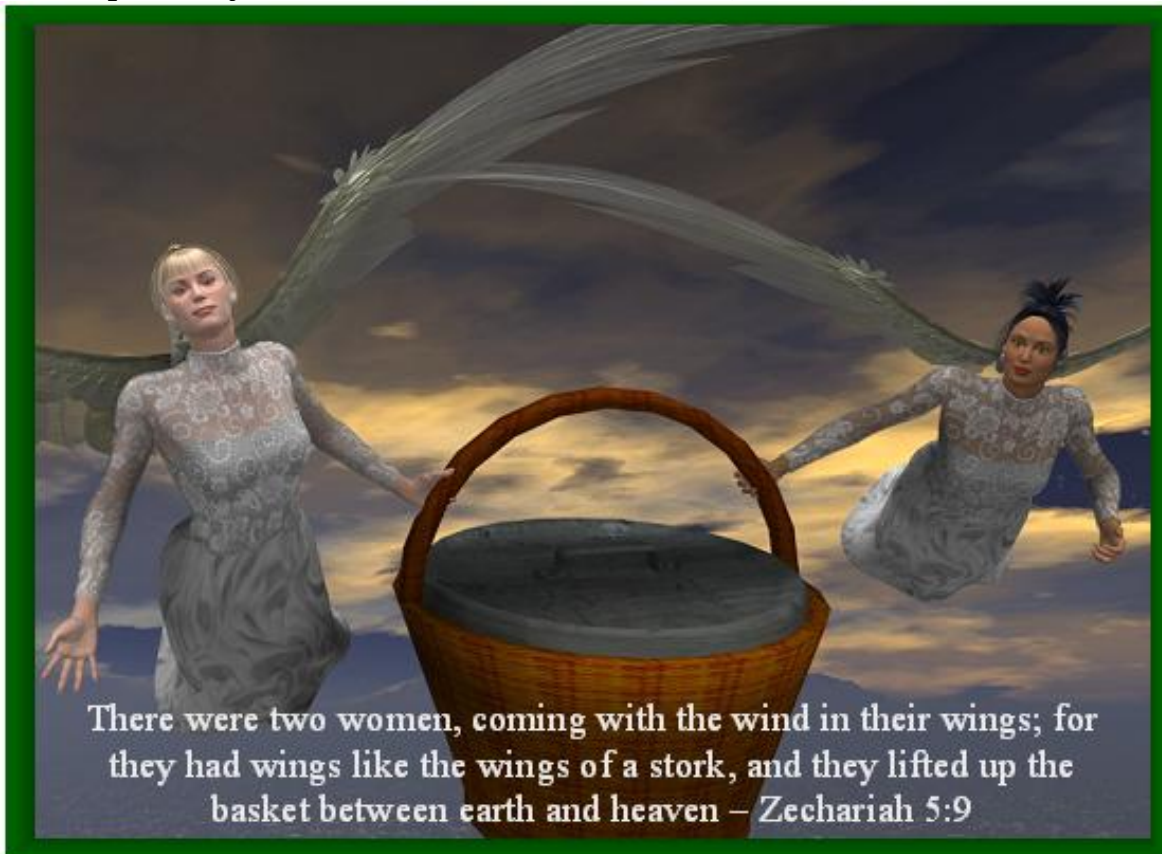


## CHAPTER 10—Part 1

### THE TWO WOMEN WITH WINGS OF A STORK

The Two Women with wings of a stork have been called out by the Almighty in these Last Days to carry out and participate in God’s final judgment of the Great Whore—we, the Church and Israel, are called upon by Him to PUT HER IN HER PLACE, once and for all, awaiting her final judgment and interior consumption. Both Israel (Isaiah 62:1-5) and the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33) are viewed as women, bride and wife; and, ultimately, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is described as the COMPOSITE CONSUMMATION of God’s masterpiece:

*“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God . . . she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel . . . now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Revelation 21:10-14 (Portions)).*



There were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven – Zechariah 5:9

But now, her awful contrast must be disposed. Think not that she is not at home in her surroundings—Commercial Babylon—for she is headed for the Plains of Shinar, Babylon (Zechariah 5:11). The sense is that she is deposited into this basket and borne between the earth and the heaven by Two Women who, with the wind beneath their wings, suspend the Woman of Wickedness between earth and heaven. Who are these Two Women—for they too are familiar to us? They are NOT angelic beings—for only the male gender throughout the Bible depicts angelic beings.

They certainly know what they are doing—for beneath their wings is the wind of the Spirit of God moving them in their transported efforts to the Plain of Shinar—there to deposit the basket’s contents and ***“To build a house for it in the land of Shinar (i.e., Babylon); when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base”*** (Zechariah 6:11).

What they are handling is unclean and their wings, though borne by the Spirit’s effort, clearly signal a task, which is unclean in nature (for the stork is an “unclean” animal). Their destination, and the natural “base” of their content, fully discloses to us that the baggage they carry, perfectly resides upon the Babylonian plain and has been prepared for its final and catastrophic demise (See Revelation 17).

But first, they, chosen of the Lord to reflect His Image and Glory, must come forth in these end of days to transport all that they are not: The WOMAN OF WICKEDNESS to her rightful place, upon antiquity’s base: BABYLON.

Her full description is seen in both Testaments: Her cup is FULL OF ABOMINATIONS—she is set beneath the “Leaded Lid of Judgment”—awaiting her doom in the midst of the Ephah wherein her abominations and idolatries are confined.

Alas! Where do they carry this Awful Potion? What is her final destination—where shall the Fullness of Wickedness and Abominations reside? Surely, she has been purged from among the People of the Lord and is destined for final judgment! With whom shall she be identified? Suspended between heaven and earth—for all heaven and earth await to know her final trauma—for surely they’ve been subjected to her apostasies, idolatries, abominations and wickednesses. We call heaven and earth to witness against her—to testify against this Jezebel of Tyre!

There—with wings of a stork do these TWO place this defilement upon a most likely and appropriate base: THE PLAINS OF SHINAR! For her house, yea

temple, is custom made for all her abominations in the land of Shinar—in the land of Babylon.

She, this Mystery Woman, is altogether welcomed on her own turf. Her house, her city, her temple has been millennia in the building thereof. ***“When it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base”*** (Zechariah 5:11). Her WICKEDNESSES are nigh full—her house near completion—prepare her for judgment—the Beast that devours, the fire that burns—they are readied for her arrival. Well do the “Merchant of the Earth” recognize their Harlot, for she resides in their familiar measurement.

Now, given the backdrop of this Women of Wickedness, is it crystallized in your spirit and mind—do you not recognize these TWO WOMEN who fully participate in carrying out this divine judgment? Their collaboration is unique in Scripture. They are not entitled as angelic beings (for angels have been described, throughout Holy Writ, as male figures); no, their gender is clearly female, who through their divinely-imparted capacities, have the ability to bodily transverse the heavens and the earth. They are a fitting antitype of the WOMAN OF WICKEDNESS—this two-faced whore who seduced the world through her religious pretensions and commercial seductions (Revelation 17 and 18).

God’s “instrumentality” in concluding His judgments upon the Woman of Wickedness, will be through the Two Women of Zechariah 5:5-11; and, these Two Women are most assuredly the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11, who are destined to rule and reign with Christ a thousand years and who constitute the Holy City, New Jerusalem!

Yet, the Two Women simply “separate out” the Woman of Wickedness from the earth and place her—identify her—with the Plain of Shinar: Babylon the Great. It is only after they have given their prophecy of 1,260 days, only after their testimony has been discharged—will the judgments of the Almighty devour, consume with fire, and destroy the person and work of the First Beast and the Second Beast.

## **THE BIBLE IS A TALE OF TWO WOMEN**

Just as the Bible is a “Tale of Two Cities” (i.e., the Holy City, New Jerusalem or Israel and the Church vs. the Great City, Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth), even so, the Bible tells the tale of but two Women: The Woman of Revelation 12 and the Woman of Wickedness. Again, let us consider the woman in the basket in the light of her counterpart. For this, I begin with Donald Grey Barnhouse’s commentary on the Revelation

(*Revelation, An Expository Commentary*) and his exposition contrasting the Two Women of prominence throughout the Scripture:

“ . . . the first is ‘clothed with the sun.’ Her raiment is light from Heaven. The second is ‘clothed in purple, and scarlet, decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.’ All her ornaments are from below, made up of things out of the earth and the sea. Both are very influential in their position; the first ‘has the moon,’ the empress of night, the powers of darkness, ‘under her feet’; the second ‘hath rule, or kingdom, upon the kings of the earth.’ Both are sufferers; against the first is the Dragon, who stands ready to devour her child, and persecutes and pursues her, and drives her into the wilderness, and sends out a river to overwhelm her, and is at war with all her seed that he can find; against the second are the ten kings, who ultimately hate her, and make her desolate and naked and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, whilst God in His strength judges her, and visits her with plague, death, and utter destruction. Both are very conspicuous, and fill a large space in the history of the world, and in all the administrations of divine providence and judgment. **That they are counterparts of each other, there can hardly be a reasonable doubt.**”<sup>1</sup>(My emphasis.)

