

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 215

SPIRITUAL WARFARE (continued)

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them which worshipped his image. *These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*” (Rev. 19:19-20).

As we walk through the wilderness of the world there are two entities that we meet — two adversaries that confront us on every hand — the *beast* and the *false prophet*. We first meet them in chapter thirteen of the Revelation. Individually and inwardly, the *beast* is the bestial nature of the natural man of flesh. Corporately, the *beast* is the monster out of the sea of humanity with its ten horns and seven heads — the whole bestial world system of man, invented and produced out of the bestial nature of man. This includes all human governments and institutions of every kind, commercial, educational, philosophical, medical, social, military, etc. It is the dragon in man who gives the beast out of the sea of humanity his seat and great authority!

The *false prophet* is the same as the second beast in chapter thirteen of the Revelation, who comes up out of the earth and *deceives* them that dwell in the earth-realm. Therefore we understand that the second beast is also called — *the false prophet!* The first beast comes out of the *sea* of all humanity, whereas the second beast comes up out of the *earth* of man’s soulical powers, who has two horns as a lamb, but speaks like a dragon — the innate soulical religious nature of man expressed through the carnal church systems of man. Individually and inwardly, the *false prophet* is man’s own soulical powers which usurp the place, life, and voice of the spirit. Corporately, it is the soulish man-made church system which has the appearance of the Lamb of God, but speaks with the worldly voice, methods, and ways of the dragon.

What is a prophet? We must banish from our minds the popular conception that a prophet is chiefly a person who foretells the future. True, a prophet may also foretell the future, but the prophetic ministry is much broader than that. A prophet is, according to scripture, one who speaks for someone else. Aaron is called the “prophet” of Moses when they two go together before Pharaoh, and Aaron delivers the message to Pharaoh on behalf of Moses the stutterer. And that is why all the prophets of God have prefaced their prophecies with the phrase, “Thus saith the Lord!” They are men who speak *for God*, delivering His message to the people, appealing to the minds and hearts of men on behalf of God and His purposes. They speak and teach and reveal the will of God and draw men to embrace that which is the mind of the Lord.

So this second beast is also a prophet! He speaks for someone else. His purpose is to influence the minds of men, to persuade them, to rally them to the cause on behalf of which he speaks. But he is a *false prophet!* That does not mean that everything he says is a lie — not all that the serpent told mother Eve in the garden was a lie — but it was truth laced with just enough error to deceive, and that deception was deadly! That is the purpose of the words of a false prophet — deception! And if we consider this in relation to this second beast, we shall find that this in reality is his character. In the first place, his very appearance is deceiving. He has two horns like a lamb; He looks like a lamb; and one would receive the impression, therefore, that every word he speaks is the word of the only lamb that appears in the book of Revelation, the Lamb of God! But when he opens his mouth, lo, and behold, he speaks like the dragon, that is, the message he bears has some truth in it, but it is not in the final analysis the *gospel*, the *good news* of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; who has reconciled the world unto Himself; who is *not willing* that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance; who has promised to draw *all men* unto Himself; who came not to condemn the world, but that *the world* through Him might be saved, and who is in very fact THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD! But this beautiful gospel, this good news, is laced with the continual drumbeat of *bad news* of threats, intimidation, fear, condemnation, coercion, judgment, hell, and eternal damnation of the vast majority of mankind!

What beast is this that appears as a lamb, but speaks like a dragon? Ah, this refers to the false church, one that outwardly looks like the church of Christ, but His voice is not the voice of the Lamb, but that of the dragon. Today, in the church systems of man the dragon's voice can be heard out of the mouths of multitudes of pastors, evangelists, and church leaders of all kinds! They carry Bibles, they have pictures of Jesus, they sing songs of worship, they speak of Jesus and the gospel, they have "church" written on their signs and their buildings, they perform religious forms, rituals, ceremonies, and sacraments, and they do good works — it looks just like the Lamb! Yet as one listens there is discernible another sound, it is "another voice," the dragon's voice, and it is scary, frightening, filling men's hearts with consternation, condemnation, dread, and gloom. It makes men afraid of the God of all grace, mercy, and love. It fills their hearts with fear and condemnation. It leads millions into obedience to man-made rules and regulations, and subservience to the domination and control of the religious system, out of *fear* of God's displeasure, judgment, or eternal hell-fire and damnation. It is much more difficult for most Christians to trust God's love, mercy, grace, and His longing to bless, than it is for them to fear His condemnation, wrath, judgment, and damnation! The people are possessed by false ideas about God, distorted understandings of God's will, His ways, and His word, sinking them into apprehension, anxiety, condemnation, and horrible religious bondage and slavery. Oh, yes! This beast purports to speak for Christ, but because of its worldly means, vain traditions, empty forms and rituals, powerless ceremonies and sacraments, and multiplied false doctrines — it is a *false prophet!*

