

Mystery Babylon: The Abomination of Desolation?

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MYSTERY BABYLON: THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION?

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P R E F A C E

The purpose of this study is to examine the Babylon of Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen. Scripture declares Babylon to be a "mystery," of which her identity has been kept secret throughout biblical history. In studying this end-time Babylon, we will draw much insight from Old Testament passages, many of which ultimately pertain to her. God has kept her identity concealed and obscured in His Word down through the centuries, waiting to be revealed at the "time of the end," when much knowledge of end-time scripture would finally be disclosed, Daniel 12:4. This study is designed to advance the **probable** identity of this "mystery" woman.

In examining the theme of this study, it should be noted that in no way will this material dwell on certain matters of scripture while neglecting scripture's crucial decree that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). All of mankind is in desperate need of the only escape from the surety of an eternal damnation. All are in desperate need of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, from which there is no other way to obtain eternal salvation (Act 4:12). The call to the Gospel of Christ cannot be avoided if one is sincere and honest with regard to biblical interpretation. The Gospel of salvation through Christ Jesus is inescapable regardless of where one looks within the pages of the Bible. As we examine Mystery Babylon, we will, in essence, be studying the history line of the Gospel of Christ.

Finally, anyone reading this report who cannot be absolutely certain of his or her salvation should lay this material aside and earnestly seek the salvation of the Lord. We are entering an era unparalleled in the history of civilization. An era that has little tolerance for religious identities or individualities. An age that is discarding religious practices, (Christian or otherwise) for a more suitable form of religion that will unite the masses into one exclusive and undivided totality of religious order. Indeed we are living on the very threshold of what ancient scripture labels "**The Abomination of Desolation**." The only true light this world has is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God's light is rapidly fading in accordance with His divine will. The Holy Spirit's restraining influence has been decreasing for decades among the so-called Christian congregations. Thus it was foretold how God would remove His power of restraint among the churches at the end of time (II Thessalonians 2:7-8). This light has nearly faded away by the Father's will. Christ's return appears imminent. Salvation for these dark days is rare, nonetheless there is still hope in this present hour.

"SEEK YE THE LORD WHILE HE MAY BE FOUND, CALL YE UPON HIM WHILE HE IS NEAR." (Isaiah 55:6)

INTRODUCTION

Let us examine the probable identity of the "mystery" woman, the great harlot of Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen. She is given the title "**Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth,**" Revelation 17:5. Babylon has been with us in scripture dating all the way back to the tenth chapter of Genesis. The name "Babylon," meaning confusion, is derived from the Hebrew word "Balal" 1*(baw-lal'), meaning to be mingled or confounded. As man built upon the land of Shinar, which later became part of the Babylonian Empire, they decided they needed to build a city and a tower whose top would reach unto heaven itself, for the purpose of making a name for themselves. Their motives were selfish and man-glorifying, as we read from Genesis 11:4:

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

The emphasis is on man, and not on God. It is on man's work, but at the same time their desire was, by means of their own works, to build a city and a tower whose top would somehow reach up to heaven itself. They wanted heaven (and all of the gods they thought were there) and they wanted to maintain a name for themselves as well. Why did they profess such a great desire to reach up into heaven with their city and tower? It was the result of sinful pride. Their desire was to establish a name for themselves. The word "city," in which they desired to build, (whose top would reach into heaven), is a word in the Hebrew language signifying "city, court, or town." It is rooted from the word 2*"uwr" (oor) and carries the idea of opening the eyes; to awake, to lift up oneself, or to raise up. Their ambition was to build a city and a tower. The word "tower" is rooted from the Hebrew word "gaw-dal" and carries the idea of advancing oneself; to boast, to exceed, to wax great, to magnify, to proudly promote. This city and this 3*tower was a representation of their own pride, having nothing at all in association to the true God. It was a false religion, acquired through the works of their own hands. Satan was attempting to mimic God's one true "city" and "tower" through these early Babylonians. Scripture gives us a vast amount of references showing that the kingdom of God is symbolized as a "city" and a "tower." For example, God is portrayed as a "strong tower" in Psalm 61:3 and again in Proverbs 18:10. Song of Solomon describes God's kingdom as the "tower of David," 4:4. Christ is also said to be the "tower of the flock" in Micah 4:8. These ancient Babylonians craved the idea of building their own "city" and "tower," which spiritually may prove to represent their own religion; their own pagan "works" gospel apart from the true Gospel of Christ.

Scripture tells us that the LORD came down to see this city and this tower that the sons of men were building. In Genesis 11:6 God reveals the arrogant attitude of these people. From the beginning of this building project their attitude was one in which nothing would stand in their way of finishing this venture. Nothing could be restrained or withheld from their own fleshly desires, which they purposed to accomplish, Genesis 11:6 declares. Seeing this, God states in verse seven: "Let us [being the Godhead: Father, Son, & Holy Ghost] go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." We learn from Genesis 11:8 that God scattered them abroad throughout the face of the earth, and they ceased from building the city. They were of one language, and God confused their language and scattered them. Verse nine declares:

"Therefore is the name of it called babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth."

The definition of the word Babylon can be said to mean "confusion." God confused their language and scattered them upon the face of the whole earth. Man's original purpose to the city of Babylon was one of which its people could have their gods, even heaven itself, and yet maintain their own destiny. Instead, God sends them confusion. This is the first mention of Babylon in scripture, and we can see the religious implications associated with this city of

Babylon. As we study Babylon throughout scripture we can expect to encounter this trait of confusion and apostasy remaining with her right up to the last mention of Babylon in the eighteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation. She is thrown down, not to be remembered any more. Throughout scripture God condemns Babylon for her pride, and because of this she is associated with rebellion toward God. Many passages in the Old Testament pertaining to Babylon find their ultimate and final spiritual fulfillment within the Babylon of the "time of the end," (Daniel 12:4). Yet, at the same time the literalism of historic Babylonian biblical history was fulfilled during those ancient days. Babylon of old was destroyed. She was destroyed and became a desolation and a dry land, as scripture tells us. It eventually was abandoned and became uninhabited, remaining much the same to this very day. This, however, is falling far too short of being God's final outcome and teaching of Babylon. God has much more in view, in regard to the lesson we can learn from Babylon, than a mere ancient city being destroyed because of her pride toward God. All the nations of the earth fall under this category. All nations, as a whole, are proud toward God. Scripture names only one nation that is truly humble and God-fearing, and that nation is God's spiritual "nation," consisting of all true believers in Christ, both Jew and Gentile, 1 Peter 2:9. Concerning the spiritual lessons revealed within this end-time Babylon, God has much for us today, and especially today, since history has indeed caught up with the Babylon of the Book of Revelation.

