word of Prophecy).

I want you to note very carefully that Jesus did not say that the evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost was speaking in tongues, interpreting, prophesying, or shouting and dancing. He said the evidence would be that you would be in the TRUTH; you would be in the Word of God for your age. Evidence has to do with receiving that Word.

In I Corinthians 14:37,

"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Now see that. The proof of the indwelling Spirit was to acknowledge and FOLLOW what God's prophet gave for his age as he set the church in order. Paul had to say to those who claimed another revelation, (verse 36)

"What, came the Word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?"

The evidence of a Spirit-filled Christian believer is not to produce the truth (Word), but to receive the truth (Word), and to believe and obey it.

Have you noticed in Revelation 22:17

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come,—And let him that heareth say, Come."

See, the bride speaks the same Word as does the Spirit. She is a Word bride proving she has the Spirit. In every church age we hear these words,

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The Spirit gives the Word. If you have the Spirit you will hear the Word for your age, as those true Christians took the Word for their age.

Did you get that last thought? I repeat, every church age ends with the same admonition. "He that hath an ear, let him (an individual) hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." The Spirit gives the Word. He has the truth for each age. Each age has had its own elect, and that elect group always 'heard the word,' and received it, proving

they had the Seed in them.

John 8:47,

"And he that is of God heareth God's Words. Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

They refused the Word (Jesus) and His Words for their days, but the true seed received the Word because they were of God.

"And ALL Thy children shall be taught of God." (Holy Spirit)

Isaiah 54:13.

Jesus said the same thing in John 6:45. Being ONE WITH THE WORD proves whether you are of God and Spirit-filled. No other criterion.

But what are tongues and interpretation and the other gifts? They are manifestations. That is what the Word teaches.

Read it in I Corinthians 12:7,

"But the MANIFESTATION of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

Then Paul names those manifestations.

Now comes this very good question I know that you are all anxious to ask. Why isn't the manifestation an evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost, because you surely could not manifest the Holy Ghost unless you truly were Spirit-filled? Now I wish I could say that is right, because I don't like to hurt people or walk on their doctrine; but I wouldn't be a true servant of God if I didn't tell you the whole counsel of God. That is right, is it not?

Just let us take a little look at Balaam. He was religious, he worshipped God. He understood the proper method of sacrificing and approaching unto God, but he was not a True Seed prophet for he took the wages of unrighteousness, and worst of all he led the people of God into sins of fornication and idolatry. Yet who would dare to deny that the Spirit of God manifested through him in one of the most beautiful portions of absolutely accurate prophecy the world has ever seen? But he never had the Holy Ghost.

Now then, what do you think of Caiaphas, the high priest? The Bible says that he prophesied the kind of death the Lord should die. We all know there is no record of him being a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led man like dear old Simeon or that sweet saint called Anna. Yet he had a genuine manifestation of the Holy Ghost. We can't deny that. So where is manifestation as an evidence? It isn't there. If you are truly filled with the Spirit of God you will have the evidence of the WORD in your life.

Let's show you how deeply I feel and understand this truth by a revelation God gave me. Now before I tell it, I want to say this. Many of you people believe me to be a prophet. I don't say that I am. You said it. But we both know that the visions God gives me NEVER FAIL. NOT ONCE. If anyone can prove a vision ever failed I want to know about it. Now that you follow me this far here is my story.

Many years ago when I first came across the Pentecostal people, I was in one of their camp meetings where there was much manifestations of tongues, interpretation of tongues, and prophecy. Two preachers in particular were engaged in this kind of speaking more than any of the other brethren. I thoroughly enjoyed the services and was truly interested in the various manifestations, for they had a ring of reality to them. It was my earnest desire to learn all that I could about these gifts, so I decided to talk to the two men about them. Through the gift of God resident in me, I sought to know the spirit in the first man, whether he was truly of God or not. After a brief conversation with that sweet, humble brother, I knew that he was a genuine, solid Christian. He was real. The next young man was not at all like the first one. He was boastful and proud, and as I spoke to him a vision moved across my eyes and I saw that he was married to a blond lady but was living with a brunette and had two children by her. If ever there was a hypocrite, he was one.

Now let me tell you, I was shocked. How could I not be? Here were two men, one of which was a real believer and the other was a sinful impersonator. YET BOTH WERE MANIFESTING GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT. I was troubled by this confusion. I left the meeting to seek God for the answer. I went alone to a secret place and there with my Bible I prayed and waited on God for the answer. Not knowing just what portion of Scripture to read I casually opened the Bible to some place in Matthew. I read for awhile and then laid the Bible down. In a moment a wind blew into the room and turned the pages of the

Bible to Hebrews, chapter six. I read it through and was particularly impressed by those strange verses,

Hebrews 6:4-9,

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

But beloved we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."

I closed the Bible, laid it down, and meditated awhile and prayed some more. I still had no answer. I again opened the Bible aimlessly but did not read. Suddenly the wind blew into the room again, and once more the pages turned to Hebrews 6 and remained there as the wind ceased. I read those words over again, and when I did, then came the Spirit of God into the room and I beheld a vision. I saw in the vision a man dressed in the purest white who went forth into a freshly plowed field and sowed grain. It was a bright day, and the sowing was done in the morning. But late at night after the sower in white had gone, a man in black came and stealthily sowed some more seed amongst that which the man in white had sown. The days went by—the sun and rain blessed the ground; and one day there appeared the grain. How fine it was. But a day later appeared the tares.

The wheat and tares grew together. They partook of the same nourishment out of the same soil. They drank in the same sun and rain.

Then one day the skies turned to brass, and the plants all began to droop and to die. I heard the wheat lift their heads and cry to God for rain. The tares also lifted up their voices and pleaded for rain. Then the skies darkened and the rain came, and again the wheat, now full of strength lifted up their voices and cried in adoration, "Praise the Lord". And to my wonderment I heard the revived tares also look up and say, "Hallelujah!".

Then I knew the truth of the camp meeting and the vision. The parable of the Sower and the Seed, the sixth chapter of Hebrews, and the evident manifestation of Spiritual gifts in a mixed audience—all became wonderfully clear. The sower in white was the Lord. The sower in black was the devil. The world was the field. The seeds were people, elect and reprobates. Both partook of the same nourishment, water and sun. Both prayed. Both received help from God, for He maketh His sun and rain to fall on both good and evil. And though they both had the same wonderful blessing and both had the same wonderful manifestations, THERE WAS STILL THAT ONE GREAT DIFFERENCE, THEY WERE OF DIFFERENT SEED.

Here also was the answer to Matthew 7:21-23

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father Which is in heaven.

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

Jesus does not deny that they did the mighty works that only the Holy Ghost can accomplish by way of men. But He did deny ever knowing them. These weren't backsliders. These were wicked, unregenerate, reprobates. These were the seed of Satan.

And there it is. You CAN'T claim that manifestation is the evidence of being Spirit-born, Spirit-filled. No sir. I will admit that true manifestation is the evidence of the Holy Spirit doing mighty acts, but it is NOT the evidence of the individual being Spirit-filled, even though that individual has an abundance of those manifestations.

The evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost today is just the same as it was back in the day of our Lord. It is receiving the Word of truth for the day in which you live. Jesus never did stress the importance of the Works as He did the Word. He knew that if the people got the WORD the works would follow. That is Bible.

Now Jesus knew that there was going to be a terrible drift away from the Word in the Pergamean Age which was as yet two hundred years off from the Patmos vision. He knew that drift would cause them to go into the Dark Ages. He knew that the way man originally got away from God was by first leaving the Word. If you leave that Word, you have left God. Thus He is presenting Himself to the church at Pergamos, and indeed to all churches of all ages, "I am the Word. If you want Deity in your midst, then welcome and receive the Word. Don't ever let anyone or anything get between you and that Word. This which I am giving you (the Word) is a revelation of Myself. I AM THE WORD. Remember that!"

I wonder if we are sufficiently impressed with the Word in our midst. Let me give you a thought here. How do we pray? We pray in Jesus Name don't we? Every prayer is in His Name or there isn't any answer.

Yet in I John 5:14, we are told,

"This is the confidence that we have in Him that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

Now we ask, "What is the will of God?" There is only ONE WAY to know His will and that is by the WORD OF GOD.

Lamentations 3:37,

"Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass when the Lord commandeth it not?"

There it is. If it isn't in the Word you can't have it. So we can't ask unless it's in the Word, and we can't petition or ask unless it is in His Name. There it is again. JESUS (the Name) is the WORD (will). You can't separate God and the Word. They are ONE.

Now then, this Word He has left behind on the printed page is a part of Him when you accept it by faith into a Spirit-filled life. He said that His Word was life. John 6:63b. But that is exactly what He is:

John 14:6,

"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Romans 8:9b

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His."

There it is, He is Spirit and He is Life. That is exactly what the Word is; that is exactly what Jesus is. He is the Word. So when a Spirit-born, Spirit-filled man in faith takes that Word into his heart and places it upon his lips, why that is the same as Deity speaking. Every mountain has to go. Satan cannot stand before that man.

If the church, way back there in that third age had only held on to the revelation of the living Word in their midst, the power of God would not have faded as it did in those Dark Ages. And right today, when the church returns to the Word in faith, we can say without doubt that the glory of God and the wonderful acts of God will be in her midst again.

One night as I was seeking the Lord, the Holy Spirit told me to pick up my pen and write. As I grasped the pen to write, His Spirit gave me a message for the church. I want to bring it to you... It has to do with the Word and the bride.

"Here is what I am trying to say to you. The law of reproduction is that each specie brings forth after its own kind, even according to Genesis 1:11, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, and the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." Whatever life was in the seed came forth into a plant and thence into fruit. The very same law applies to the church today. Whatever seed started the church will come forth and be like the original seed because it is the same seed. In these last days the true Bride Church (Christ's seed) will come to the Headstone, and she will be the super church, a super race, as she nears Him. They in the bride will be so much like Him that they will even be in His very image. This is in order to be united with Him. They will be one. They will be the very manifestation of the Word of the living God. Denominations cannot produce this (wrong

seed). They will produce their creeds and their dogmas, mixed with the Word. This mongrelizing brings forth a hybrid product.