I am certain that by now my reader will have made the connection between the *false prophet* and *Mystery Babylon the Great*. It should be obvious to every thinking mind that they are one and the same, presented under different symbols with different significations. Mystery Babylon, on the one hand, represents the carnal church system as a *city* — an organized, powerful and influential *political institution*. The false prophet, on the other hand, represents the false church system as a *religious organism* — a voice speaking for God. The system is to be brought to its end in both respects! The destruction of Mystery Babylon, the city, is accomplished under the figures of utterly burning her with fire and casting her into the depths of the sea, never to be seen again. It denotes nothing more than her complete and eternal ruin — absolute, irreversible destruction!

The end of the false prophet, however, comes about in a little different manner. He is cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. The terminology is very precise, of which we will speak more later. But these two prophetic pictures reveal the great truth that the **church system** will be **destroyed**, it will no longer exist as a **religious organism** nor appear in the earth as the **mouthpiece of God** — from that role it will vanish from the face of the earth! But the *living people*, the *ministries* of those who truly loved God and sought to serve Him with a pure heart, the *spiritual voice* that did in some measure speak within the system will be cast into the refining fires of God to be PURGED, PURIFIED, and REFINED! That is the difference. As a worldly political institution in league with the human governments of man the church system will be utterly burned with fire and cast into the depths of the sea, never to rise any more. But as a *living organism* it will be cleansed, corrected, delivered, purified, and refined as gold is refined in the furnace!

Let us consider with care the order of events we see in this portion of the Revelation. This is all so very vital to our understanding of the purpose and working of God in these days! In chapters seventeen and eighteen of the Revelation we are shown the destruction of Mystery Babylon the Great. Immediately following that, in the first verses of chapter nineteen, we see the virgin bride of the Lamb displayed at her wedding, entering into her ultimate union and glory with Christ the Lord. Babylon is gone, and the true bride is joined fully to the Lord. But the beast of world government still exists as well as the false prophet — the spiritual ministries that previously were in Babylon. In the chapters before us God deals with the nations and the nations are saved and made to walk in the light of the city of God — which is the bride of the Lamb and the sons of God as GOD’S GOVERNMENT REVEALED ON EARTH. Before the New Jerusalem can be revealed in all its glory, and before the nations can be saved to walk in the light of it, something wonderful must happen! God must deal with both *human government* and the *false prophet*! So, what does He do? The answer is not far to be found! It’s right here in our text. “*And the beast (of human government) was taken, and with him the false prophet (the church as a religious organism) that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. THESE BOTH WERE CAST ALIVE INTO A LAKE OF FIRE BURNING WITH BRIMSTONE.*” Oh, the mystery of it! Can you not see by these words that God will judge, purge, refine, purify, and transform both the governments of the world and the church which dwelt in Babylon! Neither of these are “burnt up” in the fire as Babylon was — rather, they are cast **alive** into the fire until the work of elimination of all the dross — the impurities, the contamination, the pollution, the adulteration, the uncleanness, the unchasteness, the worldliness, and the deception — is complete and an entirely new order is brought forth! What a plan!