There can be little doubt left as to the full identity of this Woman of Wickedness—neither can there be little doubt left as to the full identity of this Woman found in Revelation 12.

Again, the “*two women*” who carry “The Woman of Wickedness” within the “commercial” ephah, whose cover is a stone made of lead (i.e., a symbol of judgment), is placed upon the Plains of Shinar (i.e., Babylon). Surely, this is a Last Days’ vision of something far more striking than simply demonstrating the taking away of wickedness from Israel, back to ancient Babylon.

The entire issue of this Woman of Wickedness becomes altogether clear—as to her full identity—when coupled with the Book of Revelation’s disclosures. The “two women” who participate in transporting their cargo to the Plains of Shinar, are the antithesis of this Woman of Wickedness. They “testify” to the Bride of Christ vs. the Mother of Harlots in the Revelation. They, as Donald Grey Barnhouse affirms in his exposition *Commentary on the Revelation*,<sup>2</sup> are indicative of the believers in the One True God—of BOTH Israel and the Church . . . behold the great sign:

***“Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a***

*garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days” (Revelation 12:1-6).*

After a marvelous exegesis of Revelation 12, Barnhouse concludes:

“So the identification of this woman, clothed with all the authority of God, is certain. **She represents that spiritual Israel that is more than Israel.** It goes backward through the line of the seed to Eve and forward through the line of the seed to Mary and the Lord Jesus. The enmity of Satan came against this people because they have been chosen as the channel of the power and blessing of God.”<sup>3</sup>

More of Barnhouse’s commentary on the “Woman of Revelation 12” . . .

“Nor can we follow the many commentators who see in this vision the representation of the Church (*exclusively*). In spite of the fact that this woman is represented as the mother of the Lord, there have been those commentators who wish to bring every glory to the Church, and have attempted to see her here. Some have even gone so far as to declare that the “birth” described here is the return of the Lord in judgment, and that therefore the Church is portrayed. But other considerations force us to abandon any such view.

“The symbols of the Old Testament inform us of the identity of this personage, made glorious by the gifts of God. Most expositors have seen clearly that this woman represents Israel, but have stopped with that simple identification. We believe that there is something more in view here. The rest of this chapter is going to reveal that there is war in the spiritual realm, and that this war is a great controversy, ages long, for the control of the universe. The war began with the fall of Satan, and will continue until the great and terrible day of the Lord shall bring this war to a close. **The woman,**

**then, represents not merely Israel ‘of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came’ (Rom. 9:5), but is that spiritual body of the elect from the very beginning of the history of man, by whom God had eternally purposed to bring to naught the revolt of Satan.** All of the symbols mentioned in these verses are found in the earliest chapters of the book of Genesis. The woman, the sun, the moon, the stars, the man-child, the seed, the dragon, ‘that old serpent which is the devil and Satan’; all of these are to be found in the opening paragraphs of the Bible.”<sup>4</sup>

Barnhouse quotes another evangelical expositor, Seiss:

“There, in the twelfth chapter, ‘a great sign was seen in the Heaven, a Woman’; here, it is remarked, ‘he bore me away in spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a Woman.’ These women are mothers; the first brought forth a son, a male . . . who is to ‘rule all the nations’; the second ‘is the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.’ Both are splendidly clothed with the sun.”<sup>5</sup>

And, again, just as there is this duality of testimony that is displayed and is descriptive of the Great City Babylon; even so, there is the duality of testimony of the New Jerusalem. For the descriptions given of the New Jerusalem, “*The Woman, the Lamb’s Wife*” (Revelation 21:9), are further expounded upon in Revelation 21 as the Holy City, “*The Woman, the Lamb’s Wife*” . . .

***“Also, she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel . . . now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb”*** (Revelation 21:12 & 14).

Thus, as we see the “Woman of Revelation 12” juxtaposed to the “Woman of Wickedness” in Zechariah 5, these prophetic visions exegetically lead us to conclude:

***“The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth”*** is clearly identified with the “Woman of Wickedness” seen in Zechariah 5. Furthermore, the “Woman of Revelation 12” is not only identified with the testimony of the “two women” of Zechariah 5 who transport the “Woman of Wickedness” to her ultimate destination (i.e., BABYLON), but they are assuredly identified with the very antithesis of harlotry, the BRIDE of the Lamb (Revelation 21:2 & 9: ***“Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from***

*God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband . . . then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, ‘Come, I will show the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’)*

It is astonishing, when you witness the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, SHE is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband and this Holy City is entitled the Bride (*lit.* “THE WOMAN”), the Lamb’s wife. Indeed this is God’s WOMAN! The Lamb’s bride and wife!

The Great City, Babylon vs. the Holy City, New Jerusalem. The Woman of Wickedness and the Mother of Harlots, Mystery Babylon vs. the “Woman clothed with the sun” and the “Bride adorned for her husband” – the Woman, the Lamb’s wife.

That which fully substantiates the “composition” of these two women—two women who have struggled from the Garden of Eden; for there “has always been enmity between Satan and the woman, at every moment of her history, whether it be in the garden, or at the birth of Cain and Abel, or against the whole line of her sons from whom the Messiah was to be born” (quoting Barnhouse, again, on his *Revelation Commentary*).<sup>6</sup> While we witness the composition of BOTH the Mother of Harlots and the Woman, the Lamb’s wife . . . take careful note and ponder this profound truth:

## **THE BRIDE**

There remains utterly no question as to the full identity of this Woman, the Lamb’s Wife—for she is comprised of both Israel and the Church—the names of the twelve tribes of ISRAEL upon her gates; and the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, the CHURCH, upon her foundations.

She, the Holy City, in her ultimate consummation as the Lamb’s Wife—the eternal expression of God’s Image and Masterpiece—His New Creation; the Woman of Wickedness, that Great City, Babylon—the Old Creation, judged under the “Wrath of the Lamb.”

From the promise made in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve and spoken by the Almighty to the serpent: “*I will put enmity between you* (the serpent, Satan), *and THE WOMAN, and between your seed and her Seed* (Christ); *He* (Christ) *shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel*” (Genesis 3:15), until we see its ultimate fulfillment in both the Cross and the “*fullness of Him that fills all in all*” – The Woman, the Lamb’s Wife.

We are left breathless and astounded at the spiritual magnitude of these pictures—for they convey to us the very intent of the mind of God—how He has relentlessly pursued a Woman to be the Lamb’s Wife, the reflection of His very Image—utterly designed and transformed and transfigured to be the intensity of spiritual intimacy and joy throughout all eternity, declaring to the entire universe, that Christ is all and in all!

Once again, in order to clearly see the counterfeit (i.e., The Woman of Wickedness) we must see her exact opposite: The Bride.

Of Israel, in her millennial state, though once called “Forsaken” and “Desolate” shall be described by her Beloved as “Hephzibah” (i.e., *“My Delight is in Her . . . and as the bridegroom rejoices over the BRIDE, so shall your God rejoice over you”* (Isaiah 62:4-5, portions)).

Of the Church, once wrinkled and spotted, shall be presented to Christ, her Husband—Who loved the church and gave Himself for her—a spotless Bride (Ephesians 5:22-33) . . .

For the Consummation of the Ages heralds the Composite Bride, the Eternal Companion of the Lamb: *“Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife . . . the Spirit and the Bride say come!”* (Revelation 21:9; 22:17) . . . *“The Lamb’s wife . . . he showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem . . . twelve gates . . . the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel . . . twelve foundations . . . the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb”* (Revelation 21:9-14, included). As a TESTIMONY she is two (Israel and the Church); as a BRIDE she is one—THE HOLY CITY, NEW JERUSALEM. How can we comprehend His masterpiece, His building, His Bride? Of Israel and the Church, as His Holy City, He has said:

*“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying . . . behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream . . .”* (Isaiah 65:17-19; 66:12a).

*“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations . . .”*

*. they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever . . . but I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light” (Revelation 22:1-2, 4-5; 21:22-23).*

These TWO WOMEN—can they be none other than those with whom our Beloved has for these past 4,000 years prepared for such a time as this? All the hosts of heaven shall view their betrothal—that heavenly presentation shall consummate the ages. The glory of His Bride, that full work of transformation and deliverance, of compassion and mercy, of grace abounding and unfathomable love, of cleansing and regeneration, of resurrection and glorification—shall so electrify the universe, and fill the portals of glory with rejoicing—that angelic hosts and all nations healed by the leaves of the Tree of Life within that heavenly City, shall unceasingly exult in the celebration of their heavenly consummation!



## THE WOMAN, WHOSE NAME IS WICKEDNESS

I have sought to expose the Woman in the ephah whose name is Wickedness, as that Mystery Babylon referred to in the Revelation—for she is enshrouded by commerce, is branded as “Wickedness” and transported by the testimony of the Two Women (i.e., the Two Prophets or Two Witnesses) to her place of judgment: The Plain of Shinar, Babylon.