The first son (Adam) was the spoken seed-Word of God. He was given a bride to reproduce himself. That is why the bride was given to him, to reproduce himself; to produce another son of God. But she fell. She fell by hybridization. She caused him to die.

The second Son (Jesus), also a spoken Seed-Word of God was given a bride like as was Adam. But before He could marry her, she also had fallen. She, like Adam's wife, was put to the test whether she would believe the Word of God and live, or doubt the Word and die. She doubted. She left the Word. She died.

From a little group of the true seed of the Word, God will present Christ with a beloved bride. She is a virgin of His Word. She is a virgin because she knows no man-made creeds or dogmas. By and through the members of the bride will be fulfilled all that was promised of God to be made manifest in the virgin.

The word of promise came to the virgin Mary. But that Word of promise was He, Himself, to be made manifest. God was made manifest. He, Himself, acted at that time and fulfilled His own Word of promise in the virgin. It was an angel that had brought her the message. But the angel's message was the Word of God. Isaiah 9:6. He fulfilled at that time all that was written of Him because she accepted His Word to her.

The members of the virgin bride will love Him, and they will have His potentials, for He is their head, and all power belongs to Him. They are subject to Him as the members of our bodies are subject to our heads.

Notice the harmony of the Father and the Son. Jesus never did anything until it was first showed Him by the Father. John 5:19. This harmony is now to exist between the Groom and His bride. He shows her His Word of life. She receives it. She never doubts it. Therefore, nothing can harm her, not even death. For if the seed be planted, the water will raise it up again. Here is the secret of this. The Word is in the bride (as it was in Mary). The bride has the mind of Christ for she knows what He wants done with the Word. She performs the command of the Word in His name for she has "thus saith the Lord." Then the Word is quickened by the Spirit and it comes to pass. Like a seed that is planted and watered, it comes to full harvest, serving its purpose.

Those in the bride do only His will. No one can make them do otherwise. They have 'thus saith the Lord' or they keep still. They know that it has to be God in them doing the works, fulfilling His own Word. He did not complete all His work while in His earthly ministry so now He works in and through the bride.

She knows that, for it was not yet time for Him to do certain things that He must now do. But He will now fulfill through the bride that work which He left for this specific time.

Now let us stand like Joshua and Caleb. Our promised land is coming in sight even as theirs did. Now Joshua means "Jehovah Saviour", and he represents the end-time leader that will come to the church even as Paul came as the original leader. Caleb represents those that stayed true with Joshua. Remember, God had started Israel as a virgin with His Word. But they wanted something different. So did the last day church. Notice how God did not move Israel, or let her go into the promised land until it was His own appointed time. Now the people might have put pressure on Joshua, the leader, and said, "The land is ours, let's go and take it. Joshua, you are all through, you must have lost your commission, you don't have the power you used to have. You used to hear from God and know the will of God, and act quickly. Something is wrong with you." But Joshua was a God-sent prophet and he knew the promises of God, so he waited for them. He waited for a clear cut decision from God and when the time came to move, God placed the full leadership in Joshua's hands because he had stayed with the Word. God could trust Joshua but not the others. So it will repeat in this end day. The same problem, the same pressures.

Take the example we see in Moses. This mighty anointed prophet of God had a peculiar birth, being born at the right time for the deliverance of Abraham's seed from Egypt. He never stayed in Egypt to argue Scripture with them, nor fuss at the priests. He went to the wilderness until the people were ready to receive him. God called Moses to the wilderness. The waiting was not on Moses' part but because of the people who were not ready to receive him. Moses thought the people would understand but they did not.

Then there is Elijah to whom the Word of the Lord came. When he got through preaching the truth and that group back there that is the forerunner of the American Jezebel group would not receive the Word, God called him off the field and plagued that generation for rejecting the prophet and the message that God had given. God called him to the wilderness and he would not come out even for the king. Those who tried to persuade him to do so, died. But God spoke to His faithful prophet by vision. Out of hiding he came and brought back the Word to Israel.

Then came John the Baptist, Christ's faithful forerunner, the mighty prophet for his day. He did not go to his father's school, nor the school of the Pharisees—he went to no denomination, but out to the wilderness called there by God. There he stayed until the Lord sent him out with the message, 'The Messiah is at hand.'

Now let us take a Scriptural warning here. Was it not in the days of Moses whom God had vindicated that Korah rose up and withstood that mighty prophet? He disputed with Moses and claimed that he had as much from God to lead the people and that others shared in the Divine revelation as well as did Moses. He denied the authority of Moses. Now the people back there, after they had heard the true Word and were well acquainted with the fact that a true prophet was vindicated of God, I say those people fell for Korah and his gainsayings. Korah was not a Scriptural prophet but the people in great numbers with their leaders went for him. How like the evangelists today with their golden calf schemes like Korah's. They look good to the people as Korah looked good then. They have blood on their foreheads, oil on their hands and balls of fire on the platform. They allow women preachers, let women cut their hair, wear slacks and shorts, and bypass the Word of God for their own creeds and dogmas. That shows what kind of seed is in them. But not all the people turned on Moses and left the Word of God. No. The elect stayed with him. The same is happening again today. Many are leaving the Word but some are staying with it. But remember the parable of the wheat and tares. The tares have to be bundled for burning. These apostate churches are getting bound closer and closer together, ready for the fires of God's judgment. But the wheat is going to be gathered to the Master.

Now I want you to be very careful here and see this. God has promised that at the end time Malachi 4 is going to be fulfilled. It has to be for it is the Spirit-quickened Word of God spoken by the prophet Malachi. Jesus referred to it. It is just before Christ comes the second time. By the time Jesus comes all Scripture must be fulfilled. The Gentile dispensation will be in its last church age when that messenger of Malachi comes. He will be right with the Word. He will take the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. He will start at the serpent's seed and carry on to the messenger in the latter rain. But he will be rejected by the denominations.

He has to be for that is history repeating itself from the time of Ahab. Israel's history under Ahab is happening right here in America where the prophet of Malachi appears. As Israel left Egypt to worship in freedom, pushed out the natives, raised up a nation with great leaders like David etc., and then put an Ahab on the throne with a Jezebel behind him to direct, so have we done the very same in America. Our forefathers left for this land to worship and live in freedom. They pushed back the natives and took over the land. Mighty men like Washington and Lincoln were raised up but after awhile other men of such poor caliber succeeded these worthy men that soon an Ahab was set in the presidential chair with a Jezebel behind him to direct him. It is at such a time as this that the messenger of Malachi must come. Then in the latter rain will come a Mount Carmel showdown. Watch this carefully now to see it in the Word. John was the forerunner of Malachi 3. He planted the former rain and was rejected by the organizations of his day. Jesus came and had a Mount Transfiguration show down. The second forerunner of Christ will sow for the latter rain. Jesus will be the showdown between the denominations and creeds, for He will come to back up His Word and take His bride in the rapture. The first showdown was Mount Carmel; the second was the Mount Transfiguration, and the third will be Mount Zion.

The strange behaviour of Moses, Elijah, and John withdrawing from the people into seclusion left many confused. They did not realize that it was because their messages had been rejected. But the seed had been sown, the planting was over. Judgment was next. They had served their purpose as a sign to the people, so judgment was next.

I believe according to Revelation 13:16 that the bride will have to stop preaching for the beast is demanding the mark in the hand or forehead if permission to preach be

granted. Denominations will take the mark, or be forced to quit preaching. Then the Lamb will come for His bride and judge the great harlot.

Now remember that Moses was born for a certain work, but he could not do that work until he had received the gifts which would enable him to do the work. He had to go out in the desert and wait there; God had an appointed time. There was to be a certain Pharaoh on the throne, and the people had to be crying for the bread of life, before God could send him back. This is true for our day.

But what do we have in this our day? Multitudes are working signs until we have a generation of sign seekers that know little or nothing about the Word, or a true move of the Spirit of God. If they see blood, oil and fire they are happy; it matters not what is in the Word. They will support any sign, even unscriptural ones. But God has warned us about that. He said in Matthew 24 that in the last days the two spirits would be so close together that only the very elect could tell them apart, for they alone would not be deceived.

How can you tell the spirits apart? Just give them the Word test. If they don't speak that Word, they are of the evil one. As the evil one deceived the first two brides, he will try to deceive the bride of this last day, by trying to get her to hybridize herself through creeds, or just plainly turning from the Word to any sign that suits her. But God never placed signs ahead of the Word. Signs follow the Word, as when Elijah told the woman to bake a cake for him first, according to the Word of the Lord. When she did as the Word said, the proper sign came. Come to the Word first and then watch the miracle. The seed Word is energized by the Spirit.

How can any messenger sent from God believe only a part of the Word and deny some of it? The true prophet of God in this last day will proclaim the whole Word. Denominations will hate him. His words may be as harsh as John the Baptist who called them vipers. But the predestinated will hear and be ready for the rapture. The Royal Seed of Abraham, with like faith as Abraham's will hold to the Word with him, for they are predestinated together.

The last day messenger will appear in God's appointed time. It is the end time now as all know, for Israel is in the homeland. Any time now he will come according to Malachi. When we see him, he will be dedicated to the Word. He will be indicated (pointed out in the Word. Revelation 10:7.) and God will vindicate his ministry. He will preach the truth as did Elijah and be ready for the Mount Zion showdown.

Many will misunderstand him because they have been taught Scripture in a certain way which they consider truth. When he comes against that, they will not believe. Even some true ministers will misunderstand the messenger because so much has been called God's truth by deceivers.

But this prophet will come, and as the forerunner to the first coming cried, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," even so will he no doubt cry out, "Behold the Lamb of God coming in glory." He will do this, for even as John was the messenger of truth to the elect, so is this one the last messenger to the elect and Word-born bride."

Christ Eulogizes The Church

Revelation 2:13

"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

"I know thy works." These are the identical words uttered to each of the seven messengers relative to the people of God in each age. As they are spoken to the two vines (true and false) they will bring joy and gladness to the hearts of one group, but they ought to strike terror in the hearts of the other. For though we are saved by grace, apart from works, true salvation will bring forth works, or deeds that will please God.