Thus we come to consider that awe-inspiring term — “the lake of fire.” It will prove helpful to our understanding of this great truth for us to look again for a moment at the work of fire throughout the book of Revelation. In the very first chapter we find the glorious Christ standing in the midst of the churches and “His eyes are as a flame of fire” (Rev. 1:14). The Christ’s eyes of fire, and the eyes of fire of every son of God who shares His glory, are eyes of the very same fire that is revealed throughout the Revelation. There are not two or five or ten different fires! There are His eyes of fire, and there is gold that is tried (refined) in the fire (Rev. 3:18), and it is the *same* fire, the fire of God! The fire of the golden altar which is cast into the earth is the same holy, refining fire of God and when it is cast into the earth mighty commotions take place! The fire of the golden altar is, of course, taken from the fire on the brazen altar, and this is the fire that was kindled by God Himself — it is *His divine fire*, the consuming fire which *He is!* By that fire all carnality is consumed from the sons of men, that God may be glorified in the earth-realm even as He is in the heavenlies! There are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God (Rev. 4:5), so we

know that this is the same divine fire. These seven spirits (lamps of fire) of God are also “sent forth into *all the earth*.” Is it not clear that the work of the seven lamps of fire sent into “all the earth” is but another picture of the fire from the altar that is “cast into the earth”? It is the same fire! And as a lamp of fire, on this occasion it brings *spiritual illumination* by consuming the veil that lies over men’s minds and hearts. The Lamb has seven eyes and the seven eyes are the seven-fold spirit of God, thus they are likewise the eyes of fire which are also the seven lamps burning before the throne! (Rev. 5:6).

You see, it is all the same fire of God in different administrations! There is a sea of glass mingled with fire (Rev.15:12), a people who have become within themselves an untroubled sea of tranquility, peace, and transparency, made so by the processing fire of God. All the restlessness and agitation of the carnal mind and the flesh have been burned out of them! There is fire that is cast out of the heavens of God’s Spirit upon the earth and burns up the trees that grow out of the earth (Rev. 8:7), consuming the carnal manifestations and works that grow out of the earthly, fleshly nature. There is a fire that destroys the worldly organization and sham of Mystery Babylon (Rev. 18:8), not consuming the people or any true ministry, but destroying the apostate system that enslaves them.

Then we are shown a great lake of fire for all the adversaries of God — death, hell, the beastly fleshly nature, and the world system it creates; the soulical powers of man, and the religious systems (false prophet) it spawns; and all who are incorrigible in iniquity (Rev. 14:9-11; 20:10-15). What are we meant to understand by this lake which burns with fire and brimstone? We know only too well the use the church systems have made of this conception through the ages! It has been given some horrific connotations and has been employed to create a distorted view of the character and purpose of God. The crude idea that an all-wise, all-knowing, all-righteous, and all-loving Creator would create men whom He knew before hand would follow the paths of sin and death, and before hand decree endless torture in unending flames for all of His creatures who are deceived and become captives of sin and self, does dishonor to the name and glory of our precious Lord Jesus Christ; and it is incredible that the compassionate Saviour of mankind could ever have intended for us to read into His words the macabre notion that He will use that wonderful Holy Ghost fire of His glorious Person to torture billions of souls throughout endless eternity!

The consuming fire of God is as eternal as God Himself — it is, because *He is!* “Our God IS a consuming fire.” It is that which was from the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Our Father dwells in the light that no man can approach unto. No *man!* That is, no *carnal, fleshly, Adamic nature or being!* Who shall stand when He appeareth, for He is like a *refiner’s fire!* Oh, if there be one thing for which we ought to rejoice and praise God without ceasing, it is that eternal fire which will burn up all the foulness and rottenness, all the wickedness and cruelty, all the deception, shame, and wrong from which our souls have ever suffered. It is not evil which will have the last word, but righteousness; not sorrow, but joy; not hate, but love; not death, but life; not damnation, but salvation! When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, heaven is there. When any other spirit is dominant, hell is there. It is not God who changes when we pass from one to the other, it is *we* who are changed by the eternal fire! When all that has held us captive in chains of darkness is consumed by the fire of His love and holiness, we see Him as He is and reality breaks forth!

God has created everything with which our senses make us familiar with a far deeper purpose than merely their recognition by those senses. These are but the external court; for their real meaning one must enter the Sanctuary itself; let the divine light that shines there teach us. All nature is a book of parables! From sun, moon, and stars, down to the smallest creeping thing, all have a voice to an ear that is opened to

hear, and all witness to invisible, spiritual, eternal verities. Our blessed Saviour, in the days of His sojourn here, dealt much with this book of nature, and taught most precious lessons from it.