But we must examine still further this Woman of Wickedness and her symbolism as amplified in the Revelation, to wit:

*“And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth”* (Revelation 17:18).

Furthermore, the associated verses in the Revelation, which expose the true identity of this woman as both Mother of Harlots and as that Great City:

*“Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adored with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. But the angels said to me, ‘Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carried her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns . . . here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits . . . then he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.’ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are*

***fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth”*** (Revelation 17—most verses).

The progression of these verses clearly leads us to conclude that this woman is none other than the Great City, Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth. Now, as we progress to Revelation 18, where the full judgment of this woman takes place—for the Beast who devours her (Revelation 17:16—and this is NOT merely an “observation” of her destruction—this is a direct participation in her demise) has devoured the apostate church, that socio-religious phenomenon that has provided the moral covering atop the Seven-Headed, Ten-Horned Beast from the Abyss! But, now the Great City’s commercial entourage shall view the Great City’s commercial aspirations go up in flames in the space of “one hour.”

***“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’ And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore . . . the merchants of these things (and many are listed), who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.’ Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’ . . . Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore”*** (Revelation 18, verses).

It is utterly unequivocal: The Great City Babylon IS the Woman of Wickedness, the City IS the Mother of Harlots; Babylon the Great IS devoured by the Seven-Headed, Ten-Horned Beast from the Abyss and is burned with fire, destroying her commercial hegemony over the kings of the earth!

She, the Mother of Harlots—the Apostate Church—that Great City Babylon with her commercial and political aspirations, have all become INDISTINGUISHABLE! When you see the Mother of Harlots, that Jezebel of Apostasy, you discern a phenomenon of grotesque proportion: She has so identified herself with the Beast’s commercial aspirations, that she herself is that

Great City! What a colossal amalgamation of iniquity we witness here! The apostate church in her worst descriptive imaginable—for she is so identified with the system of this world that her devouring and ultimate burning demands this two-faced Whore receive double her judgment:

***“And another angel followed, saying, ‘Babylon IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication’”*** (Revelation 14:8).

***“And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!’*** (Revelation 18:2).

Don’t think this repetition is for emphasis only. Both her religious and commercial intrigues are extinguished, destroyed, devoured, consumed by fire—she, that Great City, responsible for innumerable iniquities and abominations, is once and for all FALLEN, FALLEN!

This HYBRID FROM HELL (for her concoction is Satan’s masterpiece of deceit, self, greed, avarice, hypocrisy, the flesh, the world, and all that bespeaks of pride, arrogance, thievery, perjury and iniquity—all cloaked in religious garb) bears no shame for her fornications; no pity upon the bodies and souls of men she has trampled; countenances no remorse for her suppression of the masses and her self-righteous condemnation of the poor upon whom she heaps her worst vindictive—no, here is one, so outrageous in description, so foul is her smell, so full is her cup with the stench of filth, so wretched is her personage, that the One Who must judge her, and those who witness her demise accord the only Hallelujahs ever recorded in the New Testament!

***“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’”*** (Revelation 19:1-4).

Don’t think I’ve circumvented the exhaustless topic of her identity—aside from the nature of her apostate and international trading empire, there’s far too

much description of her indefatigable iniquity left for discussion. But, these are but the nature of her abominations and fornications. She is not altogether “spiritual in nature” – though, assuredly, throughout the centuries her unseen powers are conclusive, while her insipid and incorrigible acts have left their spiritual carnage upon humanity—everywhere she has gone!

As the Holy City, New Jerusalem is “expressed” in three dimensions (“*Its length, breadth, and height are equal*” (Revelation 21:16) as the ultimate manifestation of the Triune God’s Image, the Woman, the Lamb’s Wife is a perfect three-dimensional cube); even so, the indistinguishable character of Satan’s “masterpiece” (Mystery, Babylon the Great) can be adjudged as a three-dimensional unity (i.e., Apostate Religion, Commercial and Political) which in its totality is Babylon, the Great City. Thus, the “appearance” of this Great City lends “herself” to this indistinguishable and infamous expression: The Composite of all that Satan, the Dragon, the Serpent, Lucifer, the Devil, the Antichrist/Beast and the False Prophet/Second Beast have wrought upon this earthly clod!

Here, I would hasten to point out, that the convergence of this awful amalgamation of religion, commerce and politics and the difficulty to clearly delineate the “tripartite” character of its participants in Revelation 17 through 19 is, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, purposefully blurred, to emphasize both the culmination of Satan’s efforts are but one, while drawing our immediate attention to what presents itself before the world as most characteristic of this End Time’s abominable brew.

Whereas most of the commentators quoted within this script cite that Babylon the Great is either in totality an apostate religious phenomenon (e.g., Dave Hunt) or is tripartite in nature, viz., religious, commercial and political. I would boldly conclude that the ultimate manifestation of this Great City attempts to counterfeit the perfect work of the Triune God; therefore, the Great City’s singularity of expression and, *ipso facto*, the purposeful difficulty in attempting to separate or compartmentalize the various aspects of the Great City.

Without controversy, and as S. Franklin Logsdon, former Sr. Pastor of the Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, declared: The U.S.A. is the Mystery Babylon of the Last Days!<sup>7</sup>

This, my friends, is the aforementioned “abominable brew” to which I have alluded. Throughout this text we have repeatedly warned and described the poignant justifications for such a conclusion. I would only add to the preponderance of evidence a further clarification to substantiate our rationale. There is today no other superpower upon the globe, nor has there ever been such an intensity of expression, wherein a nation state has so wed its political power

with its religious heritage—and I speak specifically of the West’s religious expression: Christianity. The Apostate Religion reviewed in the Revelation is the ultimate counterfeit of the Woman, the Lamb’s Wife, i.e., The Mother of Harlots, the Woman whose name is Wickedness.

Nowhere, absolutely nowhere on this planet, does the Christian religion play a viable role in the political structure and influence upon its people than what you behold within the USA. Europe’s Christianity is a shadow of its former self. It’s impotency and relegation to the ceremonial is naught but an historic relic, a quaint toleration of a bygone era where such “absolutes” wrought religious strife, wars and unnecessary prejudices. Most of the world has succumbed to that evangelical nemesis, secular humanism, and no longer can seriously take the claims of Christendom, especially as it pertains to its claims upon the social and political order.

Indeed, post-Christian Europe, and for that matter, Latin America and other “Christian States” like Canada, Australia/New Zealand, etc., simply do not have the Christian influence and vibrant religious clout of what is seen and felt within the USA. Certainly, though there be the ever-ongoing debate and cultural wars within this Republic, such “secular-religious tensions” are virtually unheard of outside revivalist America. The extent of the debate outside of the USA has little or nothing to do with Christianity, but within the USA where 80% of her population claims some form of Christianity (and 77% of her people believe in angels and, according to Gallop, some 96% believe in God) and regularly attend its houses of worship, there’s little doubt no other nation on the face of the earth (past, present and immediate future) has or can possess the religious, commercial and political configuration afforded the USA.

The other post-Christian European States simply do not have a viable religious expression of any consequence, nor do they have the commercial and political identity aligned with their religious expressions. There is simply no other nation on earth that can boast of such a contrivance of the religious, commercial and the political and do so in the context of Christianity. The identity of Mystery Babylon, Mother of Harlots, and our search for her contemporary manifestation, does not take the genius of a rocket scientist to discover . . . the only souls ignorant of this obvious and spiritually blatant reality are those of the Church in Laodicea who have been adjudged as “*wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked*” (Revelation 3:17b)!

I do not draw attention to the “*Sodom and Egypt*” characteristics of that Great City which persecutes the Holy City for forty-two months (Revelation 11:2 and 8); for some have surmised that this is the singular reason for America’s fall from grace and of her spiritually diseased state that is ripe for God’s judgment.

No, it's the insidious "core aspects" of the "great falling away from the faith" that surmount my conclusions. At the crux of apostasy is the identification of the Christian religion with the power of the State, and the commercial glue that cements this unholy alliance of convenience, greed, and blatant political power.

My work with international exchange students the past ten years always bore witness to "Two Americas" seen in the eyes of some of the brightest foreign students of Europe, Asia and Latin America. The Hollywood image of America viewed overseas utterly conflicted with the religious phenomenon they observed while staying and working in America. Numerous times I heard: "You who live in America don't see it (i.e., the religious character of the people) but coming from the outside it is altogether obvious." One student expressed the phenomenon as a nation that was "socially schizophrenic." The fact is that these foreign students realized such a contrast within this nation, while most Americans are oblivious to such a contradiction (except within the context of "cultural wars"), only confirms our worst suspicions.

What these foreign students did not grasp is the immediate coagulation of the political, religious and commercial interests within America and the intensity of that polarization taking place within the context of the ongoing "cultural wars." The quest for a constitutional amendment defining marriage between a man and a woman as the sole basis for matrimonial bliss accorded by this federal government has and will propel the nation's polarization and socio-religious divisions. Each "side's social agenda" becomes more strident and rigid. "Militants" and/or "activists" on both sides of the debate grow intolerable and intransigent. The point is made: Only in America can such a conglomeration of socio-political and religious issues be taken seriously.

