

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 216

THE BINDING OF SATAN

I once read a story stemming from the Middle Ages at which time the Christians were in control of Jerusalem. Being in control of Jerusalem, the Christians thought that it would be appropriate for them to banish the Jews from the city. So they tried various methods until, finally, they decided that they would get the pope to come and talk them into leaving. So it was, that arrangements were made for the pope to come for a debate with the head rabbi. All of the cardinals came with the pope, and all the rabbi's assistants attended with their leader. As the debate began, the pope and the rabbi agreed that it would be best if they met alone. And so, all of their advisors left. However, the pope couldn't speak Yiddish and the rabbi couldn't speak the pope's language so they communicated by using hand signals.

The pope began his discourse by moving his arms in a big circle. Then the rabbi responded by pointing to the ground. Immediately following that, the pope held up three fingers, to which the rabbi responded by holding up one finger. To that, the pope pulled out a chalice and held it up, at which the rabbi pulled from his robe an apple and held it up high. Seeing all this, the rabbi then threw his arms up in the air and concluded, "The Jews stay!" The cardinals overheard the verdict, ran into the chambers, and pulled the pope aside. They requested the details of the debate. Why had he allowed the Jews to stay? The pope said to them, "I threw my arms in a big circle to say that God is everywhere. The rabbi responded by pointing to the ground, to say that I was right but that God was also here. I then held up three fingers saying that God is three persons. The rabbi responded by holding up one finger clarifying that God is also one person. At that, I pulled out my chalice to share with him the idea that we believe in the blood of Jesus Christ as our grace and our union with God. He then pulled out an apple referring to the original sin of Adam, that all people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and therefore we are all equal in the sight of God, meaning by this that the Jews would stay."

The rabbi's council had also come into the meeting. They asked their leader to explain what had been said in the debate. The rabbi obliged them saying, "The pope swept his arms in a circle saying that we must all leave. I pointed to the ground saying that we would not; we would stay because this is our homeland. So he held up three fingers indicating that we had three days to get out. I held up one finger and said that it was the Christians who had but one day to leave. At this, he grabbed his chalice to begin eating his lunch, so I took out my apple."

The above story illustrates the great truth that if you interpret what you see and hear about the great things of God with the *natural understanding* — the *carnal mind* — you will miss the point altogether and will, along with most Christians, arrive at erroneous and absurd conclusions. And assuredly this is no more true anywhere than when we come to the symbolisms of the visions of John in the book of Revelation!

If we *understand* how a machine works, then the most intricate mechanism in the world is simple, but if we lack this understanding, even the simplest device can bewilder us. Well do I remember my fascination as I listened to a friend who at that time worked at the White Sands Missile Range explain the almost incredible performance of our missile and anti-missile systems. When I expressed my astonished admiration, he smiled and said, “Well, really it is quite simple when you understand the principle of it.” Any who have received specialized training and have become proficient in their specific field, will not doubt the truth of that statement. Many years ago I watched the frustration of my nine year old daughter as she tried to connect a tire pump to her bicycle tire. Not having connected anything like that before, the harder she tried to screw the pump connector on to the valve stem the more difficulty she was in. After a short period of observation I went over and pointed out to her that it is necessary to hold the connector absolutely straight over the valve while turning it in order for the threads to join. A very simple lesson, but how important! So whether it be a multi-million dollar missile or a five dollar pump, both are quite simple when you know how they work. The way a bumble bee flies with wings disproportionate to its body size and shape is still a mystery to man, but to the bee it is merely the way of his life.

The same thought of *understanding* was in the heart of the apostle Paul when he wrote, “I cease not to make mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the EYES OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING BEING ENLIGHTENED; that ye may **know** what is the hope of His calling...” (Eph. 1:15-18). When men earnestly seek the face of the Lord, He raises up within them His Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness of the natural mind that ever hangs as a shroud over us that He may reveal to our spiritual minds the things that pertain to the higher realm of His kingdom. In all matters of revelation and spiritual understanding it is impossible to overestimate the importance of the Spirit, who comes to take the things of God and show them unto us. Two worlds, indeed, two realms exist all about us and within us — the natural world and the spiritual world. The natural realm is the realm of man, but the spiritual realm is the realm of God. The natural man *cannot* understand the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he *know* (or explain) them, for they are *spiritually* discerned (I Cor. 2:14). Can we not see by this that the explanations of a carnal mind about the spiritual meanings of scripture would, as do many of the popular church teachings today, sound just as ridiculous and absurd as the pope’s explanation of the rabbi’s hand signals!