So here in our text the figure is used of a Lake of Fire. Why a Lake? The idea in the word is repression, confinement; and, like that Dead Sea, that seems so strangely, yet perfectly to figure it, *there is no outlet!* What flows in there is brought to the end of its journey, it cannot go any further. Whatever is going to happen to it, happens *there*. It cannot happen any place else or by any other operation. Only one thing *can* happen to it! As the water of that great Sea evaporates, is lifted into the heavens, kissed and drawn by the eternal rays of the fiery, blazing sun which alone has the power to lift it, it *leaves behind* in the Sea of Death every impurity and contaminant it possessed. What comes forth from that mystical process is *pure, distilled water*. It is a similar process to the refining of silver and gold and other precious metals. It signifies in its symbolism the process of PURIFICATION. And that, my beloved, is the Lake!

Away back in the 1600's John Everard, an anointed vessel of the Lord in London, England, spoke the following beautiful and instructive words of truth:

“My beloved, now that you are here gathered together in this place, I beseech you hearken diligently to what shall now be spoken. I will use no other preface than a word or two from that saying of our Saviour in the parallel place to this, Luke 14:35, from which He makes this conclusion: *he that has ears to hear, let him hear!* Let him now hear the word of Him by whom he shall be judged in that great day. Let him now hearken to that word which shall certainly one day, either sooner or later, rise up in judgment against him. Let him hearken to the word of Him who spoke *as never man spoke*; for His words are like the wine He made at Cana — there are no words like His words — for the best words that ever man spoke had somewhat of self and carnal ends in them. But in *His* words there is no tincture, no concourse of the creature, no allays of human weakness, but they are all words of grace, and peace, the words of spirit and life; insomuch that all who heard Him wondered at *the gracious words that proceeded from His lips*; who, in all His words never sought Himself, nor His own glory (as men do), but *the glory of Him that sent Him*.

“No, hearken I pray you, to His word that could have spoken far beyond all that ever He has spoken, had He but had auditors fit to have heard and understood Him. I beseech you therefore, silence yourselves for a while, I mean your own wit and reason, and your own blind religious understandings, *and let there be silence in heaven for half an hour*, that all things may be still and quiet within you, that you may learn to know what it is *to have salt* in yourselves, that you may have salt in you, that you be not spit out of God's mouth as unsavory and loathsome to His stomach. It were far better you never heard, than that those words should be unprofitable to you.

“*And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: for it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith shall ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another*” (Mk. 9:47-50).

“The things that I intend to open to you and answer, are these three questions: (1) What is salt? (2) What is it *to have salt*? (3) What is it *to have salt in ourselves*?”

“*What is salt?* Christ says in my text, that *everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.* We must first find out what *fire* is, and then we shall know what *salt* is. This fire without any doubt is Christ Himself and that very properly, as you may see He is so called, ‘*The light of Israel shall be for a fire, and His holy one for a flame: and it shall burn and devour His thorns and His briars in one day*’ (Isa. 10:17). In these words He, the holy one of Israel, is fire in three regards: (1) of burning (2) of heat (3) of light.

“First, the nature of fire is to *burn*. Fire cannot burn itself — take note of that — fire cannot burn fire, but all things else it will burn and consume. So does Christ! He is that fire that *burns up* all our works, all whatsoever that is of man’s building, and whatsoever is *not of Himself and His own work in us*. All else He consumes and annihilates. ‘*The light of Israel shall be for a fire, and His holy one for a flame: and it shall burn and devour His thorns and His briars in one day.*’ Know this, the more sin and carnality, the more fire, the greater the burning; the more sin and carnality the more fuel, the more matter for this fire; the more sin and carnality the more treasuring up of wrath against that day, when the *wrath of God shall be revealed by fire*. ‘*Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap*’ (Mal. 3:2). Then Christ *is* this fire! And let me tell you, this burning and consuming is for your good; it is, that out of the ashes of the old man, which must be burnt up, you may have a new life, a divine resurrection!