I John 3:7,

"Little children, let no man deceive you; he that DOETH (worketh) righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous."

If this verse means anything at all, it means that what a man DOES he IS.

James 3:11,

"Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?"

Romans 6:2,

"How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?"

Matthew 12:33-35

"Either make the tree good and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit.

O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

Now if a man is born of the Word (*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever.* I Peter 1:23) he will produce the Word. The fruit or works of his life will be a product of the kind of seed or life that is in him. His works, therefore will be Scriptural. Oh, what an indictment this truth is going to be against the Pergamean Age. There stands that Matchless One, and in His hand the sharp sword with the two edges, the Word of God. And that Word will judge us in the last day. In fact the Word is judging even now, for it is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It cuts asunder the carnal from the spiritual. It makes us living epistles read and known of all men to the glory of God.

"I know thy works." If a man fears that he might not please God, then let him fulfill the Word. If a man wonders if he will hear those words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," let him fulfill the Word of God in his life, and assuredly he will hear those words of praise. The Word of truth was the criterion then; it is the criterion now. There isn't another standard; there isn't another plumb line. As the world is going to be judged by one Christ Jesus, even so it is going to be judged by the Word. If a man wants to know how he is making out, let him do as James suggested: "Look into the mirror of God's Word."

"I know thy works." As He stood there with the Word, examining their lives in the light of the blue print He had laid out for them, He must have been pleased in a goodly measure, for they, like the others who had gone on before, were enduring the persecution of the unjust and still joyfully cleaving unto the Lord. Difficult though it was at times to serve the Lord, yet they served Him and worshipped Him in Spirit and in truth. But with the false vine it was not so. Alas, they had repudiated the life that is built upon the Word and were now going further and further away from the truth. Their actions bore witness to the depths to which they had sunk.

Thou Holdest Fast My Name

"To whom can we go? Thou alone hast the words of eternal life!" They held fast then; they were holding fast now, but not with fatalistic dread as men who live out barren lives. They were holding fast in His strength, in the assurance of the Spirit that they were one in Him. Theirs was the sure knowledge of sins forgiven and they bore the name of 'Christian' in testimony to it. They knew and loved that Name that was above every name. Their knees had bowed to that Name. Their tongues had confessed to it. Whatsoever they did, they did it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus. They had named that Name and departed from evil, and having taken their stand they were now prepared to die for that Name, being assured of a better resurrection.

Take the Name of Jesus with you,

Child of sorrow and of woe.

It will joy and comfort give you.

Take it then where ere you go.

Precious Name, O how sweet,

Hope of earth and joy of heaven.

Already in the second century those words "Father, Son and Holy Ghost" had spelled out 'Trinity' to many, and the polytheistic idea of three Gods had become a doctrine in the false church. It would not be long until the Name was taken away, as indeed it was in this age, and in its stead the titles of the ONE GREAT GOD would be substituted for the NAME, Lord Jesus Christ. While the many apostatized and embraced a trinity and

baptized using the titles of Godhead, the Little Flock still baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ and so held to the truth.

With so many dishonoring God, turning Him into three gods, and changing His gracious Name to titles, one would wonder if the signs and wonders that attend such a great Name would still be visited amongst the people. Indeed those signs were mightily and wonderfully manifested, though certainly not in the false vine. Men like Martin were greatly used and God bore them witness both by signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost. That Name was still effectual as it always has been and ever will be where the saints honor Him through the Word and faith.

Thou Hast Not Denied My Faith

In Acts 3:16 when Peter was asked how the mighty miracle had taken place upon the crippled one at the Gate Beautiful, he explained it on this wise, *"And His (Jesus) Name through faith in His (Jesus) Name hath made this man (former cripple) strong, yea, the faith which is by (from) Him (Jesus) hath given him (the man) this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." See, there it is. Jesus' Name, and Jesus' Faith brought about the miracle. Peter did not claim it was his own human faith any more than he claimed that it was his own name. He said that Jesus' Name used in the faith which is from Jesus performed that great work. This faith is what the Lord was speaking about in Revelation 2:13. It was HIS faith. It was not faith IN Him. But it was HIS OWN faith that He had given to the believers.*

Romans 12:3

"According as God hath dealt to every man (according to verse 1 the men are BRETHREN) the measure of faith."

Ephesians 2:8,

"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that (Faith) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

And it also says in James 2:1,

"My brethren (notice he, too, is talking to BRETHREN) have not the faith OF (not in) our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons."

In this Pergamean Age where men were humanizing salvation, having turned from the truth that "Salvation is of the Lord,"—having cast aside the doctrine of election and opened wide the church door and their fellowship to any and all who subscribed to their tenets (never mind the Word), in this age of rapid degradation, there were still the few who had the measure of that faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not only used that faith in acts of power but withstood those who dared to say that they were saved simply on the grounds of joining a church. They knew that no man could truly believe unto eternal life and the righteousness of God apart from the measure of the faith of the Lord Jesus, Himself. As today's church is filled with mental believers who endorse the virgin birth, the shed blood, going to church and taking communion, and are not reborn at all, even so in that third age was the same problem. Human faith wasn't enough then and it is not enough now. It takes the very faith of the Son of God to drop into a man's heart so that he can receive the Lord of glory into the temple not made with hands.

This was a living faith. "I live by the faith of the Son of God." Paul did not say that he lived by faith IN the Son of God. It was the faith of the Son of God that had given him life and kept him living in Christian victory.

No, they had not denied that salvation was supernatural from start to finish. They kept alive the truth of His Name and His Faith and they were blessed by the Lord and accounted worthy of Him.

Antipas My Faithful Martyr

There is no other record in the Word or in any profane history concerning this brother. But surely there need not be. It is more than enough that he was fore-known and known of the Lord. It is more than enough to see his faithfulness unto the Lord recorded in the living Word. He was a Christian. He had the Name of Jesus. He had the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and he was amongst those who lived by it. He had responded to the words of James, "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons." Full of the Holy Ghost and faith as was Stephen, he respected no one, he feared no one; and when death was pronounced upon all who would take that Name and walk in the faith of

Jesus Christ he took his stand with those who would not turn back. Yes, he died, but like Abel, he obtained a witness from God (his name is written in the Word), and though dead, his voice still speaks in the pages of God's Divine Record. Another faithful martyr was carried to his rest. But Satan did not triumph then, even as he did not triumph when he killed the Prince of Peace, for as Satan was despoiled at the cross, even so now will the blood of Antipas cry out to hundreds more who will take up their crosses and follow Him.

Where Satan's Seat Is

The reason that this is part of the eulogy of the Spirit is because these brave soldiers of the cross were overcoming Satan right in the midst of his own throne room. They were winning the battle through the Name and Faith of Jesus right in the camp of the leaders of darkness. What a tremendous commendation. Like the mighty men of David who invaded the camp of the enemy to bring David thirst-quenching water, so these giants of faith invaded the realm of Satan's earthly stronghold, and by preaching and exhorting brought the water of salvation to those who lived under the shadow of death.

Now as much as these words concerning the throne and realm of Satan are a part of God's praise for His elect, they actually set the stage for the denouncement of the evil that has gained supremacy in the church.

PERGAMOS: Satan's Throne and Dwelling Place. To many, these phrases have been merely pictorial rather than truly historical. But they are surely real and history bears that out. Pergamos was indeed the throne and dwelling place of Satan. It happened on this wise:

Pergamos was not originally the place where Satan (as concerning human affairs) dwelt. Babylon has always been literally and figuratively his headquarters. It was in the city of Babylon that Satanic worship had its origin. Genesis 10:8-10, *"And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."*

Genesis 11:1-9,

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

And it came to pass as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime they had for mortar.

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

Babel is the original name for Babylon. It means confusion. It was literally started by Cush, the son of Ham, but was brought to a kingdom of power and grandeur under his son, Nimrod, the mighty hunter. Nimrod, according to the Genesis eleven account and also according to profane history, set out to accomplish three things. He wanted to build a strong nation, which he did. He wanted to propagate his own religion, which he did. He wanted to make a name for himself, which he also accomplished. His accomplishments were so monumental that the kingdom of Babylon was called the head of gold amongst all world governments. That his religion gained prominence is proven by the fact that

Scripture identifies it with Satan completely in Isaiah Chapter 14 and in Revelation Chapters 17-18. And by history we can prove that it invaded the whole world and is the basis for every system of idolatry, and the theme of mythology, though the names of the gods differ in various sections of the land according to the language of the people. That he made a name for himself and his followers goes without saying, for as long as this present age goes on (until Jesus reveals Himself to His brethren) he will be worshipped and honored, though under a different name from Nimrod, and in a temple slightly different from the one in which he was originally adored.

Since the Bible does not deal in the histories of other nations in detail, it will be necessary to search the ancient profane records to find our answer as to how Pergamos became the seat of the Satanic religion of Babylon. The major sources of information will be in records of Egyptian and Grecian culture. The reason for this is that Egypt received her science and mathematics from the Chaldeans and in turn Greece received them from Egypt.

Now since the priests were in charge of teaching these sciences, and since these sciences were used as a part of religion, we already know the key as to how the Babylonish religion gained its strength in these two countries. It is also true that whenever a nation was able to overcome another nation, in due time the religion of the subduer became the religion of the subdued. It is well known that the Greeks had the very same signs of the Zodiac as did the Babylonians; and it has been found in the ancient Egyptian records that the Egyptians gave the Greeks their knowledge of polytheism. Thus the mysteries of Babylon spread from nation to nation until it appeared in Rome, in China, India and even in both North and South America we find the very same basic worship.

The ancient histories agree with the Bible that this Babylonish religion was most certainly not the original religion of earth's early peoples. It was the first to drift away from the original faith; but it was not itself the original one. Historians such as Wilkinson and Mallett have proven conclusively from the ancient documents that at one time all the peoples of the earth believed in ONE GOD, supreme, eternal, invisible, Who by the Word of His mouth spoke all things into existence, and that in His character He was loving and good and just. But as Satan will always corrupt whatever he can, we find him corrupting the minds and hearts of men so that they reject the truth. As he has always attempted to receive worship as though he were God and not the servant and creation of God, he drew worship away from God to the end that he might draw it unto himself and so be exalted. He certainly did accomplish his desire to spread his religion throughout the whole world. This is authenticated by God in the Book of Romans, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, until they became vain in their imaginations, and through darkness of heart accepted a corrupted religion to the extent that they worshipped creatures and not the Creator."