No, like Saddam Hussein's discovery by the US military, Mystery Babylon's whereabouts throughout the centuries bears far more than a spiritual or psychological portrait. Where is she now? What has happened to the Great City? Something so GREAT cannot be hidden; yet, as seductress, her craftiness astounds? Some concluded they'd never apprehend the Butcher of Baghdad—his legendary presence took on almost a mythical form. But, Alas! His physicality became a reality—just as her physicality abides—her foxhole, as well, is for real.

This author, and others like S. Franklin Logsdon, have hurled barrage after barrage upon her hideouts—exposing the identity of the contemporary, physical Babylon, the Great City, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth. This denunciation does not permit a full exposé of her wretched description; nor can I do justice to comprehensively confirm her putrid environs. Suffice it to say, be my guest and explore her whereabouts at this site:

[www.thetribnet.org](http://www.thetribnet.org) and the many links connected with this site.

Likewise, please turn to APPENDIX 1, Part 2 for a more in-depth study of this topic (THE WOMAN OF REVELATION 12 & HER OFFSPRING, and THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS) especially as it relates to the Woman's "offspring."

Yet, in accordance with the tenor of this script, it behooves me to tangle with the web of her deceits and her identification with the commercial container that hides her true identity, yet imprisons her.

# CHAPTER 10

## Part 2

### **“TAKE THESE THINGS AWAY! DO NOT MAKE MY FATHER’S HOUSE A HOUSE OF MERCHANDISE!” (John 2:16).**

For the second part of this exposure, I am indebted to a number of brethren (brothers and sisters) who have provoked this enhancement—mind you, I find it intolerable to blame anyone but our *“adversary the devil (who) walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”* (I Peter 5:8) for the commercial calamities that ravage the Church of the Living God, let alone the fusing of her identity with the body politic. However, the apostles were not averse in naming names who collided with the divine intent—so, let it be known, that the public image of those who have defamed the gospel of our Lord and Savior by their commercial compromise of that same gospel, shall not escape the pen of this justifiable exposure if the Spirit so leads; but for now, the Scriptures shall speak.

Let me be perfectly clear: This name upon her forehead, “Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth” (Revelation 17:5), yes, this Woman whose name and “essence” is WICKEDNESS (Zechariah 5:8) is the awful symbol and image of a fully corrupted compromise of the sacred and the profane. She epitomizes a church (which I purposefully place in lower case to distinguish her from The Church *“not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing”* (Ephesians 5:27) which I shall capitalize) akin to her Laodicean description:

*“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked”* (Revelation 3:17).

She has become corrupted by the course of this age, and by the Origination of greed and avarice domiciled in the one who from his initial rebellion, wherein iniquity was found in him, was *“filled with violence within . . . by the abundance of your merchandising”* (i.e., *“trading”*) (Ezekiel 28:16). Let us explore the Origins and the entrapments of the ephah, which obscures and incarcerates her.

Initially, we must travel back into antiquity to that city of international trade, Tyre. Her Biblical description became so indistinguishable from the King of Tyre, whose manifested authority and presence overwhelmed its populous, so that when one ponders Ezekiel 26, 27 and 28, one cannot determine where the definition of Tyre, the city, ceases and the cosmic King of Tyre and his satanic

description commences—they are so united, embroiled and enthralled in their iniquity!

Yet, the ancient kings of Tyre and Sidon shunned deification:

“At first, Melqart of Tyre could have been a deification of the king of the city himself, the *ml-qrt*. If that were so, Melqart, the Tyrian national god, would be a theological exaltation of the king and, as such, the ancestor of the city, the hypostasis of the king and, in short, the king himself. This type of idealization and deification of the monarchy, which so disturbed Ezekiel, has no precedents in the Canaanite world, nor is it recorded in other Phoenician cities. As far as Ugarit is concerned, for example, it implies a qualitative leap regarding the figure of the king, whose ancestor, moreover, is that same Melqart”<sup>1</sup> (My underscore.)

Indeed, a “qualitative leap regarding the figure of the king” has occurred—and THIS is what surely disturbed Ezekiel as the Spirit morphed the earthly figure of the Prince of Tyre into the King of Tyre!

Michael Clark and George Davis, in their publication, “*And They Will Make Merchandise of You*,” illuminate the sinister progression of this descriptive:

“There is some debate over the identity of this prince (i.e., the Prince of Tyre). Was he a physical king? The prophecy (in Ezekiel 26-28) seems to make no distinction between the city of Tyre with its human prince and Lucifer and his unseen minions. The visible city of Tyre was merely a manifestation of the nature, drive and ambition of the prince of this world. This becomes clear when we read the entire chapter. Tyre had so taken on the nature and ambition of the prince of this world (Satan) that the prophet addressed them as one and the same. The maritime cities of Tyre and Sidon were renown for their merchandising. The ships of Tarshish carried their commodities throughout the known world. They subjugated nations through their idolatrous trade. At the heart of their merchandising was a design to conquer the people they traded with, and Israel eventually became one of their victims.”<sup>2</sup>

The ultimate picture of the corruption wrought by Tyre upon Israel is found in Ahab’s betrothal to Jezebel, daughter of the King-Priest Ethbaal (arch anti-type of the King-Priest Joshua found in Zechariah 6).

Listen as Messrs. Clark and Davis rip the veil off her falsehoods:

“Tyre and Sidon also traded with the people of Israel by usury (lending money with interest) to lead them away captive. Whole families lost their lands and then their freedom. Children were taken away from their families to become slaves and the young girls became temple prostitutes. What land they could not get by usury they (Jezebel and Ahab) took by deceit and force. Remember Naboth’s vineyard in I Kings 21? By the abundance of their trading the land was filled with violence. Many of the prophets of God were killed as they dared to speak out against it. It was so bad that at one time, Elijah thought he was the only one left.”<sup>3</sup>

And now, let Clark and Davis make the dastardly link between Tyre and Christendom:

“Before long Israel was all but completely subdued. Things were much worse than we can convey in so few words, but here we catch a sufficient glimpse of the logical outworking and development of the principality of Tyre and Sidon. The growing focus on merchandising in Christendom today is rooted in the corrupted wisdom of the prince of Tyre, who desires to once again lead the people of God away captive. Everything is coming to its full manifestation. Have you ever wondered why the church in America is so impotent against sin, sickness and the wiles of the enemy? Why is the divorce rate higher than that of the world? Why are pastors being sent to jail for all manner of crimes?”<sup>4</sup>

Let the Scriptures speak for themselves—read them carefully, and you will see beyond any doubt that the King of Tyre, and his practice of blending religion with commerce, has always been the bane to the Body of Christ. Surely, those she has infected (yes, all who “*share in her sins,*” and “*receive of her plagues*” (Revelation 18:4))—have been strewn throughout history, but in these Last Days, the King of Tyre has concentrated his egregious efforts at defilement in the heart of American Christianity. The little mustard seed, has become a great tree in which all the birds of the air have made their nests—so, the American church has “grown” into a Mega-Church to oblige all manner of creeping things and evil birds of prey, who scavenge off the carcasses of those befallen by her plagues (Luke 13:19).

***“But there also arose false prophets among the people, as among you also there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction. Many will follow their immoral ways, and as a result, the way of the truth will be***

*maligned. In covetousness they will exploit you (KJV – “make merchandise of you”) with deceptive words: whose sentence now from of old doesn’t linger, and their destruction will not slumber” (II Peter 2:1-3 WEB).<sup>5</sup>*

*“Don’t lay up treasures for yourselves on the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves don’t break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (The Sermon on the Mount, WEB).*

But, as Clark and Davis point out—is this the testimony that the world sees today in America—or do they hear the words of Janis Joplin ringing in their ears?

“Oh Lord, won’t you buy me a Mercedes Benz?

My friends all drive Porsches, I must make amends.”<sup>6</sup>

The Bible in its entirety, both Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, finds little affinity with money, treasure, inheritance, wealth, prosperity, and the heaping up of riches—and those who distort the Scriptures to pander to their earthly desires for fortune and provision in abundance, do so at the risk of the Almighty’s indignation!

Again, hear the words of Clark and Davis:

“Men tend to measure their successes and failures by their time invested compared to the yield, always looking at the bottom line and the immediate returns. Jesus begins by addressing this false standard of success, the matter of rewards, payment made in return for a service rendered. Even when giving to the needy, you can be seeking the reward of being known among men as a philanthropist or giving person.”<sup>7</sup>

If Christ were our sole criteria—then adhere to His injunction:

*“Be careful that you don’t do your charitable giving before men, to be seen by them, or else you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when you do merciful deeds, don’t sound a trumpet before yourself, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may get glory from men. Most assuredly I tell you, they have received their reward. But*

*when you do merciful deeds, don't let your left hand know what your right hand does, so that your merciful deeds may be in secret, then your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

*“When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Most assuredly, I tell you, they have received their reward. But you, when you pray, enter into your inner chamber, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (Matthew 6:1-6, WEB).*

These are not impossible platitudes—they are the kingdom standards set by Jesus Himself.