Men of the world have told me that the things recorded in the Bible are ridiculous, and I suppose to them they are, since God has declared, “it is foolishness to them.” I do not hesitate to say that although the mind and heart of each and every child of God has been quickened by the Spirit of God, yet, in our spiritual immaturity we have oft times understood only a minute portion of the things that pertain to the vast and marvelous realm into which we have been birthed. Like Israel of old, even in the reading of the scriptures, a veil has been over our minds and we have been limited to that which our carnal mind and natural understanding could interpret, so that we have seen the things of God from the limited view of human comprehension rather than seeing things *as they really are in the spiritual world of God*. Understand this and you will know a great truth: Divine revelation *always* carries one *beyond* what the natural mind can grasp and decipher. Read any chapter or verse in the whole Bible, and if you can understand what you read *with your natural mind*, then you have missed the message! You have failed to discover the *true meaning* which lies hidden deep beneath the apparent meaning. If you do not see any truth above and beyond what is obvious on the surface to the natural understanding then you have not been touched by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God and what you do understand is not a living revelation of truth to you at all, but merely a DEAD LETTER.

As we approach chapter twenty of the Revelation there are four primary scenes presented in the chapter. As the curtain rings up, the first scene is *the chaining of the dragon*. “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he *laid hold on the dragon*, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and *bound him* a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him...” (Rev. 20:1-3). In the vision John sees an angel descending out of the heaven with a great chain in one hand and the keys of the abyss in the other. He lays hold on the dragon, fetters him, throws him as it were bodily into the pit, clamps down the lid, seals it shut, and shut it remains for a thousand years. The question follows — is John seeing and portraying literal fact or is it a spiritual truth stated figuratively in the form of a drama?

John was a Jew, and to a degree a Grecianized Jew. He lived in a Greek world and used the Greek language. Ancient Greece was the classical home of the drama, therefore he was familiar with the figurativeness and allegory of the drama. In a Greek drama written by Aeschylus 400 years before John wrote the Revelation, there occurs a scene which closely parallels the opening scene of this chapter. So striking is the similarity that more than one commentator, leaning only on natural understanding, has been inclined to the belief that the author of the Revelation borrowed the concept from that Greek drama — “Prometheus Bound.” Prometheus is a Greek demigod of Greek mythology. He offends the gods by stealing fire from the temple of Zeus and teaching its use to man. As punishment for teaching man how to use fire Zeus commands that this crafty trickster be bound fast in chains, and with chains about his arms and limbs and a wedge driven through his bosom, he is riveted to a rock for 10,000 years, and is finally released from torment by the mighty hands of Hercules.

Few people, however, have ever thought of taking the story of Prometheus *literally*. It is a story, a drama, embodying a moral truth. And if anyone insists on interpreting this twentieth chapter of the Revelation literally, then literal he must be from beginning to end. The angel, the dragon, the chains, the keys, the abyss, the lid, the seal, and the thousand years must all alike be taken literally. ALL must either be literal, or ALL must be symbolical. No *spiritual* mind can view it literally! It is a picture of spiritual truth and reality. What the Holy Spirit is conveying in chapter twenty is that the dragon himself, that is, the ancient serpent, the Devil, even Satan, all satanic power and influence, will be put in absolute restraint within us by the bonds of the *living word of God!*

In the preceding chapter we saw the beast and the false prophet captured and Babylon destroyed. But what about the dragon? Not a word there about “that old serpent”! Bear in mind that the beast, the false prophet, and Babylon are all *manifestations* of error, religiosity, carnality and evil. But the dragon is the *cause* behind the manifestations. When the nineteenth chapter closes, though the outward expressions of carnality have been brought to judgment, the instigator of these, the devil himself, is still at large, and just so long as he is at liberty to roam about, as long as deception, religiosity, carnality, lust, and sin continue in the heart of mankind, the dragon will build other Babylons and breathe falseness into other prophets. You have not destroyed the devil when you have destroyed the *works* of the devil! To the undimmed vision of the Seer of Patmos it is as clear as day that the work of God within man would not only destroy the works of the devil but ultimately would put the very spirit and power of deception, carnality, corruption, and evil in secure, effective, unbreakable bonds where in his confinement he is unable in any way to carry out his purposes. It is indeed wonderful!

The vision starts out with these words, “And I saw an *angel* come down from *heaven* having the *key* to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.” The Greek word used for angel is *aggelos* and simply means *messenger*. The usage of this word throughout the New Testament can indicate any kind of messenger from an actual heavenly being, to a minister of God in the flesh, to a messenger — either spirit or flesh —

from the devil, and even a person delivering a message of any kind from one man to another. This angel, however, is an angel coming down out of the heavens of God's Spirit. Those who have studied with us this far must certainly see that *the angel himself is a symbol* signifying a *word of the Lord* which comes out of a heavenly realm, out of the spirit, out of the mouth of God. Various "angels" appear throughout the book of Revelation accomplishing a vast array of things which are the works of God wrought by the power of His Living Word. Actually, God does not send literal heavenly angels to do the great spiritual works set forth in this book, for all is the activity of the mighty Christ in and by the Holy Spirit! It is not the revelation of angels — it is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! It was Michael the archangel *in type* who fought the dragon in the heavens of the spirit when the dragon was set to devour the manchild, and cast him out. Let the fact be imprinted indelibly upon our minds that in this age of the Holy Spirit God does not send the *literal* archangel Michael to make war with, and defeat the devil, on behalf of God's sons — it is the Christ of God who "casts out" all devils, bruises the head of the serpent, and bruises Satan under our feet! If God had to marshal Michael to assist Christ and the sons of God in their defeat of Satan then Michael would be seen as the stronger and the mightier of them all!