Remember, Satan was a creature of God (Son of the Morning). Thus we find that where once truth was disseminated amongst men, and all held to that one truth, there later came a day when a vast group turned from God and spread a diabolical form of worship around the world. History bears it out that those of the tribe of Shem that stood with the unchanging truth were in solid opposition to those of Ham who turned away from truth to the devil's lie. There is no time to engage in a discussion of this; it is merely introduced that you may see there were two religions and two only, and the evil one became world wide.

Monotheism turned to polytheism in Babylon. The devil's lie and the devil's mysteries rose up against the truth of God and the mysteries of God in that city. Satan truly became the god of this world and exacted worship from those that he had duped, causing them to believe that he was truly the Lord.

The polytheistic religion of the enemy began with the trinitarian doctrine. It was way back there in antiquity that the "one God in three persons" idea came into existence. How strange that our modern theologians have not spotted this; but evidently just as duped by Satan as their forebears were, they still believe in three persons in the Godhead. Let us be shown just one place in Scripture where there is any authority for that doctrine. Is it not strange that while the descendants of Ham went on their way in Satanic worship which involved a basic concept of three gods that there is not one trace of the descendants of Shem believing such a thing or having any ceremonial worship that involved even a type of it? It is not strange that the Hebrews believed, "Hear, O

Israel, the Lord thy God is ONE God", if there were three persons in the Godhead? Abraham, the descendant of Shem, in Genesis 18 saw only ONE God with two angels.

Now how was this trinity expressed? It was expressed by an equilateral triangle even as it is expressed in Rome today. Strange, the Hebrews did not have such a concept. Now who is right? Is it the Hebrews or the Babylonians? In Asia the polytheistic idea of three gods in one came out in an image with three heads on one body. He is expressed as three intelligences. In India, they found it in their hearts to express him as one god in three forms. Now that really is good modern day theology. In Japan there is a great Buddha with three heads like the one we previously described.

But the most revealing of all is that which sets forth the trinitarian concept of God in a triune form of: 1. The head of an old man symbolizing God the Father, 2. A circle which in the mysteries signified "Seed" which in turn means the Son. 3. The wings and tail of a bird (dove). Here was the doctrine of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three persons in the Godhead, a veritable trinity. You can see the same thing in Rome. Now let me ask once again, is it not strange that the devil and his worshipers actually had more truth revealed than the father of faith, (Abraham) and his descendants? Is it not strange that the worshipers of Satan, knew more about God than the children of God? Now that is what modern theologians try to tell us when they talk about a trinity. Just remember this one thing from now on: these records are facts and this is a fact—Satan is a liar and the father of lies, and whenever he comes with any light it is still a lie. He is a murderer. And his doctrine of the trinity has destroyed the multitudes and will destroy until Jesus comes.

According to history it did not take long for a change to be made in this concept of a Father and a Son and the Holy Ghost. Satan took them a step at a time away from the truth. The evolved concept of Deity was now: 1. The eternal father, 2. The Spirit of God incarnate in a HUMAN mother. (Does that make you think?) 3. A Divine Son, the fruit of that incarnation, (Woman's seed).

But the devil is not content. He hasn't achieved worship of himself yet, except in an indirect way. So he takes the people away from the truth still further. Through his mysteries he reveals to the people that since the great invisible father God does not concern himself in the affairs of men, but remains silent relative to them, then it follows that he may well be worshipped in silence. Actually it means to ignore him as much as possible, if not altogether. This doctrine spread around the world also, and right today in India you can see that temples to the great creator, the silent god, are strikingly few in number.

Since it was not necessary to worship the creator-father, it was only natural that worship swung to the "Mother and Child" as the objects of adoration. In Egypt there was the same combination of mother and son called Isis and Osiris. In India it was Isi and Iswara. (Note the similarity of names even.) In Asia it was Cybele and Deoious. In Rome and in Greece it followed suit. And in China. Well, imagine the surprise of some Roman Catholic missionaries as they entered China and found there a Madonna and Child with rays of light emanating from the head of the babe. The image could well have been exchanged for one in the Vatican except for the difference of certain facial features.

It now behooves us to discover the original mother and child. The original goddess-mother of Babylon was Semiramis who was called Rhea in the eastern countries. In her arms she held a son, who though a babe, was described as tall, strong, handsome and especially captivating to the women. In Ezekiel 8:14 he was called Tammuz. Amongst classical writers he was called Bacchus. To the Babylonians he was Ninus. What accounts for the fact that he is represented as a babe in arms and yet described as a great and mighty man is that he is known as the "Husband-Son". One of his titles was "Husband of the Mother", and in India where the two are known as Iswara and Isi, he (the husband) is represented as the babe at the breast of his own wife.

That this Ninus is the Nimrod of the Bible we can affirm by comparing history with the Genesis account. Pompeius said, "Ninus, king of Assyria, changed the ancient moderate ways of life by the desire for conquest. HE WAS THE FIRST WHO CARRIED WAR AGAINST HIS NEIGHBORS. He conquered all nations from Assyria to Lybia as these men knew not the arts of war." Diodorus says, "Ninus was the most ancient of Assyrian kings mentioned in history. Being of warlike disposition he trained many young men rigorously in the arts of war. He brought Babylonia under him while yet there was no city of Babylon." Thus we see this Ninus started to become great in Babylon, built Babel and

took over Assyria, becoming its king, and then proceeded to devour other vast territories where the people were unskilled in war and lived in a moderate way as said Pompeius.

Now in Genesis 10, speaking of the kingdom of Nimrod it says,

"And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur and builded Nineveh, and Calah etc."

But the translators made a mistake in translating Asshur as a noun for it is a verb, and in the Chaldee means 'to make strong.' Thus it is Nimrod, who having been made strong (he established his kingdom by building the world's first army which he trained by drilling and through the rigors of hunting) went beyond Shinar with his strong army and subdued nations and built such cities as Nineveh, which was named after him, for even today a chief part of the ruins of that city is called Nimroud!

Since we have discovered who Ninus was, it is now necessary to discover who his father was. According to history it was Bel, the founder of Babylon. (Now it is to be noted here that Bel founded it in the sense that he started this whole move, but it was the son, Ninus, that established it and was the first king etc.) But according to the Scripture, the father of Nimrod was Cush: "And Cush begat Nimrod." Not only is this so but we find that Ham begat Cush. Now, in the Egyptian culture Bel was called Hermes, and Hermes means, "THE SON OF HAM". According to history Hermes was the great prophet of idolatry. He was the interpreter of the gods. Another name by which he was called was Mercury. (Read Acts 14:11-12)

Hyginus says this about that god who was known variously as Bel, Hermes, Mercury etc, "For many ages men lived under the government of Jove (not the Roman Jove, but Jehovah of the Hebrews who predates Roman history) without cities and without laws, and all speaking one language. But after that Mercury (Bel, Cush) interpreted the speeches of men (whence an interpreter is called Hermeneutes) the same individual distributed the nations. Then discord began." It is seen from this that Bel or Cush, the father of Nimrod, originally was the ring leader that led the people away from the true God and encouraged the people as the "interpreter of the gods" to take another form of religion. He encouraged them to go ahead with the tower which his son actually built. This encouragement is what brought the confusion and the division of men, so that he was both, "interpreter and confuser".

Cush, then, was the father of the polytheistic system and when men were deified by men, he of course, became the father of the gods. Now Cush was called Bel. And Bel in Roman mythology was Janus. He is pictured as having two faces and he carried a club by which he confounded and "scattered" the people. Ovid writes that Janus said concerning himself, "the ancients called me Chaos". Thus we find that the Cush of the Bible, the original rebel against monotheism was called Bel, Belus, Hermes, Janus, etc. amongst the ancient peoples. He purported to bring revelations and interpretations from the gods to the people. In so doing he caused the wrath of God to scatter the people, bringing division and confusion.

Now up to this point we have seen whence polytheism or the worship of many gods came. But did you notice that we also found a mention of a man named Cush who was given a title of "the father of the gods."? Did you notice here the old theme of ancient mythologies, that gods identify themselves with men? That is where ancestor worship comes from. So we might just examine history to find out about ancestor worship. Well, it was brought out that Cush introduced a three god worship of father, son and spirit. Three gods who were all equal. But he knew about the seed of the woman coming, so there would have to be a woman and her seed come into the picture. This was brought to pass when Nimrod died. His wife, Semiramis deified him, and thus made herself the mother of the son and also the mother of the gods. (Just exactly as the Roman church has deified Mary. They claim she was without sin and was the Mother of God.) She (Semiramis) called Nimrod "Zeroashta" which means, "the woman's promised seed".

But it wasn't too long until the woman began to attract more attention than the son, and soon she was the one who was depicted as trampling underfoot the serpent. They called her "the queen of the heaven" and made her divine. How like today wherein Mary, the mother of Jesus, had been elevated to immortality and right now as of September 1964 the Vatican council is attempting to give a quality to Mary she does not possess, for they would like to call her, "Mary the Mediatrix," "Mary the Mother of All Believers,"

or "Mother of the Church." If there was ever Babylonish ancestor worship in a religion, it is the religion of the Church of Rome.

Not only was ancestor worship originated in Babylon but so also was the worship of nature. It was in Babylon the gods were identified with the sun and moon, etc. The chief object in nature was the sun which has light giving and heat giving properties and appears to man as a ball of fire in the heavens. Thus the chief god would be the sun god whom they called Baal. Often the sun was depicted as a circle of flame and soon around that flame there appeared a serpent. It wasn't long until the serpent became a symbol of the sun and consequently worshipped. Thus the desire of Satan's heart became full-fledged. He was worshipped as God. His throne was established. His slaves bowed to him. There in Pergamos in the form of a living serpent he was worshipped. The tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, now symbolized in the form of a living serpent had not only seduced Eve but the majority of mankind.