Among the majority of books ever written concerning the end-time Babylon, the authors most often find its fulfillment in either the Roman Catholic Church or some nation or city of the earth. Some, who are very faithful to the Word, simply assign it to the world in general. This is indeed correct, since Babylon encompasses the things of the unsaved world. Babylon of old did represent the world in general. Notwithstanding, God does not assign the Babylon of the end-times (the Babylon of Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen) to solely represent the world and nothing more. These chapters are not speaking of a literal fall and judgment of the world. The world in general spiritually fell back in the Garden of Eden. Its literal destruction is sure to come at the last day. The fall of Babylon, in which God focuses on in the accounts given in chapters seventeen and eighteen of the Book of Revelation, is not to be confused with the literal destruction of the world. God is describing something more perplexing and puzzling to us than the earth's destruction at the last day. These chapters, when read superficially, would at first glance seem to be describing the literal destruction of a city named Babylon. As Babylon of old pictured the world in general, these chapters would surely be describing the world's destruction. This, however, appears not the case. There is a spiritual and symbolic teaching concerning Babylon which runs throughout scripture like a thread, culminating in chapter eighteen of the Book of Revelation. There is something incomprehensible, something mysterious, something of amazement and astonishment to all who come to a more clear understanding of these passages.

When scripture speaks of the last days, it can be speaking of the entire Church-Age, since we read many times in the epistles that the early Church had entered into the last days. However, chapters seventeen and eighteen of Revelation are not speaking of the last days, but are specifically focusing on the "time of the end," which is a precise number of days labeled as "great tribulation" in Matthew 24:21 and elsewhere. This time frame is followed immediately by the second coming of Christ. These chapters are speaking of a certain period of time at the very end of this age, a time when the "transgressors" of God have reached their fullness (Daniel 8:32). A time period in which God will spiritually judge the outward and corporate church (Daniel 8:14). Therefore, these chapters in Revelation, with regard to Babylon, are speaking of the very worse conditions possible; degradation to the highest extent. She - Babylon, the great harlot - is being judged. This is not the literal judgment of the world, in which the world will be judged at the last day. No, Babylon is pictured in these two chapters as being judged just prior to or during the great tribulation period immediately proceeding the second coming of Christ.

When we examine and study the Babylon of the Old Testament, we find that God prophesies much in reference to her, which in the spiritual sense will be fulfilled only and ultimately within the confines of the end-time Babylon. This Old Testament Babylon spiritually points to its ultimate or final fulfillment within the end-time entity here on earth

known by God as Babylon. Its descriptions are symbolic in nature and reflect the many allegories, types and figures used in Old Testament days, which pointed to its final and spiritual manifestation upon the earth. When we examine chapters seventeen and eighteen of Revelation we find, first of all, that this Babylon has embraced a full and complete harmony and fellowship with the religious and counterfeit attributes of Satan. Babylon is pictured as "sitting" upon the beast that has ascended out of the bottomless pit (Revelation 17:3). To "sit" as is used here has to do with "residing" or "dwelling with". In other words, this time frame has to do with the great tribulation period in which Satan (the beast) is loosed upon the earth to spiritually deceive all whose names are not written in the spiritual book of life from the foundation of the world (Revelation 17:8). It is imperative to understand the fact that Satan was indeed spiritually bound at the Cross. Hebrews 2:14 tells us: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might **destroy** him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The resurrection of the Messiah - the Christ - was a death blow to Satan, a fatal wound that ensured his destruction. Yes, in 1 Peter 5:8 scripture declares: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We must understand that Satan's influence in the church age is indeed limited, allowing Christ's Gospel to flourish. Satan and his fallen angelic beings are still very much an active force in this world. As in the Old Testament days when Satan's kingdom was successful in hindering true salvation, once more this will be the case during the great tribulation. Revelation 17:8 declares: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." This reference can only be alluding to Satan as he was destroyed at the Cross and yet will be released for a "little season" at the end of time (Revelation 20:3), i.e. at the completion of the church age.

This end-time kingdom of Satan "carries" Babylon, as Revelation 17:7 states. She dwells or resides with the beast. Concerning Babylon, there are three prominent descriptions mentioned in characterizing her. They are:

1. Babylon is a symbolic "woman," as referred to six times in Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen.
2. Babylon is a symbolic harlot or whore mentioned four times in these two chapters. Babylon is referenced as "her" twenty-nine times in these two chapters, and as "she" five times.
3. Finally, Babylon is referenced as "That Great City" five times in these two chapters.