The "angel" is none other than the Christ — the Living Word! No other can bind Satan and restrain his power and liberty. Even a great angel like the one sent to strengthen Daniel beside the river Hiddekel, was unable to come at once to Daniel's aid when he (the angel) was obstructed by one of the satanic "princes" sent to monitor the affairs of the kingdom of Persia (Dan. 10:10-13). Michael did come to assist that angel and gave him success in his mission — but *this angel* in the Revelation has the *key* to the bottomless pit; and throughout the Revelation the One given the KEYS to death, hell, and the pit is none other than God's glorious Christ! The prince of darkness can only be bound by one mightier than himself, and that One is Christ who has received the keys. No other "angel" has ever been given these wonderful keys!

Now we come to a different work, for not only is the dragon *cast out* of our heavens (Rev. 12), but now he must be *bound* in our earth! So the symbolic angel possesses the key to the abyss, and carries a great chain, and moves swiftly with omnipotent power and authority in our earth realm, for he has come to our earth out of the heavens of the spirit, to lay hold upon the dragon; he binds him firmly with the chain, casts him into the abyss, and locks and seals him in, that he may no more deceive the nations for a thousand years. What a picture! This, of course, signifies the work of God now wrought within the life of each and every member of God's elect, and eventually in the life of every man and woman of Adam's race. The great light of divine revelation shines brightly upon the process — the "angel" comes down from heaven, that is, the message, the word, the revelation of Christ has to *come down* out of the subconscious of our spirit into the consciousness of our human reality. The voice of the Son of God must be heard out of the spiritual and heavenly realm — but *earth* must *hear* His voice! The word from heaven must be *made flesh* within us. Only in this way can the dragon be bound in the depths of our being. So it is with every son of God, and so shall it be unto every man. John in astonished wonder beholds the unfoldment of this divine process in the drama of the vision he sees!

THE JUDGMENT AND DESTRUCTION OF THE DRAGON

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and *bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him*, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled" (Rev. 20:2-3). And then later we read, "And the devil that deceived them *was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone*, where the beast and the false prophet are..." (Rev. 20:10).

Our text deals with the judgment and destruction of Satan, which takes place in two aspects or stages: first a binding or imprisonment, then finally a casting into the lake of fire and brimstone. The twentieth

chapter of the Revelation is one of the most difficult in the book, and, perhaps with one exception, the most widely misunderstood. In order to grasp its meaning it is absolutely essential to preserve a sense of perspective. To many minds the two great subjects of its first ten verses are the *first resurrection* and the *millennium*. But the real object of the vision is not to describe either. Even these are misunderstood and misinterpreted, but they are both purely incidental to the main object of these verses, which is to set forth the ***overthrow of Satan***. Of the four enemies of God's Christ revealed in the Revelation — the beast, the false prophet, Babylon, and the dragon — he is the chief. All along he has been the real troublemaker, for he is called "that ancient serpent," thus identifying him as the same old serpent who seduced Eve in the Garden. He is also the "devil," meaning slanderer, the one who accuses us before God within ourselves — the spirit of condemnation. And he is "Satan," the adversary, ever standing in opposition to test and try us in our upward walk in God. He has always been behind the other three, instigating and directing, although unseen and unrecognized. The overthrow of those others, his three great agents, has already been described in chapters seventeen through nineteen. But we cannot know the full victory over the very last enemy, death, until *this enemy* has been fully dealt with in our lives!

In chapters seventeen and eighteen we see the dramatic and cataclysmic judgment and destruction of the soulical system of *Mystery Babylon*. Chapter nineteen ended with the war between the Rider of the white horse and His army and the *beast* and the *false prophet* culminating with their judgment and their end in the lake of fire. Now that picture has passed, and John sees a new vision, and this one seems to follow the last one in sequence, for verse ten informs us that the devil himself is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone "*where the beast and the false prophet are.*" So now we are to witness the judgment of God on the dragon who all along has been the *instigator* of all the activities of *Mystery Babylon*, the *beast*, and the *false prophet*!

God has given all His judgments to us for our redemption, deliverance, purification, and transformation. As we receive His judgments into our lives they are His judgments upon our own bestial nature, and upon the beastly religious systems and the beastly world system which have dominated and controlled us. Christ enables us to overcome these by the blood of the Lamb — by the raising up of His divine and victorious *life* within us — and by the word of our testimony, that is, our acceptance and profession of Divine Truth as it is revealed to us by the spirit. The *last* enemy that shall be destroyed is death (I Cor. 15:26) and that ultimate victory is shown to us a little further on in our present chapter. The *sequence* of these things in the Revelation is so vitally significant and important! So we see that between the destruction of *Mystery Babylon*, the *beast*, the *false prophet*, and finally the *last enemy*, death itself — there is one other adversary that must be dealt with in our lives and that is he who has the *power of death* — the devil! (Heb. 2:14). That satanic root which lies in the abyss of our own hearts must be fully overcome and eradicated, and that precisely, my beloved, is the spiritual drama now set before us in the opening verses of chapter twenty! Jesus fought all these battles and overcame every adversary ***within Himself***, and in Him and through Him *we shall also be made more than overcomers!*