But how did Pergamos become the seat of Satan if Babylon was the seat? The answer again is in history. When Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians, the priest-king, Attalus fled the city and went to Pergamos with his priests and sacred mysteries. There he set up his kingdom outside the Roman empire, and thrived under the care of the devil.

This has been a very short resume of the history of the Babylonish religion and its advent to Pergamos. Many questions are no doubt left unanswered and much more, no doubt, could have been said to enlighten us, but this is not intended to be a study of history, rather it is intended to be a help to the study of the Word.

The Denunciation

Revelation 2:14-15

"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."

In this Pergamean Age the Lord denounces two doctrines which He hates: 1. The doctrine of Balaam which brought idolatry and sinful excesses to Israel at Baal-Peor, and 2. The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which had been but deeds in the Ephesian Age. Combine this denouncement with the fact that He has been emphasizing Pergamos as the seat of Satan, and it is very easy and proper to conclude that somehow the religion of Babylon has become intermingled with Christianity.

Now this is not merely an assumption but an historical fact which we will prove by going back into history to about 36 A.D. and coming up to the Nicene Council of 325. When the Christians (mainly Jews by birth) were scattered abroad from Jerusalem they went everywhere preaching the Gospel, particularly in the synagogues. Thus within three years, or about in 36 A.D. the Gospel had been taken to Rome by Junius and Andronicus, who according to Romans 16:7 were apostles. The work flourished there for several years until the constant altercations of the Jews amongst themselves caused Emperor Claudius to expel them from Rome. With the Jews banished from that city the backbone of that little church was practically broken. Perhaps even the elders had been Jewish and so would be gone. The flock would be unattended and since the Word had not been written as a guide it would be very easy for this little flock to drift or be inundated by the philosophers and pagans of that day. With grievous wolves on the prowl, and the spirit of antichrist released, we find from history that this little church in Rome became hopelessly backslidden, and began to introduce pagan ceremonies under Christian titles.

As the period of banishment lasted for 13 years, the founders, Junius and Andronicus, did not come back until 54 A.D. Imagine their horror to find a church with a Christian title that was woefully pagan. There were altars in the church upon which they placed incense and celebrated pagan rites. The established leaders of that church could not be approached, so with the few who had tried to remain faithful they started a new church, or the Second Church of Rome. God graciously worked amongst them by signs and wonders so that a third church was started. And though the First Church was reproached for being pagan and NOT Christian in its worship it would not give up its title but remained and STILL REMAINS the First Church of Rome—The Roman Catholic Church.

Now the majority of us have the mistaken idea that any and all who call themselves

Christians would be the target of the devil and consequently the brunt of governmental tyranny. But not so. This first church had begun to thrive and multiply so in numbers that the emperors and various officials of the government actually favored that church for political reasons.

Thus when the leaders of the First Church in Rome found themselves in favor, they took the opportunity to turn the government against the true believers and demand their persecution unless they came into their fold. One such bishop of the First Church of Rome was Anicetus who lived in the second century and was contemporary with Polycarp.

When the venerable Polycarp heard that the First Christian Church of Rome was involved in pagan ceremonies and had corrupted the truth of the Gospel, he went there to implore them to change. He saw them prostrate themselves before images named after apostles and saints. He saw them light candles and burn incense on the altar. He saw them celebrate the Passover under the name Easter, where they elevated the disc shaped bread that honored the sun god, and then they poured the wine out as a libation to the gods. But this aged saint who had traveled 1500 miles could not arrest their downward plunge. God spoke through him just as he was leaving, "Ephraim is married to his idols, let him alone," Hosea 4:15. Polycarp never more returned.

Following Anicetus was the wicked bishop of Rome called Victor. He introduced even more pagan festivals and ceremonies into the First Church, and also went about trying his utmost to persuade the true Christian churches to incorporate the same ideas. They would not do as he requested so he prevailed upon government officials to persecute the believers, hailing them into court, casting them into prison and even meting out death to many. Such an example of his vile deeds is found in history where Emperor Septimus Severus was prevailed upon by Callistus (the friend of Victor) to kill 7000 at Thessalonica because these true believers celebrated the Passover according to the Lord Jesus and not according to the worship of Astarte.

Already the false vine was turning loose its anger against the living God by killing the elect, even as did its forebear, Cain, kill Abel.

The true church kept trying to get the First Church to repent. It would not do so. It increased in size and influence. It embarked upon a constant campaign to discredit the true seed. They claimed that they and they alone were the true representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, and vaunted the fact that they were the original church in Rome, and they alone were the First Church. Indeed they were The First Church, and INDEED THEY ARE.

Thus by the time of this third church age we have two churches bearing the same name but with a bitter difference between them. One has departed from the truth, married idols and has no life in her. She has hybridized herself and the signs of death, (not life), follow in her wake. She is powerful with many members. She is favored by the world. The other is a little persecuted group. But she follows the Word, and the signs follow her. The sick are healed and the dead are raised. She is alive with the Life and Word of God. She loves not her life, but holds to His Name and His faith even unto death.

And so the terrible persecution of official Rome fell upon the true believers until Constantine arose and granted freedom of religious worship. There seems to be two reasons why this freedom was granted. In the first place various good emperors had not allowed persecution, but as they passed on, they were followed by those who killed Christians. It was so senseless that it finally came to public heed that the Christians ought to be left alone. The second and best noted reason is that Constantine had a very difficult battle ahead of him in taking over the control of the empire. One night in a dream he saw a white cross appear before him. He felt that this was an omen unto him that if the Christians prayed for a victory for him, he would win the battle. He promised freedom for them in the event that he was victorious. He was victorious and the freedom of worship was granted in the edict of Nantes 312 A.D.

But this freedom from persecution and death was not as magnanimous as it first appeared. Constantine was now the patron. As a patron his interest was somewhat more than that of an observer, for he decided that the church needed his help in her affairs. He had seen them disagreeing over various matters, one of which involved Arius, Bishop of Alexander, who taught his adherents that Jesus was not truly God but a lesser being, having been created by God. The Western Church held the opposite view, believing that

Jesus was the very essence of God and as they said 'co-equal with the Father.' With such matters, along with the intrusion of pagan ceremony into worship, the emperor called for the Nicene Council in 325 with the thought that he would bring all groups together where they could iron out their differences, and come to a common understanding, and all be one. Isn't it peculiar that though this started with Constantine it didn't die but is very much alive today as the "World Council of Churches"? And where he failed to truly achieve it, it will be achieved in this day through the ecumenical move.

Now this interference of the state with the church is a foolish thing for the world does not understand either the truth found in the Word or the ways of the church. Why, the very decision handed down by the council that Arius was wrong was reversed two years later by the emperor and for many years that false doctrine was foisted upon the people.

But that the church and state would come together was truly fore-known of the Lord. The very name Pergamos means "thoroughly married". And indeed state and church were married; politics and religion were united. The offspring of that union have been consistently the most horrible hybrids the world has ever seen. The truth is not in them, but all the evil ways of Cain (the first hybrid) is.

Not only was state and church wedded in this age, but the Babylonian religion was officially joined to the First Church. Satan now had access to the Name of Christ and he was enthroned as God in worship. With the help of federal aid the churches fell heir to beautiful buildings which were lined with altars of white marble and images of the departed saints. And right in this age is when the "beast" of Revelation 13:3 that was wounded to death: (the pagan Roman Empire) came back to life and power as the "Holy Roman Empire." Rome as a material nation had suffered much depletion and soon would suffer it completely; but it mattered not now, for her religious empire would keep her on top of the world governing from the inside where she would not appear to do so from the outside.

Let me show the exact Scriptural truth of this matter, for I do not want anyone to think that I am giving a revelation of my own—one not found in Scripture.

Daniel 2:31-45,

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed

with clay.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Herein is revealed an exact account of future, unfilled history that was prophesied to come upon the earth from the time of Daniel until Jesus would come and reign as the Son of David. It is known as "The Times of the Gentiles." It had within it four historical divisions which were known by the dominating empire in each division: Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman.

The greatest and most absolute monarchy was the Babylonian which was typified as the head of gold.

The next in glory was the Medo-Persian which as history bore out was truly less glorious and was typified as the breast and arms of silver.

Then there followed the Grecian age whose king was the most brilliant of all military leaders the world has ever known so it was fittingly typified as the belly and thighs of brass. It was less glorious than the other two preceding it.

Finally came the last kingdom which was the Roman Empire typified as the legs and feet. But wherein the former kingdoms were typified as pure minerals (pure gold, silver and brass) this last empire was pure iron only in the legs, for when it came to the feet it was a mixture of iron and clay, and mineral and soil just don't mix and produce constancy and strength. But not only is this so, but most amazing, this last empire (Roman) would endure in its peculiar 'mixed state' right up until Jesus returns.

This Roman Empire of iron (iron signifying power and great destructive force against opposition) was to be made of two main divisions. And it certainly was for the empire literally split into two—East and West. Both were very powerful, crushing all before them.

But as the glory and power of all empires fail, so this empire began to fall also. Thus Rome fell. Pagan Imperial Rome was no longer iron. She crumbled. She was wounded to death. Rome could not now rule. It was all over. So thought the world. But how wrong the world was, for that head (Rome) though wounded was not wounded unto death. (Wuest, translation of Revelation 13:3, "And one of his heads appeared to have been mortally wounded, the throat having been slashed. And his death stroke was healed. And the whole earth followed after the Wild Beast in amazement.")

People look at Rome. They look at the nation of Italy. And as they look they do not realize that Rome with her strict confines where the pope has an actual area as his domain is literally a nation within a nation, and she has ambassadors and receives ambassadors. PAPAL FALSE CHRISTIAN ROME (she is even called the eternal city—how blasphemous) NOW CONTROLS BY RELIGION EVEN MORE ABLY THAN WHEN PAGAN IMPERIAL ROME CONTROLLED BY THE PURE IRON OF FORCE. Rome took on a new lease of life when Constantine joined church and state and backed the union by force. The spirit that motivated pagan Rome is the same spirit that now motivates false Christian Rome. You can see that is so because you now know that the fourth empire never went out of existence; it just changed in its outer texture.