“Examine yourself, has this fire burnt up all your works, not only gross and external wickedness, but has it burnt up all your secret sins, all your beloved and darling desires? Has it cut off your hands and feet, and plucked out your eye? Has it consumed your young men, your own strength and zeal, as the prophet speaks? Ah, has it burnt up the *old heavens* and the *old earth*, so that you may enjoy a *new heaven* and a *new earth*? (II Pet. 3:10-13). Nay, further, let me ask you, have you thrown out all your gods into the fire? Has it burnt up all your idols? If it has, I tell you, this burning is not unto death, but unto life. But be sure, that as the Lord Jesus Christ burns up and destroys, so He remakes and raises up again; and as He wounds, so He heals and makes alive again!

“Secondly, the work of fire is to *heat*. So Christ, after he has destroyed and burnt up all our actions, as they are ours and not His, then He breathes into us a gentle warmth and heat of His own Spirit to cherish and revive us again, so that we may no longer live our own lives, or live to ourselves, but live the life of Christ, to raise up His grace and glory in us.

“Thirdly, the nature of fire is to *give light*. When that day once dawns to us, that Christ comes into the soul, we shall find that He brings light with Him, and this in scripture is called *Christ’s Day*, and this is a wonderful day indeed, a day of rejoicing even unto eternity. Our first day is our own day, man’s day, and when Christ comes to burn up our day it seems to us as a day of darkness, a day of gloominess and thick clouds (Joel 2:11). Indeed to flesh and blood the Day of the Lord is a terrible day, our flesh trembles for fear of Him; for who shall abide the day of His coming, or stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner’s fire! When Christ comes into the soul, He comes not only with light to discover, but like fire to burn up all that building that we have made to ourselves, that which we have raised by our own power, and then breathes warmly and gently by His Spirit His own life, until by degrees He brings a glorious light into the soul. He then turns us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts 26:10).

“Yes, He shines such a light of grace and glory, as makes *‘the light of the moon as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven times brighter’* (Isa. 30:26). As our own lives extinguish, so Christ’s life increases, just as the prophet Elisha did when he raised the Shunammite’s child. ‘He lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm...and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes...’ (II Kings 4:34-35). In the same manner we receive warmth from Christ, and are raised to life again, and are made *partakers of His divine nature*, even as a graft in a crab tree stock changes the whole nature of the old tree, both sap, leaves, bark, and fruit; so does Christ in union with our soul change our nature — He changes them into His own!

“And thus you see in brief what *fire* is! *‘Our God is a consuming fire’* (Heb. 12:29). Christ is the fire! But now, what is the *salt*? I know it is taken and expounded in divers ways. Some take it be wisdom and discretion in speech, and for proof they cite that place of the apostle where he says, *‘Let your speech be always seasoned with salt’* (Col. 4:6). For so Solomon says, *‘A wise man may hold up his head before princes’* (Prov. 16:13; Eccl. 8:1). They give this reason, as salt preserves and keeps things from stinking, so does wisdom so salt, and season a man’s words, that they may not be unsavory to wise men, so that he is not laughed to scorn. We cannot deny that.

“Others take salt to mean holiness and sincerity in life as our Saviour says, *‘Ye are the salt of the earth’* (Mat. 5:13). That is, they say, when by their living, and their speaking the truth in their words, and dealing justly and uprightly with men, and expressing holiness in all their actions towards God, this seasons their lives, this makes them savory before God and men, the salt of the earth seasoning all. So they interpret the words of our Saviour, *‘Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men’* (Mat. 5:13). When men live not as they profess, they are unsavory, and men tread and trample such men’s profession as dirty and loathsome. To make a show of that which is not, is hateful to God and men, but sincerity and integrity are savory to both; and therefore, say they, He admonishes them to strive for sound doctrine, integrity of life, constancy in suffering; for these things honor their profession, and this seasons them with salt, and makes them savory to God and men. Their interpretation is good, I reject it not.