Let us consider with care that this vision opens with the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is also the Devil, and Satan, being arrested and put in a maximum security prison for a time — symbolically one thousand years to be exact. But yet, the dealing of God with Satan is not finished at this point — a further work must be executed in relation to him — so he is let out on bail, as it were, for a little while, during which time he does his very worst, following which he stands trial for his crimes and is sentenced to his ultimate judgment — the very same lake of fire and brimstone where the *beast*, the *false prophet*, death, hell, and all men who abide in the realm of death have been placed "for the ages of the ages." It is my conviction that we can never understand the vision John sees, or the truth about the binding of Satan, or his casting into the bottomless pit, or the loosing again of Satan for a short season, and his eventual casting into the lake of fire and brimstone, ***until*** we truly UNDERSTAND just ***who*** and ***what*** Satan is!

SATAN — A SPIRIT!

What scientists have discovered makes it relatively easy to believe in the existence of worlds, or spheres of life, beyond the comprehension of human senses. In the realm of sound, for example, we know that the human ear is quite limited, that sounds which are very real are inaudible to us if they are below or above a certain range of frequency. And the same is true of sight. The existence of radio waves, gamma rays, ultra-violet light rays, etc., also helps us to realize the power of invisible forces which are beyond our comprehension. In Ephesians 2:2 Satan is described as “the prince of the power of the air, the *spirit* that now worketh *in* the children of disobedience.” The Amplified Bible states it this way, “At one time...you were following the course and fashion of the world...following the prince of the power of the air. You were obedient to him and were under his control, the *demon spirit* that still constantly works (Greek: *energeo*, energizes) in the sons of disobedience...for we are not wrestling with *flesh* and *blood* — contending only with physical opponents — but against *despotisms*, against the *powers*, against the *master spirits* who are the world rulers of this present darkness, against the *spirit forces* of wickedness in the heavenly (spiritual) sphere” (Eph. 2:2,6-12).

The message is clear — we have had the FALSE GOD in us! It came as a revelation to me when I saw that the Holy Spirit lives and moves and energizes in those who have been “begotten of God” and “born of the Spirit” — regenerated. The spirit within us that is born of God is renewed and raised up within us *in the image of God*. But then I read that if the Holy Spirit is working in the children of God, there is also a *spirit* energizing within the children of the Devil. “The *spirit* that now worketh *in* the children of disobedience.” Who can dispute the poignant words of the apostle John, “Ye are of God, little children...because greater is HE that is IN YOU, than HE that is IN THE WORLD” (I Jn. 4:4). Then two verses later John clearly identifies these *two spirits* which are in the people of God and the people of the world: “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the *spirit of truth* and the *spirit of error*.” Paul adds to this his testimony: “Now we have received, not the *spirit* of the world, but the *spirit* which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (I Cor. 2:12).

This gives us a most wonderful understanding of the workings of *spirit*. Spirit, like everything else in nature, has its opposites — positive and negative, good and evil, light and darkness. The negative power, Satan, is an invisible spiritual influence — energy — which exerts itself upon the mind, desires, emotions, and will of men. We must certainly realize that what we call “flesh” and the “Adamic life” and the “carnal mind” is actually *animated, energized, inspired, and activated* by a **life principle**. Understand that and you will understand where Satan’s seat is! “IN WHOM the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MINDS of them” (II Cor. 4:4). The spirit of God is the spirit of truth; the spirit of the Devil is the spirit of error. “To open their eyes, and turn them from *darkness* (wrong understanding, perverted knowledge) to *light* (truth), and from the *power of Satan* unto *God*” (Acts 26:18). Some teach that in all the universe there is only ONE SPIRIT. And truly, in the sphere of the kingdom of God, there is but the one spirit, for “he that is joined unto the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT” (I Cor. 6:17). The question follows — What about he that is **not** “joined unto the Lord”?

The fact that a thing is “spirit” does not necessarily make it equal to or of the same character as God. God is not God, in fact, because he is spirit — neither is that which is spirit necessarily of the same mind and expression of God just because it is spirit. There must be something more than that to make it qualify for godhood. Using the physical body as an example, let us note that although it is *flesh* from the very moment of its conception, it could not be said that everything that is “flesh” is HUMAN! Thus it is that man’s *substance* is flesh, but his *being* is much more! Obviously, there are more than one kind of flesh. What makes a man human is not the fact that he is flesh — he is human because he takes on a particular shape and

is endowed with an intellect and a certain set of emotions and capacities. Paul states it this way, “All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds” (I Cor. 15:39). Learn this, O man, and you will know a great principle: ALL FLESH IS NOT THE SAME FLESH! All flesh came from the same creative hand of God, but the quality and characteristics differ. What depth of meaning this adds to the statement of the apostle wherein he says, “Know ye not that he which is joined unto an harlot is...ONE FLESH?” (I Cor. 6:16). Obviously, all flesh is not *one flesh*. The flesh of a fish and the flesh of a dog can never be *one flesh*. But any flesh which is of the same nature and may be joined in a union of life with its own kind is one flesh. And may I add, though there be gods many, and lords many, *to us* there is but one God, the Father; and though there be spirits many, *to us* there is but *one spirit*, and one body, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