In Luke 12:13-21 Jesus places the bar ever higher—and rightly so, for He alone knew what was in the heart of man; listen to his exchange with the man, like so many of us, coveting what may have been rightly his:

*“One of the multitude came to Jesus and asked, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.’ Jesus responded, ‘Man, who made me a judge or an arbitrator over you? Beware! Keep yourselves from covetousness, for a man’s life doesn’t consist of the abundance of the things which he possesses.’”*

The Savior followed up this conversation with a parable wherein He connected covetousness with storing up wealth:

*“A certain rich man’s land brought forth plentifully so he asked himself, ‘What will I do, because I don’t have room to store my crops?’” (Clark and Davis make note that, “Never once entered his mind that the bumper yield might be God’s blessing to the poor . . . No . . . His answer to the problem of surplus is the same as it is today.”<sup>8</sup>).*

And listen to today’s answer if one chances upon abundance:

*“This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns, and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. I will tell my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You foolish one, tonight your soul is required of you. The things which you have prepared—whose will they be?’ So is he who lays*

*up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”* (Luke 12:18-21).

Now, let us apply this to the American church—the projection is spiritual bankruptcy in action:

“Often a man will plant a church and soon it grows beyond the size of the building they have been meeting in. Then they build a greater building to contain all the faithful. Does it ever occur to them that this might be a great time to decentralize and send the faithful out into the mission field, taking the gospel to the poor third world nations, fulfilling the great commission? This could be an opportunity to further the real kingdom built from living stones instead of squandering the money on a kingdom made of bricks, wood and stubble. Because of greed, they tear down their old barns and build bigger ones that they might get their increase under one roof, more money and a reputation for having the biggest church in town and the largest salary!”<sup>9</sup>

Ever ascending, the bar is placed beyond our earthly grip:

*“See that which you have, and give gifts to the needy. Make for yourselves purses, which don’t grow old; a treasure in the heavens that doesn’t fail, where no thief approaches, neither moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”* (Luke 12:33-34).

Yes, *“a treasure in the heavens”* – but, to the contrary, the King of Tyre descends from his perch in the great tree that has grown up and his religio-commercial efforts are championed, as Clark and Davis point out, by none other than **Forbes Magazine**, to wit:

*“Christian Capitalism, Megachurches, Megabusinesses”* – by Luisa Kroll:

“Maybe churches aren’t so different from corporations (then she lists a number of Megachurches of today, and compares their similarities with those of corporate America). Welcome to the megabusiness of megachurches where pastors often act as chief executives and use business tactics to grow their congregations. This entrepreneurial approach has contributed to the explosive growth of megachurches.”<sup>10</sup>

At this point, what one thought would be a scathing denunciation of such entrepreneurial practices within religious America, turns out to be a commendation and good 'ole American business sense. "Kroll goes on to show how helping churches grow has also become big business. In fact, there is one company called *Kingdom Ventures* that does nothing but 'help smaller churches become big with technology.' Their new book entitled *PastorPreneur*, which teaches pastors to think like entrepreneurs, is soon coming to bookstores near you."<sup>11</sup>

The world recognizes it as sound business practice—the Bible recognizes it as blatant apostasy!

Clark and Davis spare no derisive in their exposé, and search for the infections wrought by her plagues:

"The American Society for Church Growth (ASCG) gives us a clue. 'Church growth . . . is a spiritual conviction, yet it is practical, combining the eternal principles of God's Word with the practical insights of social and behavioral sciences.' The practical philosophy of evangelism today mixes the spiritual with the practical and dilutes the eternal with societal and behavioral sciences. As a result of this unholy mixture, a typical gathering of a megachurch is like a Broadway show, complete with stage band, lighting to set the mood, special singing, dancing and oration with all the marketing skills of the latest computer aided overhead presentations. Who is affecting whom? Where is the Church that was commanded by Jesus to be in the world, but not of the world? Today we see a church that is so dead it has resorted to the world's marketing strategies in an attempt to grow numerically. True spiritual growth in Christ has become passé. The Church today looks more like the Bazaar of Annas (where Jesus overthrew the moneychangers and their tables) that filled the outer courts of the temple than the body of Christ, more like a marketplace than a loving community, more like a den of thieves than a house of prayer (Matthew 21:12). The noise of the moneychangers' tables crescendos above the muted prayers of the few that 'sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof' (see Ezekiel 9:4). As it was in the time of Ezekiel's prophesy, judgment is on its way today."<sup>12</sup>

I traveled across America several times in 2003 visiting with scores of common folk keenly aware that something has gone terribly wrong with the

Church when, in Houston, TX several of these mega churches have stooped to depths heretofore unknown in church annals.

The multi-million dollar acquisition of the former Houston Rockets NBA stadium in downtown Houston was secured by one Assembly of God affiliate. That church sought to sell ringside seats at \$5,000 each! A Baptist congregation (Southern Baptist) in Houston, which now boasts a membership into the tens of thousands, Originally secured their senior pastor when they “bought out his previous contract for over a million dollars.”<sup>13</sup>

YES! EVERYTHING’S FOR SALE – Books, Bibles, tapes, conferences, special performances (especially at Christmas and Easter), retreats, vacation voyages, schools, music, trinkets, memorabilia, chairs, pews, altars—you name it—and even worship! Nothing, absolutely nothing, should be given away unless “we can find a way to fund and recoup our expense.” Multi-million dollar budgets are the norm—the WALMARTIZATION OF CHRISTENDOM has now progressed to such an extent that “if you don’t go mega, you don’t go anywhere!”

Only in America, the heartbeat of Babylonian expertise in merchandising and marketing schemes could she concoct a witch’s brew in her cup like this, now full of abominations, and as rare as this:

“Outreach Comedy offers a fresh and culturally relevant solution to reach a diverse audience with the message of Christ. Comedy events not only provide a fun and ‘invite-able’ event, but one that people will want to bring their unbelieving friends to. Outreach Comedy equips leaders to both reach the unchurched as well as edify believers in a unique and enjoyable way—by providing a host of top-quality, hilarious performers with an effective Christ-honoring message” (from the web site: <http://www.outreachmarketing.com/print/>).<sup>14</sup>

On our travels across the nation, these repeated absurdities that antagonize the gospel of Christ raised her cup again and again into the air, reeking with her foul odor. In San Antonio, Texas, at one of the largest Churches of Christ in the region, an adult Bible study, upon completion of their study of one of the Bible’s books, took a polling of its members to determine what their next topic would be. Jerry H., the brother who related to us this account, suggested studies in John’s gospel, others suggested additional books, but the overwhelming winner was: How to Manage your Finances!<sup>15</sup> Once again, the American Church caved.

The world observes, denounces and admires—“they are like us in many, many ways - so why should we believe in their god when they embrace ours?”

You thought that the '80s would never end. Scandal upon scandal—Jerry Falwell careening down the water slide dressed in his full dress suit on a dare that if the “money came in to preserve Heritage USA” he’d do this absurdity! Jim and Tammy and their scandalous Disneyland-style Christianity brought more joy-seekers to Heritage USA than any other theme park except Disneyland itself—all in the name of wholesome family entertainment for God’s people. This form of “Cartoon-Christianity” – this “Happy Heaven” image – is an abomination to the Almighty, rest assured.

With over a million in attendance in the early '90s at rallies held throughout the USA, and subsequently hundreds of thousands (some say a million) who showed up in Washington, D.C. in the Fall of 1997, the Promise Keepers (PK) epitomizes an expression of American evangelicalism’s marketing techniques that defy anything that Madison Avenue could contrive. Listen; if you did not know that they “stand for Christ” you would think you were at a “tailgate party” being held atop the Oakland Coliseum parking lot, rather than the people of God celebrating the Savior:

“Promise Keepers (PK) not only has its own catalog and web site, but successfully markets through Christian book stores. In Syracuse, PK set up three big tents, the largest of which was 100x200 feet, next to the Carrier Dome, on the grounds of Syracuse University. PK’s products and services are modeled on and in many respects are extensions of those offered by Focus on the Family—the big Christian Right “ministry” of radio psychologist James Dobson. Focus on the Family filled one tent. A second tent featured exhibits of other ministries, mostly foreign missions. Most of what they offered was free.

“The PK’s tent displayed row after row of PK’s merchandise on cafeteria tables—PK baseball hats, PK football jerseys, PK golf shirts, PK jackets, and PK sweats—all available in several different styles. There were PK mugs, pens, books, videos, and CDs and cassettes of the greatest hits of past Promise Keepers rallies.