This report will give clear indications why the woman, this spiritual mother of harlots, this great city Babylon is in fact pictured in the Book of Revelation as something other than the world at its destruction at the second coming of Christ. God is displaying the spiritual condition of the confessing worldwide church of Christ during the great tribulation period leading up to Judgment Day itself. Babylon the Great does not depict the Roman Catholic Church, nor is it describing any particular denomination for that matter. It is not picturing other false religions, simply because all false religions have always been pagan religions of the world, and are not affiliated in any way with the "mystery" of which the New Testament Greek embraces with regard to "Mystery Babylon," (see "Babylon of Scripture and Mystery Babylon" of this study). These chapters in the Book of Revelation appear to be picturing a great harlot clothed with the spiritual apparel and decor that is assigned **only** to the true and faithful Church of Christ. These two chapters show how God's own earthly representation - His worldwide church itself - has **FALLEN** into spiritual fornication. So much so that many believers are finally forced to flee out from among her, while multitudes remain spiritually blind and stay within this "Christian appearing" imitation church. This is the time of great deception. So great in fact, that if it were possible, God's very elect would be deceived by this, Matthew 24:24 tells us. Babylon the Great, the corporate church of Jesus Christ, has left most of the true believes behind. The great "falling away" within the corporate church

of Christ has reached its crest. The church has opened its doors and has received with open arms the world, along with all of its abominations and sins against God. This is the description of much of God's confessing church today. They have merged into the world, they have accepted the world (Babylon) into their very own congregations, thus God labels this false church - "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." These are they who are still in the world and yet claim to belong to Christ. As with the first city of Babylon, they claimed to know God but wanted their own way. They only appear to conform and belong to the true Church, but they are false Christians. God has only one city, the true and spiritual City of Jerusalem, while the false or apostate city is Satan's **imitation** of the true city. This false city is pictured as the kingdom of Satan within the corporate church. Therefore, these chapters of Revelation are showing us the climax of apostasy running rampant and prevailing in the church in these final days as congregations worldwide are desecrated by the abominations of Satan through unsaved religious man.

We need only examine the characteristics of this great city, keeping in mind that Satan is the great imitator of God, and we will discover that within this city are found much of the spiritual attributes assigned to the true Church, the Great and Holy City. It is important to keep in mind that this city of merchants in Revelation chapter eighteen is not a literal city of merchants who buy and sell material merchandise. When one reads these chapters without comparing with scripture the many descriptions given of this city, the only logical conclusion is to assume that these chapters, and especially chapter eighteen, are speaking of the material riches of this world. **This is not so.** We must compare this merchandise with its usage in the rest of scripture, remembering that everyone who proclaims the true gospel of salvation through Christ Jesus is a spiritual **MERCHANT** in scripture. Our merchandise is the "good news" (gospel of salvation), and this spiritual merchandise is typified by many descriptions of the literal furnishings and decor found in the Old Testament Tabernacle in the Wilderness and again in Solomon's Temple, of which both pictured the one true Temple of God, the Church of Jesus Christ worldwide.

The chapters in this study are disclosed as highly conclusive biblical data. It is not the intention of this study to introduce interesting reading while not arriving at any concrete conclusions. Any other discoveries that will lend credibility to this report but are found to be lacking in biblical support will not be included.

This report concludes that Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen are **not** presenting Babylon as two distinct entities, nor are they describing the physical destruction of the world, a city or empire at the last day. Rather, this study asserts that the Babylon of these two chapters is in fact the **4***corporate church of Jesus Christ as seen immediately prior to and during the "great tribulation," symbolized by "one hour" (Rev. 17:12; 18:10,17,19). This harlot is indeed the corporate church of Jesus Christ as she slips irreversibly into the clutches of the kingdom of Satan. She is the outer court of God's Temple (Rev. 11:2). The account of her destruction (as seen from Revelation chapter eighteen) is in fact God's judgment upon the corporate church worldwide. The destruction of this harlot comes in the form of **spiritual liquidation** and not as much in the form of physical or material destruction, as many assume. The woman's spiritual decay comes as God revokes His true Gospel from her midst.

FOOTNOTES:

1* "Baw-lal" #1101 Strong's Hebrew. To overflow (spec. with oil); by impl. to mix; also (denom. from 1098) to fodder:-anoint, confound, fade, mingle, mix (self), give provender, temper.

2* "oor" Strong's Hebrew #5782 - rooted from # 5892 "city" - through the idea of opening the eyes; to wake (lit. or fig.): awake, lift up (self), master, raise (up), stir up (self).

3* "gaw-dal" Strong's Hebrew #1431 rooted from "tower." A prim. root; prop. to twist, i.e. to be (caus.make) large (in various senses), as in body, mind, estate, or honor, also in pride: - advance, boast, bring up, exceed, excellent, be (come, do, give, make, wax), great, lift up, magnify, promote, proudly, tower.

4* CORPORATE: Throughout this study the word "corporate" will be used in referring to the worldwide church of Jesus Christ. The corporate church consists of both Christians and those who are masquerading as Christians (non-believers). True believers are a part of the corporate church, which is simply the outer shell of the real Church; unbelievers cannot be a part of the one true Church of Jesus Christ. This paper will spell church with a small "c" when referring to the corporate church; and capital "C" when alluding to the true Church.

CHAPTER ONE

The Abomination Of Desolation: A Brief Synopsis

The phrase "abomination of desolation" is indeed a biblical phrase. Christ spoke of it in the Gospels.

"When ye therefore shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)"

"Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." (Matthew 24:15-16)

"But when ye shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains." (Mark 13:14)

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the **desolation** thereof is nigh." "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there into." (Luke 21:20-21)

Matthew and Mark's accounts are nearly identical. Luke uses somewhat different language, but all are speaking of the same event, and all are contributing information. The Bible declares that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," therefore we realize that each slightly different account only adds to our information, and nothing in scripture contradicts scripture. The only difference between Matthew and Mark's accounts is that Matthew says that the abomination of desolation will stand in the "holy place," while Mark says that it will stand where it "ought not." Mark is actually saying the exact same thing. These books of scripture were written for the New Testament Church. With that in mind, where would the "holy place" be in reference to? It could only be the New Testament spiritual Temple of God; His Church. Scripture tells us that Christ is our true Temple, and every born-again believer is a part of that Temple (John 2:21; I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19).