I am sure that it would be correct to conclude that in the physical world a man's *substance* is flesh, but his *being* is much more! So it is with God. His *substance* is *spirit* — but His *being* is MUCH MORE THAN THAT! In connection with this truth I am deeply impressed to share the following thoughts from a letter I received from a friend of many years. She writes, “It is on this account that I say that God is not God because He is spirit. God is, rather, God because He is LOVE! He is God because He is UNIFIED! God is *spirit* — that is His *substance*. God is *love* — that is His *being*! The very fact that God *is* — as a state of being — *love* speaks of His plurality, for, without that plurality, God could not be love as a state of being. He could only have love for that which is outside Himself. God I-S LOVE — and love is UNITY — because love is cohesive. When the holy men declared, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is ONE LORD,’ they were announcing the *unity* within the Godhead — the *love* and cohesive force among *Elohim*. This love, of course, is far more than a sentimental virtue. Love is a very real power and is the very essence of the *being* of God by virtue of the cohesiveness of His plurality, and the nature that makes Him all that He is. It is the LIFE-FORCE of God which makes Him ONE, although He is MANY!

“I re-iterate: God's substance is spirit — but His being is love. ‘God is love (unity, cohesiveness), and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him’ (I Jn. 4:16). By the same token, whatever is not dwelling in love is *not* God though it be constructed of the same substance — namely *spirit*. Where there is still *ego*, dividing a man's spirit from the whole, there is not God but Adam. Spirit is not good — neither is spirit evil. Spirit is just a *type of thing*, just as flesh is a *type of thing*. For that matter, flesh is neither good nor evil. It is just there. That's all. Flesh becomes evil when its use is perverted. Flesh is good when it is properly used as the temple of God or in another manner of speaking, when it is used to give visible manifestation to the nature of God. As Paul said, ‘There is nothing impure of itself,’ and, again, ‘to the pure all things are pure.’ Spirit, then, like anything else is neither good nor evil until it is expressed through usage. Only then does it take on an evil or unrighteous character” — end quote.

Oriental imagery is never more graphically displayed in all its eloquence than in the use of the biblical word “serpent” as a figure of Satan. This symbol, along with a number of other word pictures, is very expressive of his nature and activity. I make no apology for declaring to you the truth that each and every creature of earth typifies a higher reality in the realm of *spirit* — good or bad, positive or negative. This can be seen clearly in the words of Jesus when He says, “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the *devils* are subject unto us through Thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (the realm of *spirit*). Behold I give you power to TREAD ON SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS, and over *all* the power of the enemy” (Lk. 10:17-19). Spake He of serpents and scorpions of the field? Nay, my brother, my sister, He spake rather of *spirits* possessing the nature typified by serpents and scorpions, hidden and cunning, dangerous and deadly, slithering about in the lowest realms of man's earthiness, in the thoughts and desires and ambitions of the carnal mind, full of deadly venom. Even the fowls of heaven, as the law of Moses shows us, clean and unclean, each bespeak of a kind or quality of nature, expressing those characteristics that originate in the spirit realm. Hence, in scripture unclean birds are a type of corrupt natures

that express themselves in high spiritual realms, as John the Revelator reveals in these words, “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great 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*” (Rev. 18:2). We know the Lamb, the meek and sacrificial nature of the Christ within, the Son of the living God, gentle, kind, compassionate, pure and holy, redemptive, blessing all He touches; but have we not known also the nature of the beast, wild and ravenous, that spirit, so obvious in the world, which stomps and rends and breaks in pieces and devours, of whom Peter warns us, saying, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a *roaring lion*, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8).

Let us meditate deeply upon this word — *spirit*. The English word is from the Latin *spirare*, meaning “to breathe,” the words *respiration*, *expiration*, and *inspiration* all being derived from the same source. The word “spirit” in the Old Testament is the translation of the Hebrew word *ruwach*, the primary significance or root-meaning of which is *wind*. Similarly, the New Testament Greek word is *pneuma*, coming from *pneo*, meaning “to breathe or blow,” the primary significance or root-meaning also being *wind*. The English word “ghost” used in the King James Bible, though now somewhat obsolete and not in general use, is derived from the Greek *pneuma* — meaning a blowing or a wind. But let no one hastily conclude that we are about to attempt to prove that the Holy Spirit is a *Holy Wind*, for nothing could be farther from our thought!