“Promise Keepers is at or near the cutting edge in the marketing of products which link the identity of the individual with the product and the corporate image. They have apparently learned to use catalogs and retail outlets from observing the likes of Pepsi, Disney and Marlboro Gear. The official PK edition of the New Testament, *PK: Man of His Word* makes the Good Book look like a cross between a product catalog and *Sports Illustrated*. Interspersed among the books of the Bible are personality profiles of Christian

athletes. And at the end, right after the Book of Revelation, there are ads and tear-out cards for PK products—including an opportunity to ‘Save on Promise Keepers New Testaments by the Case.’ (They are priced to sell—\$35 per case of 20, \$75 per case of 50.)

“Finally, there was a PK merchandise mart on the floor of the Carrier Dome, roped off on two sides with a bank of cashiers on either end. At one point, Bob, the MC for the event, waded down from the stage for a live televised guided tour, which we watched on giant TV screens visible from every part of the stadium. Bob showed off some of the Promise Keepers books, videos, and CDs for your home improvement ‘tool box.’ Then the crowd rushed down to shop. The loss leader designed to help get men on the program is the hard cover of *The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*, priced at only \$5.”<sup>16</sup>

We “brag it and bag it” with the outrageous claims of the “Word-Faith” Movement that “speaks it into being” and declares, as “on-the-rebound” evangelist Robert Tilton, now back on the airwaves, that believers can speak like God, and create with their words as He does—as in “ex cathedra” (having divine “authority”)—to use the power of God to “bring things into being” (e.g., money), through the “Rhema” (the “experiential word”) of the Spirit. This twisted form of “positive thinking” and “positive confession” by Pentecostals and Charismatics, and other ignorant evangelicals who have no idea from whence this source of demonic claptrap Originates, along with “Holy Laughter” and “spiritual absurdities” like “animal utterances” through human vessels, has and continues to make a mockery of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Asian, African, and Latin American churches that witness these foolhardy attempts at spirituality, can only imagine how low we have sunk. In the name of “cultural outreach” the largest Assemblies of God congregation in Sacramento launched its \$20-Million Dollar “Living the Dream Campaign” for bigger and better buildings, and brought on board one of America’s most dynamic couples in 2002-2003 to bring in the youth. The young peoples’ evening of “outreach” resembled a Rock and Roll concert, Fear Factor, Razzmatazz, Strobe-Light Circus—replete with teams eating everything from snails to cockroaches and gladiator-style contests where young people challenged each other to physical feats of prowess. This flash in the pan style evangelism went from 200 to 1,000 quite quickly, only to die out (back to 200) when the dynamic couple left the Church because of “doctrinal differences.”

Repeatedly, the media, 98% of whom never darken (according to Gallop) the door of an American house of worship, except to “spy out our liberty” –

expose these nonsensical and carnal expressions of Christian performance, entertainment and compromise. Search the Worldwide Web and ask for Christian Charlatans or Religious Crimes and you will be shocked at the number of sites, which monitor our foolhardiness. Bigger is better, more is better, competition is good, marketing is wisdom, merchandising is sensible management of limited resources, and on and on—again, all in the name of Christ and the Church, where Mammon’s altar is moved to center stage.

The shallow and insipid justification for this commercial balderdash amongst the brethren comes in many a shape and size. Perhaps the most inane is: “There’s always going to be money issues facing God’s people . . . the American church understands we live in a society that is consumed with the monetary side of things; therefore, we can live with that and we expect it!” (My prefabrication.)

By the 1980s, Evangelist Oral Roberts held sway over an organization, which employed nearly 2,300 people, and possessed an annual budget of some \$110 million dollars. Roberts claimed that Jesus Himself appeared to him in 1983 and informed him that he would find a cure for cancer. Then “Jesus” got real specific:

“I want you to use the Oral Robert University Medical School to put My medical presence in the earth. I want you to get this going in one year (that was in 1986) or I will call you home. It will cost \$8 million and I want you to believe you can raise it.”<sup>17</sup>

This Pentecostal member of the United Methodist Church, Roberts, huddled in his prayer tower at OR University awaiting the Almighty’s promise—Michael and George tell the story:

“In January of 1987 Oral said that God told him that he had not sent out any medical missionaries from the City of Faith and He would take Oral home if he didn’t raise \$8 million by March of the same year. This money was to be used to provide full scholastic scholarships for medical missionaries who would be sent to other countries. Oral claimed that he had already raised \$3.5 million, but he needed \$4.5 million more by March 1, in order to get the full \$8 million and prevent God from taking him home. In April Oral Roberts said that he had received \$9.1 million, which was \$1.1 million more than was required by God. In November of that very year, Oral Roberts announced that the City of Faith (the medical school) would be closing down. In January of the following year, 1988, Oral discontinued the medical scholarships. In March of 1988, the medical scholarship fund went bankrupt and those students

that wanted to transfer to another college were told they would have to repay their scholarships to ORU at 18% interest. In September of 1989, Oral closed the City of Faith, never having sent out a single medical missionary. And no, He didn't refund a single dime of the money that he bilked from the faithful. You do the math.”<sup>18</sup>

But, wait, let Evangelist Jerry Sholes, a former employee at Oral Roberts Ministries, assist you, in your math tutorial from his publication, *Give Me that Prime-time Religion*):

“Here is a portrait of the real Oral Roberts, the man not too many of his admirers know. He dresses in Brioni suits that cost \$500 to \$1000 (Note: this was in 1979); walks in \$100 shoes; lives in a \$250,000 house in Tulsa and has a million dollar home in Palm Springs; wears diamond rings and solid gold bracelets (that employees ‘airbrush’ out of his publicity photos; drives \$25,000 automobiles which are replaced every 6 months; flies around the country in a \$2 million fan-jet falcon; has membership, as does his son Richard, in ‘the most prestigious and elite country club in Tulsa,’ the Southern Hills (the membership fee alone was \$18,000 for each, with \$130 monthly dues) and in ‘the ultra-posh Thunderbird Country Club in Rancho Mirage, California’ (both father and son joined when memberships were \$20,000 each—they are now \$25,000); and plays games of financial hanky-panky that have made him and his family members independently wealthy (millionaires) for life. (When his daughter and son-in-law were killed, they left a \$10 million estate!)”<sup>19</sup>

The Babylonian god, whose name is Mammon (literally), sought worshippers who would present their offerings to him in exchange for worldly gain! As Clark and Davis point out: “Their focus was on the things of this world. The pursuit of success, fame, and wealth filled their attention. In short, they desired a kingdom for themselves that was totally of this world.”<sup>20</sup>

In the early days of the Jesus Revolution, and shortly after I did my stint in the military, I returned from overseas to discover that the fellowship of believers with whom I was meeting, who had dedicated themselves to a simpler gospel and who were willing to forsake all for Christ and the Church, had utterly complicated themselves with the affairs of the King of Tyre—and on a scale heretofore unheard of in “Jesus circles.”

We had acquired an assembly plant in the Los Angeles area to ready a fleet of motor homes to be sold in the midst of the 1973 oil crisis. These gas-guzzlers

were so opulent and ridiculously ornate in appearance, that, in retrospect, I cringe in revulsion to ponder what we were actually doing with them in the first place! The leader of this ludicrous effort marshaled congregation after congregation, elder after elder, to press the members of the churches to commit their finances to this outrageous venture with the expressed intent that their financial largess would soon turn a handsome profit, thereby providing abundant resources to build “meeting halls” across the nation, and around the world.

The scheme initially incorporated every imaginable “spiritual fallacy”—and God’s people were looked down upon if they were not financially committed in one way or another. This brother was conscripted to sell these, what one brother entitled, *Wildebests*, along the West Coast—which he did, and was seemingly successful at so doing; regrettably so.<sup>21</sup>

At one point his sales were acclaimed as Moses who brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea—just in the nick of time—notwithstanding, the firm finally went “south” and was sold to a Canadian firm for pennies on the dollar. However, that did not stop the entrepreneurial efforts of the father and son team (the leader of the Church and his sons) from making additional profit off the Church—a Church that initially sold very little, because they had very little.

That same organization (for to call it a “church” belittles the grace of God) began to sell absolutely everything that moved to further its ministry: Books, tapes, literature of all sorts, lessons—and it continued to build its overseas factory and produce everything from tennis rackets to chairs—anything and everything that could be sold to the saints, marketed to its members, was on the block to the highest, or lowest bidder. If it was something that could be packaged for sale, the ministry could and would find a way to sell it—all in the name of Christ and the Church.

Then, in order to defend themselves from their critics, this organization commenced to sue other members of the Body of Christ for millions of dollars for defamation of character—and to this very day, as I write, is suing an international evangelical ministry for upwards of \$134 million. I find it ironic that this fellowship’s critics (i.e., the “defendants”) did not denounce their (i.e., the “plaintiffs”) obvious commercialization of the gospel, but targeted their doctrine and cultic practices. I have little doubt that their critics could not throw rocks from their own glass (i.e., “commercial”) palaces! One such lawsuit was “settled out of court” against this fellowship, due to the antagonist’s publisher whose financial costs were going through the roof in defense of the efforts to resist calling back the negative publication against this fellowship. A simple apology in widely circulated Christian publications would suffice, along with a general recall of their author’s publication sent out under their name. The lawsuit against one of

the nation's largest Christian publication houses was dropped posthaste (much to the joy of the publisher's insurance company), and the penniless author of the "negative publication" exposing the doctrine and practice of this fellowship had to abide by the decision to remain silent or face further lawsuits.