Once the Nicene Council had swung the power of political Rome to the church, it seemed that there were no limits to which this First Christian Church would go. The name, Christian, which originally brought persecution, now became the name of the persecutors. It was in this age that Augustine of Hippo (354-430) set forth the precept that the church ought and MUST use force if necessary to bring her children back into the fold, and that it was in harmony with the Word of God to kill the heretics and apostates. In his controversy with the Donatists he wrote... "It is indeed better that men should be led to worship God by teaching than that they should be driven to it by fear of punishment or pain, but it does not follow that because the former course produces the better men, therefore those who do not yield to it should be neglected. For many have found advantage (as we have proved and are daily proving by actual experience) in being first compelled by fear or pain, so that they might afterwards be influenced by

teaching, so that they might follow out in act what they have already learned in word... whilst those are better who are guided aright by love, those are certainly more numerous who are corrected by fear. For who can possibly love us more than Christ, Who laid down His life for the sheep?

Yet after calling Peter and the other apostles by His words alone, when He came to summon Paul, He not only constrained him with His voice, but even dashed him to the earth with His power; and that He might forcibly bring one who is raging amidst the darkness of infidelity, to desire the light of the heart, He first struck him with physical blindness of the eyes. Why therefore should not the Church use force in compelling her lost sons to return? The Lord Himself said, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in.' Wherefore if the power which the Church has received by divine appointment in it's due season, through the religious character and faith of kings, be the instrument by which those who are found in the highways and hedges—that is in heresies and schisms—are compelled to come in, then let them not find fault with being compelled."

The thirst for blood was growing apace. The false vine in Spain now played upon the Emperor Maximus to join in the attack upon the true believers who had the Word and the signs and wonders with them. Thus some Priscillianists were brought to Treves by Bishop Ithacus (385). He accused them of witchcraft and immorality and many were executed. Martin of Tours, and Ambrose of Milan protested this, and pleaded in vain for the persecution to cease. When the persecution was prolonged these two bishops refused to fellowship with bishop Hydatus and others like him. Strange to say the Synod in Treves approved of the murders.

From this time on, especially through the Dark Ages, we will see the children of the flesh persecute and destroy the children of the Spirit, though both claim one Father even as was in the case of Ishmael and Isaac. The darkness of spiritual corruption will deepen and the true light of God will fade until number-wise it glows ever so faintly. Yet the promise of God will hold true, "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness can do nothing about it."

Now up to this time I have not brought out that point in history that I promised to cover, that is, the intermingling of the religion of Nimrod and the Christian religion. You will recall that Attalus fled from Babylon to Pergamos and set up his kingdom outside the reaches of the Roman Empire. It flourished over the years, nurtured by the god of this world. A succession of priest kings followed Attalus until the reign of Attalus III when for reasons known only in the sovereignty of God he willed the kingdom to Rome. Julius Caesar then took both the kingdom physical and spiritual for he became Pontiff Maximus of the Babylonish religion and was therefore priest-king. This title passed on to the following emperors until the time of Maximus III who refused it. According to Stevens' History it was then that the pope took the headship the emperor rejected and today there is still a pontiff in the world, and he is truly Pontiff Maximus. He wears a triple crown and resides in Rome. And in Revelation 17 God does not any longer refer to Pergamos as Satan's seat nor does he say that is where Satan dwells. No, the throne room is no longer in Pergamos, but it is MYSTERY Babylon. It is not in Babylon but in MYSTERY Babylon. It is in a city on seven hills. Its head is antichrist for he has usurped the position of Christ Who alone is mediator and Who alone can forgive sins. Yes, Pontiff Maximus is with us today.

The Doctrine Of The Nicolaitanes

Revelation 2:15,

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."

You will recall that I brought out in the Ephesian Age that the word, Nicolaitane, comes from two Greek words: Nikao which means to conquer, and Lao which means the laity. Nicolaitane means, "to conquer the laity". Now why is this such a terrible thing? It is terrible because God has never placed His church in the hands of an elected leadership which moves with political mindedness. He has placed His church in the care of God-ordained, Spirit-filled, Word-living men who lead the people through feeding them the Word. He has not separated the people into classes so that the masses are led by a holy priesthood. It is true that the leadership must be holy, but then so must be the whole congregation. Further, there is no place in the Word where priests or ministers or such mediate between God and the people, nor is there a place where they are

separated in their worship of the Lord. God wants all to love and serve Him together. Nicolaitanism destroys those precepts and instead separates the ministers from the people and makes the leaders overlords instead of servants.

Now this doctrine actually started as a deed in the first age. It appears that the problem lay in two words: 'elders' (presbyters) and 'overseers' (bishops). Though Scripture shows that there are several elders in each church, some began (Ignatius among them) to teach that the idea of a bishop was one of preeminence or authority and control over the elders.

Now the truth of the matter is the word 'elder' signifies who the person is, while the word 'bishop' signifies the office of the same man. The elder is the man. Bishop is the office of the man. 'Elder' always has and always will refer simply to a man's chronological age in the Lord. He is an elder, not because he is elected or ordained, etc., but because he IS OLDER. He is more seasoned, trained, not a novice, reliable because of experience and long standing proof of his Christian experience.

But no, the bishops did not stick to the epistles of Paul, but rather they went to Paul's account of the time he called the elders from Ephesus to Miletus in Acts 20. In verse 17 the record states, "elders" were called and then in verse 28 they are called overseers (bishops). And these bishops, (no doubt political minded and anxious for power) insisted that Paul had given the meaning that 'overseers' were more than the local elder with official capacity only in his own church. To them a bishop was now one with extended authority over many local leaders. Such a concept was neither Scriptural nor historical, yet even a man of the stature of Polycarp leaned toward such organization.

Thus, that which started as a deed in the first age was made a literal doctrine and so it is today. Bishops still claim power to control men and deal with them as they desire, placing them where they so will in the ministry. This denies the leadership of the Holy Ghost Who said, "Separate Me Paul and Barnabas for the work where-unto I have called them" This is anti-Word and anti-Christ.

Matthew 20:25-28,

"But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Matthew 23:8-9,

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for One is your Father, Which is in heaven."

In order to clarify this even more, let me explain Nicolaitanism in this way.

You recall that in Revelation 13:3 it says,

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death: and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

Now we know that the wounded head was the pagan Roman Empire, that great political world power. This head rose again as the "Roman Catholic spiritual empire". Now watch this carefully. What did political pagan Rome do that was the basis of her success? She, "divided and conquered." That was the seed of Rome—divide and conquer. Her iron teeth tore and devoured. Whom she tore and devoured could not rise again as when she destroyed Carthage and sowed her to salt. The same iron seed remained in her when she arose as the false church, and her policy has remained the same—divide and conquer. That is Nicolaitanism and God hates it.

Now it is a well known historical fact that when this error crept into the church, men began to vie for the office of bishop with the result that this position was being given to the more educated and materially-progressive and politically-minded men. Human knowledge and program began to take over Divine wisdom's place and the Holy Spirit no longer controlled. This was indeed a tragic evil, for the bishops began to maintain that it no longer required a transparent Christian character to minister either the Word or the rites in the church for it was the elements and the ceremony that counted. This allowed

evil men (seducers) to rend the flock.

With the man-made doctrine of the elevation of bishops to a place not accorded them in Scripture, the next step was the handing out of graded titles that built up into a religious hierarchy; for soon there were archbishops over bishops and cardinals over the archbishops and by the time of Boniface the third there was a pope over all, a Pontiff.

What with the Nicolaitane doctrine and the amalgamation of Christianity with Babylonianism the net results had to be what Ezekiel saw in Chapter 8:10,

"So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall around."

Revelation 18:2,

"And he cried mightily, with a strong voice saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, for all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

Now this Nicolaitane doctrine, this rule that was established in the church did not hit it off too well with a lot of the people for they could read the odd epistle or essay on the Word written by some godly person. So what did the church do? It excommunicated the righteous teachers and burned the scrolls. They said, "It takes a special education to read and understand the Word. Why even Peter said that many things Paul wrote were hard to understand." Having taken away the Word from the people, it soon came to the people listening only to what the priest had to say, and doing what he told them. They called that God and His holy Word. They took over the minds and lives of the people and made them the servants of a despotic priesthood.

Now if you want proof that the Catholic Church demands the lives and minds of men, just listen to the edict of Theodosius X. Theodosius' First Edict.

This edict was issued immediately after he was baptized by the First Church of Rome. "We three emperors will that our subjects steadfastly adhere to the religion which was taught by Saint Peter to the Romans, which has been faithfully preserved by tradition and which is now professed by the pontiff, Damasus of Rome, and Peter, bishop of Alexandria, a man of Apostolic holiness according to the institution of the Apostles, and the doctrine of the Gospel; let us believe in one Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of equal majesty in the Holy Trinity. We order that the adherents of this faith be called Catholic Christians; we brand all the senseless followers of the other religions with the infamous name of heretics, and forbid their conventicles assuming the name of churches. Besides the condemnation of divine justice, they must expect the heavy penalty which our authority, guided by heavenly wisdom shall think proper to inflict..."

The fifteen penal laws that this emperor issued in as many years deprived the evangelicals of all rights to the exercise of their religion, excluded them from all civil offices, and threatened them with fines, confiscation, banishment and even in some cases, death.

Do you know what? We are headed right that way today.

The Roman Catholic Church calls herself the Mother church. She calls herself the first or original church. That is absolutely correct. She was the original First Church of Rome that backslid and went into sin. She was the first that organized. In her was found the deeds and then the doctrine of Nicolaitanism. No one will deny that she is a mother. She is a mother and has produced daughters. Now a daughter comes out of a woman. A woman robed in scarlet is sitting on the seven hills of Rome. She is a harlot and has borne daughters. Those daughters are the Protestant churches that came out of her and then went right back into organization and Nicolaitanism. This Mother of the daughter-churches is called a whore. That is a woman who was untrue to her marriage vows. She was married to God and then went off fornicating with the devil and in her fornications she has brought forth daughters that are just like her. This mother and daughter combination is anti-Word, anti-Spirit and consequently anti-Christ. Yes, ANTICHRIST.