“But to be short, that we may come to the matter at hand, the fire and the salt are both one, **‘...for everyone shall be SALTED WITH FIRE.’** Christ Himself *is the fire*, as we have shown already, so therefore He is also the *salt*. Since every man shall be *salted with fire* Christ has to be both the salt and the fire! So Jesus Christ is the fire that salts every man; yea, HE IS BOTH!

“Yet I confess that the apostles were also called salt, as Christ also said, *‘Ye are the salt of the earth.’* Not that they were salt within themselves or the salt indeed, but were those who lived the Christ-life, the life of Him who is salt. They were those which uttered the salt and lived the salt, which is Christ. Therefore they were not themselves the salt, but they were the instruments or ministers which Christ used to convey and impart to us the *true salt* which is Christ, and in no other regard were they *the salt of the earth*.

“And again, Christ says (in the same sense), *‘Ye are the light of the world’* (Mat. 5:14). Yet John tells us plainly that *‘HE is the true light, which lightens every man that cometh into the world,’* and Jesus Himself says, *‘I am the light of the world’* (Jn. 8:12). So we are the light of the world only because *He* is the one who

has lighted us and now shines through us as our light. So it is with Christ and us, we are only what He is in us and through us! He it was also who was typified in all the oblations and sacrifices under the law, and by all the relations, histories, and representations throughout the Old Testament; 'tis HE that is set forth and intended, that He might be made known unto the sons of men. He was *the true Paschal Lamb*, He was *the true sacrifice*, He was *that fire* that always burned upon the altar (Lev. 6:13). He also was that salt commanded for the sacrifice, for the salt was never to be wanting just as the fire must always burn upon the altar of sacrifice. And so our Lord says, **'For everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.'** HE was that salt which must never be wanting; HE seasons every oblation (Lev. 2:13). HE is the salt of the *everlasting covenant unto you and your seed for ever*' (Num. 18:19). HE was that salt that *Elisha threw into the waters; and those many waters are many people*, as it is expressed in the book of Revelation. In sum, HE is *the substance*, the *mind*, and the *meaning* of the whole scriptures!

“As He is the fire, by reason of burning, and because of heat and light; so also He is the salt that sweetens and savors everything. As He is *the light that enlightens*, so He is *the salt that salts* every man. So when His fire purifies you and His salt sweetens and savors you, your sacrifice is **salted with fire** and salted with salt. So apart from Christ men's lives are unsavory, the Adamic man is unsavory as Job says, *'Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt?'* (Job 6:6). It is not your salt, not the best duties you can perform will make you savory, except they be salted and seasoned by the Christ within” — end quote.

If you think the kingdom of God is rosewater, or eau-de-cologne, you are mistaken. You cannot war on the devil with that! You cannot war on the carnal mind with that! You cannot war on the flesh with that! You cannot war on the world with that! You cannot war on religion with that! You have to make war with weapons that are mighty through God! You have to make war on the carnal mind and on the flesh nature and on all their offspring with fire, divine fire, that will burn up every inherent altar of Baal, and consume even the stones and lick up the very dust about. OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE! CHRIST IS A REFINING FIRE! He is man's "horse breaker" and He will break you, precious friend of mine, and bring you to the foot of the cross of Jesus no matter how hot He has to build the fire around you! He will cast you into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. Even if long ages of fiery judgment and burning processing and tormenting darkness fall upon you, they will last no longer than till the Great Fire of God has melted all arrogance into humility, and all that is of self has died and been reduced to ashes in the bloody sweat and all-conquering cross of the Christ, which will never give up its redeeming and transforming power until sin and sinners and self and carnality and man-made religiosity have no more a name among the creatures of God.

Who cast the beast and the false prophet into the Lake of Fire? John doesn't say. His description of the action simply states that "the beast **was taken**, and **with him** the false prophet...and **they were cast alive** into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." The battle was between the beast and the false prophet against Christ and all the holy sons of God riding upon the white horses; therefore, we may conclude that the sons of God, the armies out of heaven, are the ones who do the casting.