Since one cannot live without air and breathing in the physical world, wind and breath are used symbolically of the Holy Spirit, apart from whom there can be no life in the realm of the divine. The Holy Spirit is thus God’s breath, God’s out-breathing, God’s *energy force* by which He accomplishes His purpose and executes His will. Many times we have thought of the Holy Spirit as *power*, and certainly He has power, but power denotes basically the *ability* or *capacity* to act or do things and it can be latent, dormant, inactively resident in someone or something. *Force*, on the other hand, is always active and more specifically describes energy *projected* and *exerted upon* persons and things, and may be defined as “an influence which produces or tends to produce motion, or change of motion.” *Power* might be likened to the stored energy in a battery; it is there, but inactive. *Force*, however, could be compared to the current flowing from the battery, starting and running the car. *Force*, then, more accurately represents the sense of the Hebrew and Greek terms relating to God’s Spirit, and this is borne out in a consideration of the scriptures.

It will greatly aid our perception of the activity of the Holy Spirit once we understand the simple truth that all spirit is *energy*. Energy has many forms, but it is not something that you can see or hold in your hand. You can think of energy as something that can make things change. For example, a moving object has energy because it can change things by crashing into them. Heat is another form of energy. Heat energy can change ice by melting it into water, and heat it more, changing it into vapor. It can run the engine of an automobile, jet plane, or rocket. There is another kind of energy, called chemical energy. It is in the coal or oil that heats buildings. It is in the food that nourishes your body and keeps you active. There is atomic energy which can be set free from the atoms of some materials. And there is the energy carried by light waves, called electromagnetic energy. It is the electromagnetic energy in sunlight that warms the earth. Light waves, streaming out of the sun, carry energy to us across nearly a hundred million miles of space. When the energy of the light hits the earth, part of it changes to heat. Some of it is stored in plants as chemical energy.

Another kind of energy of which we, the people of God, are aware is SPIRIT ENERGY. In physics energy is known as the capacity for doing work. The Greek noun for energy is *energeo* and its verb form is *energeia*. These words are used in the Greek New Testament several times. Because of the association between “doing work” and “energy,” the words are generally translated into English as “work” or “working.” Since so much has been learned about energy in recent decades it would now be far better, in my opinion, to translate the words for just what they mean — *energy* or *energizing*. Let us look at a few scriptures. “That ye may know...what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the *working*

(energeia) of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead” (Eph. 1:18-20). Yes, it was energy, *God’s energy*, which RAISED CHRIST FROM THE DEAD! And the record further states that He was raised up by the SPIRIT of the Father! Oh, yes! That is SPIRIT ENERGY!

And not only did Paul say that it was God’s energy, or His invisible power in motion as force, which raised Christ up, but he went on to say that it was the same energy of God which transformed his own life and made him a minister of Jesus Christ. “Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual *working* (energeia) of HIS POWER” (Eph. 3:7). How plain it would be rendered thus, “I was made a minister...by the effectual *energizing* of HIS POWER.” Then on top of this Paul declares that it is this same ENERGIZING or SPIRIT ENERGY of God which is WORKING OR ENERGIZING WITHIN US to bring us unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual *working* (*energizing*) of every part, maketh increase of the body...” (Eph. 4:16).

And furthermore Paul states that “he that is joined unto the Lord *is one spirit*” (I Cor. 6:17). ONE SPIRIT! ONE ENERGY SOURCE! ONE ENERGY FORCE! YOU AND THE LORD! NOT JUST **POWER — ENERGY!** “There is one body, and ONE SPIRIT!” (Eph. 4:4). Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! You will know a great truth when you understand the simple fact that in the kingdom of God there is ONLY ONE SPIRIT! In union with the Lord you are that one spirit. All spirit is *energy*, exerting a force, or influence upon creation. GOD is the supreme source of energy, the highest and purest form of energy, and the wonder of it is beyond comprehension. For while there are indeed many spirits in the world, as we shall consider later, yet in union with God Y-O-U ARE THE ULTIMATE ENERGY SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS! All creation stands on tip-toe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God pouring forth the energy of divine spirit — love, joy, peace, righteousness, provision, and power! Through this ministration of the manifest sons of God ALL THINGS SHALL BE C-H-A-N-G-E-D! “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev. 21:5).

The Holy Spirit is God’s *energy force*. It is God’s energy force *projected* and *exerted* upon creation. It is God’s motion, action, and influence in one measure or another upon, in, and through man. Yahweh accomplished the creation of the universe by means of His Spirit or energy force. Regarding the planet earth in its early formative stages, the record states that “The Spirit (energy force) of God was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). Psalm 33:6 says, “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (spirit, out-breathing) of His mouth.” Like a powerful breath of living wind, God’s Spirit can be sent forth to exert power even though there is no bodily or visible contact with that which is acted upon. I have myself witnessed many astonishing miracles of healing, provision, and manifestations of various sorts, and while I could never see with my eyes the *cause* of the activity I was awed by the visible and undeniable *effect*. Where a human craftsman would use the force of his hands and fingers to produce things, God uses His Spirit. Hence that Spirit is also spoken of as God’s “hands” or “fingers.” Jesus told the Pharisees, “If I cast out devils by the *Spirit* of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you” (Mat. 12:28). But Luke, in recording the same event, expresses it thus: “If I with the *finger* of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you” (Lk. 11:20). The Spirit of God is the finger of God, the working, energizing, and activity of God usward. How great is His working!