"If any man defile the **temple** of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which **temple** ye are." (I Corinthians 3:17)

Matthew and Mark's statements tell us that the abomination of desolation will stand in the "holy place" or "where it ought not." We then know immediately that the holy place is the New Testament Temple. The congregations of the earth are where the Temple of God is to be found during the Church-Age. Of course we must realize that there will be false believers or non-believers among the true Christians, but nonetheless this is where the Temple of God is found on earth.

In Luke's account we find more information concerning the abomination of desolation. Luke 21:20 differentiates the language somewhat, which only helps to confirm Matthew and Mark's account. Instead of saying "when ye shall see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place" (or standing where it ought not), Luke says the same thing this way: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, know that the desolation is nigh." The word "Jerusalem" in Luke is substituted for "holy place" in Matthew and Mark. Likewise, the phrase "compassed (encircled) by armies" in Luke is substituted for "standing in the holy place, or where it ought not" in Matthew and Mark. So then God is telling us that Jerusalem is another term for the Temple (holy place) of God. The name Jerusalem means

"habitation of peace," and this is where our real peace is to be found. Not in the literal city of Jerusalem, nor in any of the congregations of the world, but in Christ Jesus, who is also the Jerusalem of scripture and the chief cornerstone of the New Testament spiritual Temple. Jerusalem is used many times throughout scripture in reference to God's Church; His earthly representation. Jerusalem is also used as the name of the believers' eternal home, the new and heavenly Jerusalem.

When Luke states that Jerusalem will be compassed about with armies, we must realize that these armies are the spiritual forces of Satan, such as the false congregations overtaking the church (the spiritual Jerusalem). It is this spiritual warfare that is in view, and not literal and physical armies of the world. We understand this to clearly be saying that Jerusalem (symbolizing the New Testament Temple) is about to be overrun. The Temple is about to be defiled! What does this mean? It is an abomination to God to defile His Temple. It is an abomination that will make desolate the Temple of God. It is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet and referenced by Christ Himself (with warnings!) in three of the gospels. Jesus says: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad," Matthew 12:30. There is no middle ground with which to flee and remain neutral. The abomination of desolation is simply when the enemies of Christ (unsaved, but common everyday people) gradually overtake and contaminate, pollute, and defile the congregations of the world with their own versions of what salvation should be. It is their worldly false gospels. This will occur at the time appointed, at the "latter time" when the "transgressors are come to full," Daniel 8:23.

Why did Christ refer us back to Daniel? The abomination of desolation is spoken of in many places throughout the book of Daniel. In chapter nine we read that "...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy [defile] the city [spiritual Jerusalem] and the sanctuary [the holy place]...", Daniel 9:26. Speaking of this sanctuary, the New Testament Temple of God, Daniel declares in verse 27: "...and for the overspreading of **abominations** he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." This event is also spoken of in II Thessalonians 2:3-4:

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;"

"who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Throughout much of scripture one can read of the desolation of the literal city of Jerusalem during Old Testament days. Ultimately these occurrences pointed to the final and spiritual desecration of the spiritual Jerusalem shortly before Judgment Day. God has given us much insight into this time of great tribulation, in which Satan and his ministers of righteousness (common everyday people) will cunningly cut off the true gospel of salvation and discretely replace it with false gospels that appear much like the real Gospel of Christ. We are even warned by Jesus Himself that this final deception in the church would, if it were possible, deceive even the very elect! That is how awesome and thoroughly deceptive this time will be. Few people will become saved because of this massive onslaught by Satan, in his final attempt to destroy the true Gospel of Christ.

It is the belief and conviction of this study that such an event of this magnitude would not escape an analysis or commentary in the book of Revelation. Secondly, it is suspected that the abomination of desolation is indeed examined in great detail in the seventeenth and especially the eighteenth chapter of the book of Revelation. The customary teachings of the eighteenth chapter have always laid down the same conclusions; the physical destruction of a physical city, or a physical country, or even the literal world itself. By comparing scripture's symbolism (of which much of this chapter embraces) with Old Testament scripture, the light begins to dawn on just precisely what this

destruction is. This study affirms in all probability that Revelation chapter eighteen is not teaching a literal destruction of any city, country, or even the world, but is particularly emphasizing the defilement and the spiritual destruction of the corporate church worldwide, shortly before the second coming of Christ the Lord.

CHAPTER TWO

Babylon of Scripture and "Mystery" Babylon

Never in all of scripture do we find the phrase "Mystery Babylon" until we reach Revelation chapter seventeen and verse five:

"And upon her forehead was a name written, **MYSTERY**, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

"Mystery Babylon" is clearly a separate entity and is distinct from all past mentions of Babylon in scripture. "Mystery Babylon" is the consummation and the completion of all church iniquity of which much of Old Testament scripture prophesied. Mystery Babylon seems to be the abomination of desolation spoken of throughout the Old Testament and confirmed by Christ Himself.

The word "Mystery" is translated from the Greek word **5***musterion (moos-tay'-ree-on) and is defined from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words as follows:

6*"Musterion, primarily that which is known to the mustes, "the initiated" (from muevo, "to initiate into the mysteries." In the New Testament it denotes, not the mysterious (as with the English word), but that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those only who are illumined by His Spirit. In the ordinary sense a "mystery" implies knowledge withheld; its scriptural significance is truth revealed. Hence the terms especially associated with the subject are "made known," "manifested," "revealed," "preached," "understand," "dispensation." The definition given above may best be illustrated by the following passage: "EVEN THE **MYSTERY** WHICH HATH BEEN HID FROM AGES AND FROM GENERATIONS, BUT NOW IS MADE MANIFEST TO HIS SAINTS," (Colossians 1:26)."

"Mystery" is Used in the New Testament of the Following Subjects:

1. "Mystery" is used in disclosing spiritual truth, as revealed in the Gospel.