To the saints is given authority to baptize men with the Holy Ghost, but also to baptize them with *fire*, to cast them into the great lake of fire and brimstone which *our God is* and which *in Him we are*, to burn out of their minds, souls, and bodies the thoughts and ways and passions and wills that are contrary and hostile to the will of God. "In righteousness He doth **judge** and **make war.**" An act of that judgment is the casting of men into the lake of fire! The fire of God is His all-consuming LOVE. Out of His burning love the sons of God shall send decrees and commands coming from the Most High God and the Lamb out of Zion. The sons of God will send decrees to individuals, to rulers, to authorities, to institutions, to armies, to church

systems, to governments, to nations — we will even send commands to the elements as our Lord did when He spoke to the winds and the waves, hushing the gale and calming the waters with His word. Men rose up out of death and the grave, and even the demons cried out with loud voices and came out of many that were possessed of them. It is by THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, the One riding the lead horse, that all these things and many more shall be seen in the earth with great power and great glory!

THE REMNANT SLAIN

“And the *remnant were slain* with the sword of Him that sat upon the white horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:21).

We have arrived once more at the end of a chapter. I will not comment on our text, but feel to share the words of Stephen Jones who has beautifully confirmed my own thoughts and convictions in regard to the “slaying” of the remnant, that is, the rest, the remaining ones, or those people or those things of flesh within any of us which had not been fully dealt with by God. He writes:

“In ancient times, God sent a literal sword upon Babylon by the hand of Medo-Persia toward the end of Daniel’s life. However, the sword that is used in the book of Revelation is *‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’* (Eph. 6:17). This is made plain in Revelation 1:16, which says, *‘out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword.’* This is confirmed later in Revelation 19:5, which says, *‘And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations...’* It is the same ‘sword’ that God used through His prophets in the Old Testament. *‘Therefore have I hewn them in pieces by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth; and the judgments on you are like the light (understanding) that goes forth. For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings’* (Hos. 6:5-6).

“In other words, God ‘slew’ them and cut them in pieces with WORDS. Why? Because He preferred loyalty to Him rather than sacrifice. In other words, He did not want to literally kill them, so He did NOT use a physical sword. The sword He used was the *spiritual sword* described elsewhere in the New Testament. And this is the ‘sword’ by which He will slay the nations, as described in the book of Revelation. This tells us that His intent is NOT to shed blood, but to cause people to repent by the word of His mouth. And so, while the description is in physical terms of warfare, blood, and destruction, this is not really what God intends for the nations at all. The nations *are God’s inheritance — and ours* (Ps. 2; Rev. 2:26-27) — so it would make no sense to destroy them! The only thing that God intends to destroy is oppressive government and false religion (the beast and the false prophet) that burdens the people today and deceives them into doing violence to others.

“Once again, let us not think of God as a torturer. The law does not specify torture as a proper judgment of divine law. The law, however, is pictured as a *fire* in Deuteronomy 33:2-3, saying, *‘from His right hand went a fiery law for them...all His saints are in Thy hand.’* In other words, the ‘fiery law’ in God’s hand is identified with the ‘saints’ in His hand. When the law is written on the hearts of the overcomers, they *become* His fiery law, and they become the administrators of divine justice and rulership in the earth. The fire of God comes from His right hand, the place of rulership, and all of His saints are in His

hand. It pictures the overcomers as the manifested sons of God administering the divine law to the world according to the mind of Christ. This is the meaning of the ‘fire’ as God intended it from the beginning.

“I write these things in order to show the divine plan in the mind of God from the beginning. Only by knowing the divine plan from the beginning can we understand the end of the story in the book of Revelation, because that book tells us how God’s plan succeeds after a long detour. Revelation 14:9-11 tells us that those who continue to worship the beast and his image will drink of the wine of God’s judicial wrath, *“and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence (Greek: before the ‘face’) of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.’* Men have long interpreted this literally, as if God plans to torture sinners in front of Him like the kings of the beast systems have done to their opponents over the centuries. But God is not like them! In fact, it is because of their injustice and torture that God will remove them from their positions of authority over the earth. God will not have unjust tyrants ruling in His kingdom — not even Christian tyrants like King Saul or the Popes! The verse simply means that with the holy angels and the Lamb (and those with Him) present, these unrepentant people will be tormented *by their very presence!*” — end quote. What a word that is!

To be continued...

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