There are two basic characteristics of the wind which qualify it to so fittingly serve as the supreme symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wind is first of all a *powerful energy force*, and secondly it is *invisible*. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the *spirit*” (Jn. 3:8). You cannot see the wind, and yet you are aware of its reality because of its power and the visible effects manifested all around you. In earlier times the wind was used broadly as a source of energy. Man has from antiquity known how to use sails on a boat or

ship. Later, he learned to use the same principle to construct a windmill, using the force of the wind to turn grindstones, pump water, and do many other kinds of work.

Because the wind is both *invisible* and *powerful*, the biblical words *ruwach* and *pneuma* meaning wind, gradually took on much wider meanings, and came to represent *any* invisible power or influence, good or bad, positive or negative. And since God's power, within and without, is exercised through channels and by agencies beyond human sight or perception, therefore this word "spirit" came more and more to be applied to all of the Lord's dealings and operations. The invisible and powerful INWARD ENERGY FORCE which motivates and transforms our lives into the image of God is the HOLY SPIRIT! Yet — it is also OUR SPIRIT! For, joined to the Lord, we are the ONE SPIRIT! Only by this Holy Spirit within are we guided beyond the outer senses, and beyond the letter of the Word, into the glorious and eternal reality of "the deep things of God," even all those things which God has in reservation for them that truly love Him, which the human eye hath not seen, the human ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the human heart to understand and appreciate.

That *spirit* is a proper term for nature, ideas, thoughts, attitudes, desires, mind, will, and all such characteristics is illustrated by a story I read one time. An elder was telling of a young lad in a certain congregation. This boy was a devotee of baseball. He was a little leaguer. When the world series ran he came to the meeting of the church dressed in a baseball outfit, a glove on one hand and a small transistor radio in the other. His pocket was stretched by a ball. He didn't hear the ministry that came forth in the meeting. His ear was glued to that radio. He refused to miss one word of the announcer's description of the game. Now, that boy was FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT OF BASEBALL! He thought baseball. He talked baseball. He even took his bat to bed. It was all he cared about. He was filled with it. He was consumed by it. It was his life!

Through past decades "equal rights" of various kinds has been an issue in our country. There are people filled with the *spirit* of equal rights! They don't have time for anything else. They are consumed with a desire to petition, organize, and march. Nothing else matters. They eat, sleep, and dream equal rights. Their money, time, talents, and energies are exhausted as they pour themselves into the struggle for equality. They are literally FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT of equal status for all people. These people are *energized*, they are filled with an attitude, a mind, a disposition, a will, a passion, and all these characteristics produce a tremendous *influence* upon the thinking and actions of multitudes of citizens. Perhaps now we can understand what it *really means* to be FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT! It means to not only be filled with the consciousness of the Person and presence of the Holy Spirit of God, but to also be filled with all the characteristics within that Spirit: His nature, will, ways, virtues, disposition, purpose, power, etc. How many believers settle for something far less than this!

We are living in an hour when it is popular to be known as a "Spirit-filled" Christian. Charismatic "Mega Churches" have sprung up all across the land. But truly I say to you that multitudes have settled for a superficial experience of "tongues," or being "slain" in the Spirit, or some "feeling" or "gift," and have never even dreamed of what it means to become literally *filled* with each and every characteristic of the divine nature and power of God! Becoming filled with the Holy Spirit must do far more for us than speaking in a tongue or becoming ecstatic in our emotions. To be filled with the Spirit means to be filled with *all the spirit is* — to truly become the manifestation of God in the earth! It means that the life and nature and power of the indwelling Spirit must control and swallow up completely soul and body until there is no manifestation but of the Spirit.

Jesus, that blessed firstborn Son of God, was so filled, for He possessed the Spirit "without measure" (Jn. 3:34). Jesus did not go about speaking in tongues or falling out under the power, though those are

wonderful blessings, but He did go about doing the works of God and expressing the totality of the life of the Father as the writer to the Hebrews says: “He is the sole (complete, full) expression of the glory of God, the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine, and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God’s nature...” (Heb. 1:3, Amplified). And Paul prayed for the saints that they might be “*filled with ALL the fullness of God*” (Eph. 3:19). This measure is reserved for all who go all the way with God, to be *sons* even as Jesus was “the Son of God.” Sonship is the hope of creation, and the SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE is the hope of the sons! It is there that the ancient serpent, Satan, along with all his works — sin, sickness, sorrow, limitation, and death are *swallowed up*, and the wisdom, nature, life, power, and glory of the living God is revealed in its totality through His people unto creation!