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all **mysteries**, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." (I Corinthians 13:2)

"Holding the **mystery** of the faith in a pure conscience." (I Timothy 3:9)

7* Among the ancient Greeks "the mysteries" were religious rites and ceremonies practiced by secret societies into which any one who so desired might be received. Those who were initiated into these "mysteries" became possessors of certain knowledge, which was not imparted to the uninitiated, and were called "the perfected," cf. (1 Cor. 2:6-16) where the Apostle has these "mysteries" in mind and presents the Gospel in contrast thereto; here "the perfected" are, of course the believers, who alone can perceive the things revealed.

2. "Mystery" is used in showing Christ, who is God Himself revealed under the conditions of human life.

"That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the **mystery** of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." (Colossians 2:2)

"Withal praying also for us, that God would open us a door of utterance, to speak the **mystery** of Christ, for which I am also in bonds." (Colossians 4:3)

2a. "Mystery" is used in showing Christ submitting unto death:

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a **mystery**, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (I Corinthians 2:7,8)

2b. "Mystery" is used in showing Christ raised from the dead:

"And without controversy great is the **mystery** of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."
(I Timothy 3:16)

2c. "Mystery" is used in showing that the will of God to coordinate the universe in Him, and subject it to Him, might in due time be accomplished:

"Having made known unto us the **mystery** of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." (Ephesians 1:9,10)

2d. "Mystery" is used in declaring the Gospel:

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the **mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." (Romans 16:25,26)

3. "Mystery" is used in showing Christ's body, i.e., the union of redeemed men with God in Christ:

"This is a great **mystery**: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Ephesians 5:6)

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

4. "Mystery" is used in showing the rapture into the presence of Christ and those members of the Church which is His Body who shall be alive on the earth at His Parousia:

"Behold, I shew you a **mystery**, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," (I Corinthians 15:51)

5. "Mystery" is used in showing the operation of those hidden forces that either retard or accelerate the Kingdom of Heaven:

"He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the **mysteries** of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matthew 13:11)

"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the **mysteries** of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables." (Mark 4:11)

6. "Mystery" is used in showing the cause of the present condition of national Israel:

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25)

7. "Mystery" is used in showing the spirit of disobedience to God:

"For the **mystery** of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." (II Thessalonians 2:7)

"And upon her forehead was a name written, **MYSTERY**, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Revelation 17:5)

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore did thou marvel? I will tell thee the **mystery of the woman**, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns." (Revelation 17:7)

The word "mystery" is not found in the Old Testament. From the above New Testament verses we learn that this word is strictly associated with the many secrets and mysteries of God: mystery of the Gospel; mystery of God in Christ; mystery of the crucifixion; mystery of the resurrection; mystery of the created universe; mystery of the preaching of the gospel; mystery of Christ with His Church; mystery of the rapture at the last day; mystery of the kingdom of God; mystery of the blindness of national Israel; mystery of iniquity (within the church); and Mystery Babylon. "Mystery" is therefore accordingly the companion of God and His eternal Word. The only minor exceptions to this rule would be in II Thessalonians chapter two, "the mystery of iniquity" and in Revelation chapter seventeen, "Mystery Babylon." Nonetheless, both of these passages continue to address the spirituality of the things of God.

All of this is being stated in order to point out the clear fact that the word "mystery" is employed in the New Testament to certify and to authenticate the secrets of the mysteries of God. It is simply used as an adjective to describe being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, with regard to the things of God. Again, mystery is not defined as "mysterious" as it is in the English language. Man can only comprehend these great mysteries by being indwelt by God's Holy Spirit.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:14)

Therefore, when we read the title "MYSTERY" (Rev. 17:5) we should realize immediately that this Babylon of both chapters seventeen and eighteen in all probability could not possibly be in reference to anything that is outside of the church (corporate or otherwise). It certainly looks as though it could not pertain to the unsaved (outside) world. The title alone tells us that Babylon of Revelation is assuredly affiliated (although in the negative sense) with the church of Christ.

FOOTNOTES:

5* "Moos-tay'-ree-on" #3466 Strong's Greek. From a der. of "muo" (to shut the mouth); a secret or "mystery" (through the idea of silence imposed by initiation into religious rites):-mystery.

6* "Mystery," from Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words - computer version.

7* Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words - computer version.

CHAPTER THREE

Old Testament Commentary: Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen! (Isaiah 21:1-10)

Isaiah 21:1-10

1 - The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.

2 - A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

3 - Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it.

4 - My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.

5 - Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.

6 - For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

7 - And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

8 - And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights:

9 - And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen**; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

10 - O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

The abomination of desolation is a theme that runs throughout scripture; much of the time being unnoticed by many. When we read of the cities of Judah or the cities of Israel being laid waste and made desolate, we can know that these verses give us at least a partial glimpse of the end-time abomination of desolation within the corporate church, i.e. spiritual Israel or spiritual Jerusalem. The Book of Lamentations, for example, gives us much information concerning the destruction of the literal city of Jerusalem. Ultimately, however, these many verses teach of the final and spiritual destruction of the corporate church once Satan is loosed and allowed to rule within the congregations. In Isaiah chapter twenty-one we find a short account that may very well be alluding to the abomination of desolation. Space does not allow for an extensive study of each verse, however the reader will profit much by studying these verses thoroughly. In verse two Isaiah declares that a grievous vision is revealed unto him. We

wonder what this grievous vision is all about? Surely there must be many places in scripture where God sends a grievous vision? Actually, the answer is no. This is the only passage in all of scripture where God labels a vision to be a grievous vision. Grievous in this verse means extremely sorrowful. It is a most severe and sorrowful vision.

AS WHIRLWINDS IN THE SOUTH: VERSE ONE

In verse one God tells us where this vision comes from. It comes from the desert or the wilderness. It comes from a dry land, one in which is lacking the Gospel filled fountains and waters of eternal salvation. This vision comes from a terrible land. Terrible is also translated as dreadful, a terrible or dreadful land. This seems very much to be a vision of the kingdom of Satan as it enters into the congregations of God. The unsaved make up the spiritual wilderness. The kingdom of Satan is typified in scripture as a nation (a wicked nation) or even a land.