Now before I get too far along I want to mention that these early bishops thought that they were above the Word. They told people they could forgive their sins upon confession of those sins. That never was the truth. They began to baptize infants in the second century. They actually practiced regenerational baptism. No wonder people are mixed up today. If they were so mixed up then, so close to Pentecost, now they are in a most desperate condition, being about 2000 years away from original truth.

Oh, Church of God, there is only one hope. Get back to the Word and stay with it.

The Doctrine Of Balaam

Revelation 2:14,

"Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."

Now you just can't have a Nicolaitane set-up in the church and not have this other doctrine come in, too. You see, if you take away the Word of God and the moving of the Spirit as a means of worship (they that worship Me must worship Me in Spirit and in truth) then you will have to give the people another form of worship as a substitute, and substitution spells Balaamism.

If we are going to understand what the doctrine of Balaam is in the New Testament church we had better go back and see what it was in the Old Testament church and apply it to that third age and then bring it up to the present.

The story is found in Numbers Chapters 22 through 25. Now we know that Israel was the chosen people of God. They were the Pentecostals of their day. They had taken refuge under the blood, they had all been baptized in the Red Sea and they came up out of the waters singing in the Spirit and dancing under the energy of the Holy Ghost, while Miriam, the prophetess, played her tambourine. Well, after a certain time of journeying these children of Israel came to Moab. You remember who Moab was. He was the son of Lot by one of his own daughters, and Lot in turn was a nephew of Abraham, so Israel and Moab were related. I want you to see that. The Moabites knew the truth, whether they lived up to it or not.

So Israel came up to the borders of Moab and sent messengers to the king saying, "We are brothers. Let us pass through your land. If our people or our animals eat or drink anything, we will gladly pay for it." But King Balak got very excited. That head of that Nicolaitane bunch was not about to let the church come through with its signs and wonders and divers manifestations of the Holy Ghost, with their faces shining with the glory of God. It was too risky, as he might lose some of his crowd. So Balak refused to let Israel pass through. In fact, so great was his fear of them, that he went to an hireling prophet called Balaam and asked him to mediate between him and God and petition the Almighty to curse Israel, and render them impotent. And Balaam, being eager to take part in political affairs and become a great man, was only too glad to do so. But seeing that he had to approach to, and receive an audience from God to get the people cursed as he could not do it by himself, he went to ask God if he could have His permission to go. Now isn't that just like the Nicolaitanes we have with us today? They curse everyone that won't go their way.

When Balaam asked God for permission to go, God turned him down. My that stung! But Balak insisted, promising him even greater rewards and honor. So Balaam went back to God. Now one answer from God should have been enough. But not for self-willed Balaam. When God saw his perversity, He told him to get up and go. Quickly he saddled the donkey and away he went. He should have realized that this was simply God's permissive will and he wouldn't be able to curse them if he went twenty times and tried twenty times. How like Balaam are people today! They believe in three Gods, get baptized in three titles instead of the NAME, and yet God will send the Spirit upon them as He did upon Balaam, and they will go on believing that they are exactly right, and here they are actually perfect Balaamites. See, the doctrine of Balaam. Go ahead anyway. Do it your way. They say, "Well, God has blessed us. It must be all right." I know He has blessed you. I don't deny that. But it's the same organizational route that Balaam took. It's defiance to God's Word. It's false teaching.

So Balaam went wildly down the road until an angel from God stood in his way. But that prophet (bishop, cardinal, chairman, president and general overseer) was so blinded to Spiritual things by the thought of honor and glory and money that he could not see the angel standing with drawn sword. There he stood to block the mad prophet. The little donkey saw him and dodged back and forth until he finally crushed Balaam's foot against a stone wall. The ass stopped and would not go on. He could not. So Balaam jumped off and began beating him. The donkey then began to talk to Balaam. God let that donkey speak in a tongue. That donkey was no hybrid; he was original seed. He said to the blinded prophet, "Am I not your donkey, and haven't I carried you

faithfully?" Balaam replied, "Yes, yes, you are my donkey and you have carried me faithfully until now; and if I can't get you going, I'm going to kill you... whoa! what's this, talking to a donkey? That's funny, I thought I heard the donkey talking and I was answering it back."

God has always spoken in a tongue. He spoke at Belshazzar's feast and then at Pentecost. He is doing it again today. It's a warning of soon coming judgment.

Then the angel was made visible to Balaam. He told Balaam that except for the donkey he would be dead even now for tempting God. But when Balaam promised to go back, he was sent on with the admonition to say only what God gave him.

So Balaam went down and set up seven altars for the clean beasts of sacrifice. He killed a ram signifying the coming of the Messiah. He knew what to do to approach unto God. He had the mechanics just right; but not the dynamics; same as now. Can't you see it Nicolaitanes? There was Israel down there in the valley offering the same sacrifice, doing the same things but only one had the signs following. Only one had God in their midst. Form won't get you anywhere. It can't take the place of Spirit-manifestation. That is what happened at Nicaea. They put over Balaam's doctrine, not the doctrine of God. And they stumbled; yea they fell. They became dead men.

After the sacrifice was made, Balaam was ready to prophesy. But God tied his tongue up and he could not curse them. He blessed them.

Balak was very angry, but there was nothing that Balaam could do about the prophecy. It had been spoken by the Holy Ghost. So Balak told Balaam to go down below, into the valley, and look upon their back parts to see if there wasn't possibly some way he could curse them. The tactics that Balak used are the same tactics they use today. The big denominations look down at the little groups, and anything they find amongst them to make out a scandal they bring it out and shout it. If the moderns live in sin, no one says anything about it; but let one of the elect get into trouble and every paper blasts it across the country. Yes, Israel had her back (carnal) parts. They had their side that wasn't praise-worthy; but in spite of their imperfections, by the purpose of God that works through election, by grace and not by works, THEY HAD THE CLOUD BY DAY AND THE PILLAR OF FIRE BY NIGHT, THEY HAD THE SMITTEN ROCK, THE BRAZEN SERPENT AND THE SIGNS AND WONDERS. They were vindicated—not in themselves, but in God.

God didn't have any respect for those Nicolaitanes with their PHD's, LLD'S and D.D.'s and all their fine organizations and the best that man could boast; but He did have respect unto Israel for they had the Word vindicated amongst them. Certainly Israel didn't look too polished up, just having come out of Egypt in precipitous flight, but she was a blessed people anyway. All she had ever known for over 300 years was herding flocks, tending fields and slaving away in fear of death under the Egyptians. But she was free now. She was a blessed people through the sovereignty of God. Certainly Moab looked down on her. All the other nations did, too. Organization always looks down on the unorganized and either will by determination bring them into organization or destroy them when they won't come.

Now someone might ask me, "Brother Branham, what makes you think that Moab was organized while Israel was not? Where do you get that idea?" I get it right here in the Bible. It is all typed out here. Everything written in the Old Testament that is in story form is written for our admonition so that we can learn from it.

Here it is right in Numbers 23:9,

"From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him; lo the people shall dwell ALONE, and shall NOT BE RECKONED AMONG THE NATIONS."

There it is. God looking down from the top of the rocks, not in some valley looking for their bad points and condemning them. God seeing them the way He wanted to see them—from the height of love and mercy. They dwelt ALONE and they weren't organized. They didn't have a king. They had a prophet, and the prophet had God in him by the Spirit; and the Word came to the prophet and the Word went to the people. They didn't belong to the U.N. They didn't belong to the World Council of Churches, to the Baptists, Presbyterians, Assembly of God or any other group. They didn't need to belong. They were joined to God. They didn't need counsel from any council—they had "Thus saith the Lord" in their midst. Hallelujah!

Now in spite of the fact that Balaam knew the proper approach to God and could bring

forth a revelation from the Lord by means of a special endowment of power, he was still for all of that a bishop in the false group. For what did he do now in order to win favor with Balak? He formulated a plan wherein God would be forced to deal with Israel in death. Just as Satan knew that he could beguile Eve (cause her to fall in fleshly sin) thus causing God to pass His pronounced sentence of death against sin, so Balaam knew that if he could get Israel to sin, God would have to deal with them in death. So he planned a way to get them to come over and join in sin. He sent out invitations to come to the feast of Baal-peor (come over and worship with us). Now Israel, no doubt, had seen the feasts of the Egyptians so they did not feel it was too wrong to go and just look on and perhaps eat with the people. (What is wrong with fellowship any way? We are supposed to love them aren't we, or how can we win them?) Being friendly never hurt anyone—or so they thought. But when those sexy Moabitish women began to dance and undress while they whirled around doing their rock and roll and twist, the lust rose up in the Israelites and they were drawn into adultery and God in wrath slew forty two thousand of them.

And that is what Constantine and his successors did at Nicaea and after Nicaea. They invited the people of God to the convention. And when the church sat down to eat, and rose up to play (partaking of church form, ceremonies, and pagan feasts named after Christian rites) she was trapped; she had committed fornication. And God walked out.

When any man turns from the Word of God and joins a church instead of receiving the Holy Spirit, that man dies. Dead! That is what he is. Don't join a church. Don't get into organization and get taken up with creeds and tradition or anything that takes the place of the Word and the Spirit or you're dead. It's all over. You're dead. Eternally separated from God!

That is what has happened in every age since. God delivers the people. They come out by the blood, sanctified by the Word, walk through the waters of baptism and get filled with the Spirit; but after awhile the first love cools off and someone gets the idea that they ought to organize in order to preserve themselves and make a name for themselves, and they organize themselves right back in the second generation and sometimes even before then. They no longer have the Spirit of God, just a form of worship. They are dead. They have hybridized themselves with creed and form and there is no life in them.

So Balaam got Israel to commit fornication. Do you know that physical fornication is the very same spirit that lies in organized religion? I said that the spirit of fornication is the spirit of organization. And all fornicators will have their place in the lake of fire. That is what God thinks of organization. Yes sir, the whore and her daughters will be in the lake of fire.

Denominations are not of God. They never have been and never will be. It's a wrong spirit that separates the people of God into hierarchy and laity; and it's, therefore, a wrong spirit that separates the people from the people. That's what organization and denominations do. In organizing they separate themselves from the Word of God, and bring themselves into spiritual adultery.