Let us take a closer look at some of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. He is variously defined as — “The Spirit of God,” “The Spirit of Christ,” “The Spirit of Holiness,” “The Spirit of Truth,” “The Spirit of Life,” “The Spirit of a Sound Mind,” “The Spirit of Liberty,” “The Spirit of Burning,” “The Spirit of the Father,” “The Spirit of the Son,” “The Spirit of Promise,” “The Spirit of Meekness,” “The Spirit of Understanding,” “The Spirit of Wisdom,” “The Spirit of Revelation,” “The Spirit of Glory,” “The Spirit of Counsel,” “The Spirit of Might,” “The Spirit of Grace,” “The Spirit of Love,” “The Spirit of Adoption,” “The Spirit of Prophecy,” “The Spirit of Power,” etc., etc. These various titles, repeated many times, and used interchangeably, give us a full, proper assurance that they all relate to the same Holy Spirit of God and the One Spirit that we are in Him. These various expressions are descriptive of the spirit, nature, disposition, ability, power, and glory of the one God, and of Jesus Christ who reveals Him, and of all who are born of Him and MADE ONE IN HIM. “He that is joined to the Lord is ONE SPIRIT.”

Each of these characteristics is a form of the *energy* of God! This energy is transmitted from the spirit within outward into soul and body to produce its power in our life, just as electricity is transmitted from a battery to an engine to make it function in a certain way. When the “Spirit of Holiness” is transmitted into our life and consciousness we begin to function in our personality in the characteristic of God’s holiness, thus becoming holy and expressing holiness. When the “Spirit of Wisdom” is transmitted into our consciousness we cease from our own natural reasoning and commence to act in accordance with the higher wisdom of God. When the “Spirit of Life” fully permeates our being even our bodies shall be quickened by His life within until this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Then shall be fulfilled the word which was spoken, “We shall *not all sleep*, but we *shall all be changed*...” (I Cor. 15:51).

Our failure to see that the Holy Spirit of God is not the only form of spirit in the world leads us into all manner of error and misunderstanding. There is *another spirit* mentioned frequently throughout the Word of God! This “other spirit” is spoken of in opposite terms, namely, “The Spirit of Fear,” “The Spirit of Bondage,” “The Spirit of the World,” “The Spirit of Error,” “The Spirit of Antichrist,” “The Spirit of Jealousy,” “The Spirit of Slumber,” etc., etc. These terms signify the WRONG SPIRIT — the spirit, nature, disposition, power, and will which has its chief exemplification in Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, the Dragon — the same spirit manifesting itself in all who walk in, and live out of, the *carnal mind*, which mind is *energized* by the indwelling serpent! Sin, error, darkness, and death are all characteristics of the SPIRIT OF THE NEGATIVE REALM, even as holiness, truth, love, life, etc., are all characteristics of the one Holy Spirit.

As mentioned previously, there are brethren who are convinced that all spirit is the same spirit and that there is only one spirit in the whole world, which is the spirit of God in every man. But we are constrained to take heed to the testimony of the spirit of wisdom and revelation which instructs us, “Beloved, believe not *every spirit*, but *try the spirits whether they are of God*: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I Jn. 4:1). Both the holy and the unholy spirit bear the characteristics of personality, both

alike are invisible, both are powerful, both can change things, both indwell, empower, express, and manifest through man. and both are *energy!* Can you not see the mystery?

It is true — for the child of God there is only one spirit, and that spirit is God in the spirit of every man. It should be equally obvious that most men are not living out of the spirit of God in their spirit, but are living out of “another spirit.” He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, but he that is joined to the world, or joined to religion, or joined to any other thing outside of God, is also one spirit in that realm! That “other spirit” is the spirit that energizes and controls and manifests through the natural man! Why else would the apostle differentiate between the spirit of *man* and the Spirit of *God*, saying, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the *spirit of man* which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no (natural) man, but the *Spirit of God*” (I Cor. 2:11). Even for the redeemed, before they are brought to that full union with God, there is a distinction drawn between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. “For as many as are led by the *Spirit of God*, they are the *sons of God*. For ye have not received the *spirit of bondage again* to fear; but ye have received the *spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The *Spirit itself* beareth witness with *our spirit*, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:14-16).

Well did Jesus know the limitation of the spirit of man apart from the Holy Spirit. Well did He know that our understanding could not possibly ascend beyond the things of man. He did not leave us thus comfortless and confined, but promised in words that cannot fail, “When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.” And yet again, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me” (Jn. 15:26). And not only is there the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, there is also a *spirit in* the children of disobedience, the very spirit of the devil, “the prince of the power of the air, the *spirit* that now worketh *in* the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). How significant and full of meaning are these words of the apostle John: “Ye are of God, little children...because greater is HE that is IN YOU, than HE that is IN THE WORLD” (I Jn. 4:4). HE! Personality! Spirit! One in the saints and the other in the world! Only two verses later the apostle clearly identifies these *two spirits* which are in the people of God and the people of the world. “*We* are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; *he* that is *not* of God heareth us not. Hereby we know the S-P-I-R-I-T OF TRUTH *and* the S-P-I-R-I-T OF ERROR.” Paul adds to this his testimony: “Now we have received, not the *spirit* of the world, but the *spirit* which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (I Cor. 2:12).

Well, my beloved, we have only begun to explore the depths of the mystery of who and what Satan is, and how he can be bound in the bottomless pit, why he should be loosed from the pit for a short season, and the great purpose in his eventual casting into the lake of fire and brimstone. We shall continue this theme in our next Study.

To be continued...

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