"The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through;
so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land." (Isaiah 21:1)

A GRIEVOUS VISION: VERSE TWO

In verse two God begins to disclose this grievous vision to the prophet Isaiah.

"A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease." (Isaiah 21:2)

The vision begins this way: "The 8*treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously. The word treacherous means "to transgress; to be unfaithful; to deal deceitfully." Some translations read "the deceiver deceives," and this is exactly right. Verse two continues: "and the spoiler spoileth." The word 9*"spoiler" and "spoileth" is the same Hebrew word which means "to plunder; to lay waste; to ravage; to destroy; to rob; to oppress." Some translations read "the deceiver deceives and the plunderer plunders." Again, this is exactly right. "The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth," we read in King James Bible.

Verse two continues with the vision: "Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the [her?] sighing thereof have I made to cease." The Hebrew indicates that this can also read "all of 10* [her] sighing." Elam and Media were pagan nations. Elam was the oldest son of Noah's son Shem. His descendants were known as the Elamites. They were idolaters, and in the time of Abram, their land encompassed much of the known world. In the 500s B.C. Media became the most powerful empire in the world. God has chosen Elam and Media to represent the kingdom of Satan (which is the same as the kingdom of this world) in this vision. God commands Elam and Media to "go up" and He commands them to "besiege." Besiege means to "assault, to lay siege, or to inclose." But what or who is God commanding Satan to assault? Verse two ends with God saying: "...all the [her?] sighing thereof have I made to cease." One may naturally assume that Satan's pillage and assaults would cause the joy and the singing to cease. But why does God say the "sighing" will cease? Sighing means to grieve or to lament. When we compare scripture with scripture, we find that "sighing" is a distinctive characteristic of the church. Let us consider just two of many possible verses:

David (the Psalmist) says:

"For my life is spent with grief, and my years with **sighing**: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed." (Psalm 31:10)

Sigh is a negative word meaning to groan or to mourn. David, as well as every believer sighs over their sins. Knowing that Christ paid for our sins, and yet while we are in this body we still sin, therefore we sigh over our sins. Grieving and sighing over our sins is something that non-believers are oblivious to. The unbelievers do not sigh over their sins. Another beautiful verse on this matter is found in Ezekiel 9:4:

"And the LORD said unto him, go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that **sigh** and that **cry** for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."

This is God's definition of what it really means to be a true believer in the God of scripture. The only way anyone can sincerely grieve and sigh over his sins is to become a "new creature in Christ," (Galatians 6:15). For those who are sincere, God puts a spiritual mark upon their foreheads. The only way anyone can truly sigh over their sins is to be brought and humbled to the position of knowing that Christ died for those sins. Then, if one is a true believer, he'll truly grieve and sigh over his sins. And we will have God's spiritual mark upon our forehead; meaning that we were purchased with a price and we belong to God.

PANGS HAVE TAKEN HOLD UPON ME: VERSE THREE

Isaiah the prophet is horrified when he sees (in this vision) Satan (the destroyer) and his kingdom plundering - not the world, but plundering the Temple of God. Isaiah, of course, has no idea when this vision will occur, but he knows what is happening. Having heard only the beginning of this grievous vision, Isaiah says that his loins were filled with pain, verse three.

"Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it." (Isaiah 21:3)

This vision caused Isaiah to literally experience pain in his side. He also says that he was taken by pangs, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth. He experienced severe pain, as a woman with labor pains, because of this sorrowful vision. "I was bowed down at the hearing of it." Isaiah is reiterating the horror of the vision and the reaction that it has on him. He was bowed down at the hearing of it. What does that mean? It means that he was literally thrown back, as if he were hit with some type of force, the vision was that powerful. The word **11**"bowed" as he was bowed down, is very different from the word "bow" as in to bow in worship. They are defined in the Hebrew as "to wrest." Wrest, which means to shift the position of or move; as if by vigorous twisting. In other words Isaiah was literally moved by the horror of this vision. He was thrown back or bowed down by it. Verse three continues as Isaiah says he was dismayed at the seeing of it. Isaiah was, as if he were literally there in the vision. He heard things and he saw things in this vision. He was dismayed, which in the Hebrew means to tremble inwardly or to be alerted with great alarm.

FEARFULNESS AFFRIGHTED ME: VERSE FOUR

In verse four Isaiah continues to describe the physical effects that this vision has on him:

"My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me; the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me." (Isaiah 21:4)

Isaiah's heart is racing. Terror affrighted me, he says; it overwhelmed him. This is Isaiah's reaction to such a horrifying vision that would not be totally and ultimately fulfilled until our day. Again, Isaiah sees Satan and his kingdom (represented by Elam and Media) which were vast areas of the ancient world. These countries are used to represent the world in the same way that Egypt or Assyria pictures the world in much of scripture.

PREPARE THE TABLE: VERSE FIVE

In verse five God tells Isaiah what to do:

"Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink; arise ye princes, and anoint your shield." (Isaiah 21:5)

Notice carefully that the kingdom of Satan is not attacking and assaulting the world in any way whatsoever. The non-religious world is nowhere in view in this vision, as far as being the recipient of this assault. We know this because in verse five the defense is being set in place. God says to prepare the table. What does it mean to prepare the **table**? This is salvation language altogether! God has prepared a table for every person called into His kingdom. Psalm 23:5 says "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," (The same Hebrew word "table"). But here in Isaiah's vision, we are not told to prepare "a" table, but rather we are told to prepare "the" table. And that table is God's table. The word **12***"prepare" here in Isaiah in this context means "to arrange; or to place in order." God is telling us in essence to put our faith in order, or arrange your spiritual house. He is telling us to prepare spiritually for the attack!