Lawsuits and full-page ads on other doctrinal and practice issues, which defended their beliefs and practices, raged throughout the country. Obviously, they knew, but twisted the Scriptures, which enjoin believers not to sue other brethren. They deliberately distorted Paul's injunctions to the Corinthians concerning such matters (I Corinthians 6). Scores of brethren lost their life savings in a pernicious scheme to enhance the wealth of its leadership and families associated therewith. The shame of it all was that a people so dedicated to Christ, could be so ripped off by the god of this world. Yet, the man, and the men who backed him, exuded a "superior contempt" for all who were "not of them" – they who claimed they had forsaken Babylon and the confusion of Christianity, became its most contemptible aspirants. Eventually, sexual misconduct, lies, deceit and carnal manipulation, fraught with more and more merchandising of the Word of God, replaced all that longed for the "simplicity that is in Christ." And, like most of evangelical Christendom today—the "code of silence" cast its infringements upon the faithful. Don't ask, don't tell—and whatever you do, don't criticize the leadership, for they are God's anointed ones!

In the end, the leader of this worldwide fellowship of churches, who died in his 90s, had amassed an immense fortune into the tens of millions of dollars, and an ecclesiastical empire with holdings equal to his huge estate and much more. His burial tomb rivals that of the wealthiest on the planet! The spiritual destitution caused by this man, and his immediate followers, is but one of countless tragedies recorded throughout the 1970s by brethren who saw the revulsion to a culture bent on greed and the war to secure that greed, but who desired only Jesus; yet, they were entrapped in their worst nightmare. How vulnerable were they? The King of Tyre attacked the innocent of the Jesus Movement and brought them under his tyranny, leaving a residual of compromised consciences and burnt stones.<sup>22</sup>

And what of the so-called "Liberal Churches" – the "main-line" Episcopalians, United Methodists, American Lutheran Churches, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, etc., the ones who oppose these marketing scams of the evangelical wing of the church, and who stand for justice, peace, freedom of choice and rail against the incursions of the Church into the political arena?

My friend, they who dwell in glass palaces need not cast their stones at their counterparts! Needless to say, but say we must, these mainline denominations, along with the Roman Catholics, and scores of other organizations like the Mormons, have amassed over the years, in the name of "stewardship" and

church welfare, unbelievable holdings in pension funds and have invested their BILLIONS (that's right BILLIONS) into "less risky" ventures, like real estate on a massive scale, I hasten to add. It's as if the evangelicals finally got their hands into the cookie jar only to discover that most of the cookies had already been taken by those who got into the jar before they did. A beloved United Methodist pastor informed me that he sits on a board that administers for the United Methodist Church the church's vast holdings (Northern CA and Nevada) which include some of the prime real estate in the greater Sacramento area—but that's all right, because ministerial retirements and medical expenses are met by such investments!<sup>23</sup>

Indeed, the mainline denominations, like the Episcopalians, are in a total quandary to form a communion outside of Bishops who knowingly ordain homosexuals. These conservatives, however, simply cannot leave their communions or their church structures, because to do so would be to forfeit hundreds of millions of dollars in buildings and investments — so for monetary reasons, they will sacrifice their own consciences!

The sophistication of fund raising amongst evangelicals, in particular, has reached a feverish pitch. Professionals sign contracts with church boards and get a take or percentage of the "building fund drive." Everything is couched in terms of "professional" – "market-driven" "needs-oriented" "purpose-driven" and the like, and, given Scripture to back it up—twisting the Word of God to suffice their greed and compromise of the gospel, to have the biggest, the best, the most attractive and all done in the name of Christ!

None of this is new—the "Way of Cain" commenced shortly after the simplicity of the garden. His was the beginning of "civilization" and his way has held sway for thousands of years.

The apostles were well aware of Mammon and his fertile efforts to supplant the faith of the saints. The early Church despised Mammon and the irrepressible urge to worship at his altar. Money, and its adoration, was the root of ALL EVIL (Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:3). When describing the tenets of a deacon amidst the assembly, it was imperative that the deacon be "***not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre***" (I Timothy 3:8).

Peter admonished: "***Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but a ready mind***" (I Peter 5:2).

Today's training of leadership within the Body of Christ is so ill focused upon the "talents" of the brethren, that hardly a word is ever spoken regarding the

corruption found in the “love of money” (just how to gather it, that’s where the training is given). Well, do Clark and Davis address this phenomenon:

“We hear a lot today about the qualifications for leadership. An elder must be the husband of one wife, of good reputation, not a fighter or drunkard and so forth, but one quality is rarely mentioned in today’s church sermonizing. Godly leaders must not be greedy of filthy lucre. This seems to make no sense at all in the present day religious setting here in America. The pursuit of happiness has become synonymous with the pursuit of wealth. Personal wealth has been made a measurement of godliness in some American Churches. They reason, ‘If you have faith you will prosper financially. God wants to bless His children. After all, aren’t we the King’s kids?’”<sup>24</sup>

Now, listen to the training of Paul:

*“. . . and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away”* (I Corinthians 7:31).

*“I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’”* (Acts 20:33-35).

*“To the present hour we both hunger and thirst and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now”* (I Corinthians 4:11-13).

*“If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ”* (I Corinthians 9:12).

*“What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel”* (I Corinthians 9:18).

*“Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge?” (II Corinthians 11:7).*

*“And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself” (II Corinthians 11:9).*

*“Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children” (II Corinthians 12:14).*

*“Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you? I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?” (II Corinthians 12:17-18).*

*“Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ” (I Thessalonians 2:6).*

*“For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe” (I Thessalonians 2:9, 10).*

*“But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing” (I Thessalonians 4:9–12).*

*“ . . . nor did we eat anyone’s bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a*

*burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread”* (II Thessalonians 3:8-12).

*“After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth . . . and he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks”* (Acts 18:1-4).

The preponderance of evidence and exhortation in the early Church is altogether obvious—the marketing, merchandising of the Word of God, as well as a “professional paid-clergy” (i.e., “the doctrine of Balaam” – who was “hired” to prophesy against Israel) were in no way the norm, nor encouraged, nor even suggested. Indeed, *“Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit”* (Jude 11a). Today, the ox has so stuffed himself that there is no meal left! **IT IS TIME TO MUZZLE THE OX!**

Theyers defines the Greek word *kapeleuo* (peddling) as follows:

- (1) To be a retailer, to peddle
- (2) To make money by selling anything
- (3) To get sordid gain by dealing in anything, to do a thing for base gain
- (4) To trade in the word of God,
- (5) To try to get base gain by teaching divine truth.

Now, with this backdrop, let us muse upon II Corinthians 2:17:

*“For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.”*

Have we altogether forgotten Luther’s “Circus Vaticanus” he beheld upon his spiritual quest while visiting Rome? The words of Dominic, a contemporary of Francis of Assisi, who also visited Rome (the Pope himself gave him the tour d’horizon of the Vatican), should strike like a dagger into this ghastly creature who bears gruesome acquaintance to the father of lies. For after Pontiff Maximus showed Dominic the filthy lucre heaped up within the portals of the Roman

Church, he, with chutzpa, declared: “Well, Peter can no longer say, ‘Silver and gold have I none.’” Dominic’s rapier still cuts deep: “Neither can he say, ‘Rise and walk.’”

Michael (of Michael Clark and George Davis) speaks of “The Gehazi Effect” – wherein Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, ran after Naaman to secure the gifts refused by Elisha (acquiring Naaman’s leprosy as proof positive of his covetous heart). Michael includes this “effect” within a letter of invitation to attend a “Christian Conference” for a fee of \$45 at the door to hear a speaker who apparently was an old friend of Michael—carefully read his letter, it speaks to the heart of the Church’s condition in America, it is NOT a pious protestation against commercialism within the church:

“As much as I would like to see you and my friend \_\_\_\_\_ once again, I can not help him prostitute his gift by paying to see and receive from him, so I guess I will have to forgo. Please tell him ‘Hi’ for us.

“Here is part of the reason why I cannot do ministry the way it is done in the American church today. (my emphasis)

“When the Spirit first started moving through me in the prophetic, He warned me not to run after any kind of worldly gain by the use of His gifts or I would end up like Gehazi, the servant of Elisha (see 2 Kings 5).

“Last night I was talking with some guests and fellow saints from Alaska, telling them about my experience with physical healings. I told them about one lady with cancer that my wife and I prayed for. Part of the requirement that I laid down before praying for her was that she was not to know my name or where I lived and that I wanted absolutely nothing that she had or could give. This sister owns a large ranch that had once been a Christian retreat center until her husband died. Now it is used for boarding horses and has a large quest house with studio apartments that is her means of support.