Now notice that Constantine gave special feasts unto the people. They were the old pagan feasts with new names taken from the church, or in some cases Christian rites were taken and abused with pagan ceremonies. He took the worship of the sun god and changed it to the Son of God. Instead of celebrating on December 21, which is when they used to celebrate the feast to the sun god, they put it up to December 25th and called it the Son of God's birthday. But we know that He was born in April when life comes forth, not in December. And they took the feast to Astarte and called it the Easter celebration wherein the Christian is supposed to celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord. Actually it was a pagan feast to Astarte.

They placed altars in the church. They put in images. They gave the people what they called the apostles' creed, though you can't find it in the Bible. They taught the people ancestor worship thereby making the Roman Catholic Church the greatest spiritistic church in the world. Every foul bird was in that cage. And you have the Protestants with their organizations doing the same thing.

They ate things sacrificed to idols. Now I don't say that this really means they were literally eating meats sacrificed to idols. For though the council of Jerusalem had spoken against such, Paul did not make much of it as he said the idols were nothing. It was just a matter of conscience except where it offended a weaker brother and then it was not

allowed. Furthermore, this Revelation has to do with Gentiles and not Jews as these are Gentile Churches. I see this in the same light I see the words of the Lord, "Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood you have no life in you. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." You can see that eating is actually partaking in a spiritual sense.

So when these people were bowing to the images, lighting candles, using pagan holidays, confessing their sins to men (all of which belongs to the devil's religion,) they were partakers with the devil and not of the Lord. They were in idolatry whether they admitted it or not. They can talk all they want that the altars and the incense are only to remind them of the prayers of the Lord or whatever they think it means; and they can say that when they pray before the image it is just for the sake of emphasis; and that when they confess to the priest, it is really to God they are doing it in their hearts, and when they say the priest forgives them, it is just that he is doing it in the Name of the Lord; they can say what they want but they are partaking in the well known Babylonian, Satanic religion and have joined themselves to idols and committed spiritual fornication, which means death. They are dead.

So the church and the state were married. The church joined up with idols. With the power of the state behind them they felt that now, "The kingdom had come and God's will had been enforced upon the earth." No wonder the Roman Catholic Church is not looking for the return of the Lord Jesus. They are not millennialists. They have their millennium right here. The pope is reigning right now and God is reigning in him. So when He comes according to them, it has to be when the new heavens and the earth are prepared. But they are wrong. That pope is the head of the false church, and there is going to be a millennium, but while that is going on he won't be in it. He will be somewhere else.

The Warning

Revelation 2:16.

"Repent or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth."

What else can He say? Can God overlook the sin of those who have borne His Name in vain? There is only one way to receive grace in the hour of sin, REPENT. Confess you are wrong. Come to God for forgiveness and for the Spirit of God. This is a command from God. To disobey is death, for He says, "I will make war with you with the sword in My mouth." The beast made war with the saints, but God will make war with the beast. Those who fought the Word will one day find the Word fighting them. It is a serious thing to take from, or add to the Word of God. For those who changed it, and did with it as it suited them, what will their end be but death and destruction? But still the grace of God cries out, "Repent". Oh, how sweet are the thoughts of repentance. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling. I bring my sorrow. I repent that I am what I am, and what I have done. Now it is the blood, nothing but the blood of Jesus. What will it be? Repentance, or the sword of death? It's up to you.

The Rewards

Revelation 2:17

"He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Each message to each age holds out an incentive to the believer, encouraging him to be an overcomer and thereby be rewarded of the Lord. In this age the Spirit is promising the hidden manna and a new name written in a white stone.

Now since each of these messages is directed to the 'angel'— (human messenger) a very great responsibility as well as a wonderful privilege is his lot. To these men God makes special promises, as in the case of the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Then, remember Paul was given a special promise: that of presenting the people of the bride in his day to Jesus,

II Corinthians 11:2

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

So it will be with every messenger who has been faithful to the Word of his hour and his age. It will be so in the last day. It will be the same special reward that was given to Paul. I think most of you remember how I said I had always been afraid to die lest I should meet the Lord and He should not be pleased with me as I had failed Him so many times. Well, I had been thinking of that one morning as I lay in bed and suddenly I was caught up in a most peculiar vision. I say it was peculiar for I have had thousands of visions and not once did I seem to leave my body. But there I was caught up; and I looked back to see my wife, and I saw my body lying there beside her. Then I found myself in the most beautiful place I have ever seen. It was a paradise. I saw throngs of the most beautiful and happiest people I have ever seen. They all looked so young—about 18 to 21 years of age. There was not a gray hair or a wrinkle or any deformity amongst them. The young women all had hair down to their waists, and the young men were so handsome and strong. Oh, how they welcomed me. They hugged me and called me their darling brother, and kept telling me how glad they were to see me. As I wondered who all those folks were, one beside me said, "They are your people".

I was so astonished I asked, "Are all these Branhams?"

He said, "No, they are your converts." He then pointed to one lady and said, "See that young lady that you were admiring a moment ago. She was 90 years old when you won her to the Lord."

I said, "Oh my, and to think this is what I was afraid of."

The man said, "We are resting here while waiting for the coming of the Lord."

I replied, "I want to see Him."

He said, "You can't see Him just yet; but He is coming soon, and when He does He will come to you first, and you will be judged according to the Gospel you have preached, and we will be your subjects."

I said, "Do you mean I am responsible for all these?"

He said, "Every one. You were born a leader."

I asked him, "Will every one be responsible? What about Saint Paul?"

He answered me, "He will be responsible for his day."

"Well," I said, "I've preached the same Gospel that Paul preached." And multitude cried, "We're resting on that."

Yes, I can see that God is going to give a special reward to His messengers who have faithfully discharged the responsibility He has placed upon them. If they have received the revelation of the Word for that age and faithfully preached in their day, and lived what they preached, they will receive a great reward.

Now with this thought in mind, look at the verse again. "I will give him the hidden manna." We all know that the manna was angel food; it was what God sent down upon the grass for Israel at the time of their wanderings. It was perfect food. It was amazing how those little pellets of food kept them in perfect health. No one got sick. It was all they needed. When the ark was made they put some of that manna into it. Then the ark was put behind the veil and only the high priest would dare approach unto it and then he had to have the sacrificial blood. The Bread from heaven, symbolized by manna, one day came down from heaven and became Life for all who believe on Him. He said, "I am the bread of life. I am the living bread that came down from heaven, if any man shall eat of this bread he shall live forever." When He went away He left us His Word, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

His Word was bread. It was the perfect manna, which, if a man live by, he shall never die. But right after the death of the fathers, no one seemed to know the exact truth and in a short while this manna seemed to have become hidden to the people. But in every age God began to give back by revelation that which was hidden until in this last day according to Revelation 10:7, a prophet will come and reveal all the mysteries and then the Lord will come. Now in each age, I say, the messengers received hidden truth. But they did not receive it for themselves only. But it is as it was when the disciples were asked to serve the multitudes loaves and fishes; Jesus gave them the broken food, but they in turn gave it to the people. God gives His hidden manna to the overcomer. It cannot be otherwise. He would not open His treasures to those who spurn what is already revealed.

What I have been saying about the messenger of each age receiving from God some

of the original truth of Pentecost is typed out in the Old Testament where Moses was commanded to take up three and one half pints of manna and place it in a golden vessel behind the veil of the holy of holies. There the high priest of every generation could enter with sacrificial blood. Then he could take a small portion of this manna (for it did not corrupt) which was part of the original and eat it. Now in every age the messenger of the Lord to that age was given the revelation of God for that specific period. Once the messenger was enlightened by truth, he would bring that truth to the people. And they whose ears had been opened by the Spirit would hear that truth, believe it, and live it.

Now then, there is also the thought of the future partaking of the hidden manna. I think it will be the eternal partaking of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the eternal ages to come. How else could we begin to know the unsearchable riches of His own Being? All that we have longed to know, all our unanswered questions, all that will be revealed. It will be from Christ Who is our life that we receive it. Oh, sometimes we think we get to know a little of Him and His Word down here, and it is so good, it makes us rejoice; but one day when our flesh changes, that Word and He will become what we had never dreamed possible.

It also says here that He is going to give the overcomer a white stone and in (not on) the stone a new name, which the owner alone knows. Now the idea of a new name is a familiar one. Abram was changed to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Peter, and Saul to Paul. These names either brought about a change, or were given because of a change. It was only after Abram and Sarai had their names changed by the Lord that they were made ready to receive the coming son. In Jacob's case, he had to overcome and then he was called a prince. In the case of Simon and Saul, when they had received the Lord, their change came. And today each one of us true believers has had a change in name. We are Christians. It is a name common to all of us. But one day we will have another change; we will of a certainty receive a new name. It could well be that name was our true and original name written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world. He knows the name, but we do not. One day at His good pleasure, we will know also.

A white stone. How beautiful. Here is another picture of the saint receiving recompense from the hand of God for his trials upon earth. You know, after Constantine, the false church was able to dip its hand in the state treasury and thereby erect beautiful buildings full of lovely statuary. These statues, made of white marble, were actually Roman idols renamed as saints. The churches and their furnishings were exceptionally beautiful, even as one sees today. But God was not with them. Where was God? He was with His saints in some little home, or in a cave, or some wild mountain area where they hid from the false church members. They did not have beautiful buildings, gowned choirs, fine clothes, and other worldly attractions. But now in this special promise to the true believers of all ages, God has declared He will give them rewards of great beauty and eternal duration. Let the wealthy look down on the poor. Let them give large sums to the church that it in turn might honor the donor by placing a marble plaque or some statuary in their honor on public display that all may applaud. Some day the God Who sees and knows all will once more commend the widow for giving her all, though it be but two mites, and He, Himself, reward with the treasures of heaven.

Yes, hidden manna and a new name in a white stone. How good is the Lord to us to reward us so wonderfully, and we so underserving. Oh, I want to be ready at all times to do His will, and to lay up treasures in heaven.



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Sermons By
William Marrion Branham
"... in the days of the voice ..." Rev. 10:7