The Hebrew defines the ***13**table as "by implication, a meal." Jesus Christ is our meal. It is figuratively seen as the table prepared by Christ when He atoned for our sins by going to the cross. He made it possible to eat and drink at His table. We feed on His body, represented by the bread of the table. We spiritually drink of His blood, represented by the drink of the table. This "table" then represents Jesus Christ and His provision for us to become eternally saved. This table was pictured far back in the tabernacle of the congregation in the wilderness. The "table" of shewbread was a type of Christ's eternal table. God is warning us in this vision: Prepare "the" table; put your spiritual table in order; arrange your spiritual walk; **BE READY!** It seems quite possibly that God, in this vision, is showing Isaiah the abomination of desolation. As God allows Satan to rule in the congregations (as judgment upon the corporate church), this causes "**the sighing to cease,**" as verse three says. Satan deceives and causes the unsaved within the corporate church to disregard the truth of God; to disregard their sins. There is no concern for the sin of adding and taking from the Word. There is no concern for personal sin. There is no sighing! **The sighing of the corporate church has ceased, because Satan has deceived them into thinking all is well with their eternal souls!**

As we continue on in verse five, God commands us to watch in the watchtower. Arrange our table and watch in the watchtower. What is the watchtower? The Church is our watchtower, of course. How do we watch? Not by watching the skies. We watch by reading and studying the Word of God. This is where our defense is. "Arrange the table, watch in the watchtower, eat and drink." This takes us back to Christ's table. We eat and drink of Christ. Jesus said: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day," (John 6:53). We continue to see that this vision has everything to do with the church and only the church. The Table, the watchtower, the meal, and the drink, and even the sighing. The outside world is not in view as the focal point of this attack.

Verse five concludes by saying "arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield." The word princes is also translated as "rulers." God is warning the church and reiterating it to the ministers, teachers, elders, etc. "Arise ye princes and anoint the shield." Every believer is considered a "prince" of God. What is the shield in reference to? Does it have anything to do with the things of God? Of course the answer is yes. Christ is our shield. This word is also translated as buckler. Psalm 18:30 says:

"As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried:
he is a **buckler** to all those that trust in him."

"O Lord our **shield**" we read in Psalm 59:11.
"Thou hast given me the **shield** of thy salvation." (Psalm 18:35)

Over and over again we read of Christ being our shield. And now, in this grievous vision, God commands us to "anoint the shield." We continue to see that this vision is dealing strictly with the church. To **14***"anoint" carries the meaning of consecration; "to consecrate oneself; to be set apart; to be holy." Christ calls us to be holy as He is holy. And so as much as we can, we need to consecrate ourselves for this duty or function. Repentance and holy living is a crucial part of the Christian faith. In Isaiah 21:5 God commands the church to anoint the shield. We are told to consecrate ourselves to Christ. Every generation of believers are called to this anointing or this consecration. But especially as we see Satan coming into the congregations with an overwhelming number of false gospels and false signs and wonders. This is what is spoken of in this vision of Isaiah chapter twenty-one. Even though it may have had its partial and literal fulfillment in Old Testament national Israel, it looks as though ultimately its fulfillment is at the end of time in the corporate church of Jesus Christ.

SET A WATCHMAN: VERSE SIX

In verse six God declares:

"For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth." (Isaiah 21:6)

A **15***watchman is someone who, according to the Hebrew, is called to observe or to wait. As we go into verse seven we should consider that the first six verses speak of the church and warn the church. They also speak of the world (the dominion of Satan) as the attacker. It speaks also of Isaiah himself, how this vision caused him literal pain and grief. But now verse seven begins to detail somewhat the grievous vision itself.

Old Testament Commentary: Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen! (Isaiah 21:1-10)

HARKEN DILIGENTLY: VERSE SEVEN

"And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed." (Isaiah 21:7)

In verse six Isaiah is told to place a watchman, and let the watchman declare what he sees. In verse seven we read what this watchman saw. It is important to understand what is meant by the word **16***"horsemen." This word can mean either a steed (a war horse; one that is attached to a vehicle or a chariot, and one that is not used for mounting); or this word can also mean a driver (as the driver of a chariot). In this context it might represent a chariot with two horsemen along with a chariot of asses and a chariot of camels. Very difficult language to understand. These chariots were pulled by two asses, two camels and two horses, or so it seems. The number two is very prominent here. Two camels; two donkeys, and two drivers. After seeing this, the watchman harkened diligently with much heed. Meaning it is a very difficult vision to interpret. We can relate some of the vision that seems to be correct without being too dogmatic about it. First of all, where are the chariot of asses and camels in relation to the vision? Are they passing through the world? Where are they passing through? Verse eight gives us the answer.

I AM SET IN MY WARD WHOLE NIGHTS: VERSE EIGHT

"And he cried, A lion: My Lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights." (Isaiah 21:8)

The watchman says that he stands continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and am set in his "WARD" whole nights. **17***"Ward" is directly related to the safe guarding of the church. It means to safeguard; to watch; to keep guard duty in the house of God. This is where the watchman is and this is where the vision is taking place. The horsemen and the chariots in this vision are seen in the watchtower itself (which is another term for the church). They are passing through. We know this to be true also because back in verse one we read "...as whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it [speaking of the vision] cometh from the desert, from a terrible land." This vision is passing through "as" whirlwinds in the south pass through. The "south" many times in scripture relates to the kingdom of God, while the NORTH many times represents the kingdom of Satan. This vision is passing through the SOUTH: **the vision is seen in the church of God.**

Returning back to verse seven the watchman in the church sees one single chariot with two drivers; one driving two asses and the other driving two camels. When scripture says a COUPLE of asses and a COUPLE of camels, we might wonder what exactly does couple mean? "**18***Couple" is translated in scripture as "two" or "couple" or "yoke," which is a team of two oxen or two animals. This is probably where the word "couple" originated from; meaning a yoke of oxen, which is two. And so the watchman sees one single chariot with two drivers; one driving two asses and the other driving two camels. Scripture teaches that the number "TWO" is representative of the church worldwide. Without question the number two is symbolic of the corporate church, consisting of believers and non-believers alike. But what about asses and camels? Why two of each? Can they be associated with the church in any way? The answer is a definite yes. God, perhaps, tells all who have ears to hear that this is speaking of the church for the

simple fact that He emphasizes the number two. And so what is so familiar about the two asses? God uses the term wild asses to describe believers. God says in Psalm 104 that He sends the gospel waters into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst," (Ps. 104:10-11). God speaks of His land, His kingdom as "the joy of wild asses" in Isaiah 32:14. This would have to be speaking of believers as wild asses. Before we were saved we were spiritually wild and stubborn as a wild ass. There are numerous other verses to confirm this.