“Her cancer was in advanced stages when we prayed for her, and her son-in-law brought her out of the bedroom in a wheel chair. She looked near death. After praying, we saw no immediate results, but we heard later that she began to get better at that point and in a few weeks she was totally healed and gave all the glory to

God. She was not only completely free of cancer but Jesus even healed her failing vision, so that she no longer needed glasses!

“I found out that many pastors and ministers from the surrounding area had been in her place, wanting to pray for her, but they all wanted to be in her will so that they could get hold of that facility when she died. When we went back to see her six months later, she was the picture of health and vitality. But she had a question for me. She said, ‘How is it that the pastor of the largest church in our area can come up here to pray for my cancer, go home, come down with it himself, and die six months later?’

“I had no answer until I was telling our friends from Alaska about what happened with her and then mentioned the warning God gave me years ago. The light finally came on! Pastor Mega church, who went up to pray for this sister with an ulterior motive, was a victim of the Gehazi effect!

“When Elisha’s servant ran after Naamam to get the gifts that Elisha refused after the Syrian was healed, Gehazi got Naaman’s leprosy and had it until he died. The same thing happened here with cancer. God is not playing games with our lust for the things of the world when we minister in His name using His gifts.

“One other thing seems to apply. When we show ourselves faithful in that which is little, even more shall be given to us. But it all is curtailed when we seek temporary rewards instead of waiting on the Lord in His rest for our provision.”<sup>25</sup>

Savonarola was a fiery preacher whose flock was not far from the Papacy’s palaces. He thundered upon his congregation: “The church once had hearts of gold and wooden crosses, now she has wooden hearts and crosses of gold!”

He was repeatedly warned, and even tortured by Papal officials, to surrender his audacious bombasts, which were an embarrassment to Rome. Each time his efforts to recant were foiled due to his human incapacities—for as he arose to demonstrate his change of heart toward Rome, his refrain was all the more rigid: Hearts of wood, crosses of gold! Eventually, for admittedly he abhorred pain as we all do, he succumbed to his fate, and was martyred for Christ!

Dear reader, the “trial which is to try the whole earth” is coming upon us—either you and I shall testify against the Woman whose name is Wickedness, and against the commercial city, Babylon the Great, to whom she has prostituted

herself time and again, or we shall “*share in her sins, and receive of her plagues!*” Either we shall declare “the riches of Christ” for 1,260 days and be trampled under foot for forty-two months by the Court of the Gentiles, or we who have become accustomed to “buying and selling” shall avail ourselves of that infamous MARK—owned by the Beast and the system that he has created. How fitting is the nature of this MARK—the “number of a man” 666 who has reached his zenith and like his master, Mammon, awaits the final declaration:

*“Your riches, wares, and merchandise, your mariners and pilots, your caulkers and merchandisers, all your men of war (for to acquire, one must protect) who are in you, and the entire company which is in your midst, will FALL into the midst of the seas on the day of your ruin . . . all who handle the oar, the mariners, all the pilots of the sea will come down from their ships and stand on the shore. They will make their voice heard because of you; they will cry bitterly and cast dust on their heads; they will roll about in ashes; they will shave themselves completely bald because of you, gird themselves with sackcloth, and weep for you with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing. In their wailing for you they will take up a lamentation, and lament for you: What city is like Tyre, Destroyed in the midst of the sea?” (Ezekiel 27:27-32).*

And the Revelation echoes the refrain:

*“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’ And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys her merchandise any more . . . the merchants of these things who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment weeping and wailing . . . and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’ They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate” (Revelation 18).*

John’s accounting of Babylon’s demise mirrors that of Ezekiel’s, written some 700 years prior to John’s account. Yet the persistence of the King of Tyre’s commercial exploits, now bound up in John’s Mystery Babylon, abide and

flourish. What remedy awaits the diseased who have repeatedly partaken of her sins and exposed themselves to her plagues? What of those brethren who have “sold out” to the King of Tyre, and have become partakers in the sins of the Mother of Harlots, the Woman whose name is WICKEDNESS? You may surmise that to “flee Babylon” is alone a matter of physicality—let us escape to “fight another day.” When the Lord delivered His people from Egypt, it was His outstretched arm that accomplished this deed. Vain are the attempts (be it a Moses of yesteryear or today’s false messiahs) to preserve God’s people from Babylon’s demise; yet, what you so confidently assume to be an “injunction” in Revelation 18:4 is a “presumption” – for only the Lord Himself can prevail in the sealing of His people from that horrible day of His vengeance.

Outwardly, she is graciously adorned, rather, opulently attired. She, as Jezebel, will “put paint on her eyes and adorn(ed) her head, and look(ed) through a window . . . Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?” (II Kings 9:30) as Jehu seeks to destroy her!

***“Then he (i.e., Jehu) said, ‘Throw her down’ (i.e., out of the second-floor window) . . . So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot . . . and when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, ‘Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king’s daughter.’ So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands . . . therefore they came back and told him. And he said, ‘This is the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ‘On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot of Jezreel, so that they shall not say, ‘Here lies Jezebel’””*** (II Kings 9:33-37).

***“And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire”*** (Revelation 17:16).

Coincidence of Scripture—not so! The Testaments are in total agreement. She shall be devoured by beasts—beasts that once she commanded and over whom she provided her covering, her “moral” and “immoral” authority, shall eat her flesh.

Is this, as they say, “an hard saying?” The Bible spares no niceties to declare its outrage against her—neither should we! The tentacles of commercialism, of the King of Tyre’s deceits and infiltrations, are so ubiquitous

within today's Christendom—led by the American Church and her marketing portfolio—that, as Scripture cries out:

***“For her sins have reached to the heavens, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her”*** (Revelation 17:5).

Prior to the devouring and the burning of her commercial empire, a call so desperate, I believe, deafening to all who hear it, goes forth throughout the whole earth, but especially to Babylon's physical counterpart:

***“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues”*** (Revelation 18:4).

His people are not destined for the “wrath of the Lamb.” Indeed, Revelation 18:4 is the ultimate expression of divine deliverance from her who sits on many waters and seven hills. Yet, what shall it take to expunge them from her clutches, her unholy grip—they have become so familiar with her embrace? I believe that day is fast upon us—especially, here in America—and to all who have been infected, afflicted, seduced, and compromised by her merchandising, trafficking, wares, and adornments. Brethren, the day is not far off when you shall hear these words, as He prepares His people for their final deliverance:

***“The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all”*** (Revelation 18:14).

As I have said, and will repeat it again and again: The Man must measure us with the measuring rod in His hand. Either we find ourselves at the altar of worship or we shall be “left out” in the “Court of the Gentiles” – a place and people who know all about God but whose commercial flesh refuses to be cut off! They, like “The Way of Cain,” behold “*sin*” that “*crouches at the door . . . its desire is for you, but you are to rule over it*” (Genesis 4:7). Yet they, like Cain, refuse to yield to the Almighty, and instead embrace the evil. Choose between Cain and Able, Church, choose wisely. Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, will assist you in your choice:

“He (Cain) also introduced a change in that way of simplicity wherein men lived before; and was the author of measures and weights. And whereas they lived innocently and generously while they knew nothing of such arts, he changed the world into cunning craftiness. He first of all set boundaries about lands; he built a city,

and fortified it with walls, and he compelled his family to come together to it; and called that city Enoch, after the name of his eldest son Enoch . . . Nay, even while Adam was alive, it came to pass that the posterity of Cain became exceeding wicked, every one successively dying, one after another, more wicked than the former. They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies; and if any one were slow to murder people, yet was he bold in his profligate behavior, in acting unjustly, and doing injuries for gain.”<sup>26</sup>

Yes, this is the source, “The Way of Cain,” from whence merchandising gave rise to oppression, taxation, and taskmasters. As Clark and Davis declare: “Without doubt, the exactor and the gold gatherer are responsible for every form of slavery and oppression in the world today.”<sup>27</sup> Then, who shall abide the Way of Cain and how shall we escape his inevitable mark?

Finally, there is no further need to mince words with those brethren who have crafted the subtlest of instrumentalities, strategies, and verbal hyperbole to seduce the pocketbooks of the faithful. “Guilt trips” are their specialty. Clever appeals enhanced by “tangible projects” which “need your support more than you’ll ever know” are equal to “spiritual indulgences” whose extremities are akin to another century—so far off the charts that they led to the Reformation. Normally, these incessant appeals for money appear at the close or their diatribes and expositions, while they condemn the wealthy of the world, yet earnestly gravel in the mud before their benefactors. Alas! They decry the rich and incessantly plead for their sustenance to fuel their “God-ordained ministries and churches.” Their shameless appeals include every deviant request for tithing, giving (normally above the required tithe); and, declaring (even by name) their benefactors and their “sacrificial contributions” (“surely they have their reward”)!

But God, in His mercy, through our Messiah, Jesus—the One Who knocks outside the door of the Church of the Laodiceans—in the crucible of the Tribulation shall cry out to us all in our distress, and once and for all, free us from this Woman whose name is WICKEDNESS:

***“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me”***  
(Revelation 3:18-20).