Why did our LORD ride into Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass? He rode into Jerusalem driving two asses, not one. Was He showing forth a spiritual picture of the gospel of the kingdom taming the wild asses? The gospel will bring eternal peace to the worse of sinners. Zechariah 9:9 speaks directly of the Messiah's triumphant entry into the city of Jerusalem:

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon a ass, and upon the colt the foul of an ass." (Zechariah 9:9)

For a spiritual blessing read Genesis 49:10-11:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."
"Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes."

The reason that this is said to bring a wonderful blessing is not only because this again speaks of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, but when we examine this Hebrew word **19**"colt" we find that it carries a different meaning altogether than does the normal definition of colt. It has a variety of meanings, but mostly it means "a son (as the builder of the family)." It can also mean in fewer and lesser degrees a daughter. It also carries the meaning of anointed one; appointed; branch, afflicted, firstborn. The astounding fact is that it is rooted from the Hebrew word **20**"baw-naw," meaning to "build" or to "rebuild." This is why Christ entered Jerusalem; to go to the cross that He may BUILD His CHURCH, or we can even say that He may rebuild His church. He came to seek that which was lost. He came to BRING BACK or to REBUILD the captivity of Jacob. That which was lost at the fall of Adam and Eve in the beginning. One will find a great blessing in studying out the word "colt" as it is used in Genesis 49:11.

The watchman of this grievous vision sees a chariot, one driver driving two asses and another driver driving two camels. Camels can be affiliated with the Church as well. Let us list only two references:

"All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron [Christ gives us a perfect heart] to make David king over all Israel: [David being a picture or type of Christ, our king of kings over spiritual Israel] and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king." [It is only the believers who want David as their king; that is Christ. The world does not want Christ in any way to rule over them].

"Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naph-ta-li, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel." (I Chronicles 12:38,40)

The asses and the camels carry the bread and meat, that is they carry the Gospel of Christ that there might be joy in Israel - that there might be joy in the Church of God. Christ commissions us to carry His gospel. Mules, oxen, and sheep, as well symbolize the same thing. Isaiah 60:6 says:

"The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries [young camels] of Midian and E-phah, all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall sew forth the praises of the LORD."

All believers, (typified by camels) bring gold and incense [faith and prayer] into the Church that we may show forth the praises of the LORD. But, thus far, what is so grievous about this vision that Isaiah sees? Isaiah has seen God's Israel [ultimately the Church] as it should be. There is joy in Israel. The chariot of camels and of asses (from the SOUTH) are passing through the watchtower in this vision. They have the true gospel. Everything is as it should be. Nothing is grievous as of yet.

As we move into verse eight the watchman suddenly cries out: "A LION." The verse reads "And he cried, A lion." Examining this word "cried" we find that it means "through the idea of approaching a person met; to call out or to address by name." It may well be that this watchman suddenly calls out to Messiah, the Christ who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Another possibility is that the watchman could be contrasting Satan to a lion, as he moves in to invade the church at the end of the age. Satan's kingdom is equated to a great lion in many passages. Either way the watchman is calling out because of the horror of what is to come, as we move to verse nine.

BABYLON IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN: VERSE NINE

"And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is **fallen, is fallen**; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground." (Isaiah 21:9)

Now God gives us the crisis or the turning point to this vision. Joy is no longer found in the watchtower. Verse nine says "... behold, here cometh a chariot of a man." This verse is clearly mistranslated in the King James. While the King James bible says "behold, here cometh a chariot of men," this word **21***"men" comes from the Hebrew word translated in the singular form as a man.

The definition also lists other singular forms of this word. There is no doubt that it is a mistranslation. This is the same word meaning singular as we read of in Isaiah chapter fourteen where Satan himself is pictured as a "singular" man. God says of Satan: "...is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms," Isaiah 14:16. It is this same symbolic man (Satan pictured as a man riding two war horses into the watchtower) that causes Isaiah to say "My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear for me," verse four. Even if verse nine is accurate in stating a chariot of men rather than a chariot of a man, it would not change the outcome of this vision. Unsaved man is ruling in the watchtower. Unsaved man is ruled by Satan. Satan has taken his seat in the churches.

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." (Matthew 24:15-16)

Immediately upon seeing the man in the chariot driving two war horses, we realize that again the number two is prevalent. Meaning that Satan is masquerading as truth in the church itself. He appears as Christ, a lamb with two

horns (again the number two symbolizing the church), but speaks as a dragon, Revelation chapter thirteen. Near the end of this vision (verse nine) the watchman declares **Babylon is fallen, is fallen!** After all of this, we wonder if we could have been wrong after all? We've seen the characteristics of this vision being made up of church symbols and salvation language: the sighing; the meal and the drink; the watchtower; the table; the princes; the shield; the two asses and the two camels. And we say, well Babylon has always been a picture of the unsaved world in scripture. And that is exactly right. So what do we do? Throw all of these church symbols away and say this is again teaching the destruction of the world? Absolutely not. These things harmonize perfectly with the rest of scripture. Yes, Babylon is a picture of the unsaved world in scripture. The world as a whole fell back at the beginning of time. This is why the earth is cursed, of course.

We have to understand that Satan enters into the corporate church at the end of time, causing - as never before - the church to spiritually FALL into spiritual decay. True believers will not be subject to this deception, of course. But once the abomination of desolation occurs, and once Satan's kingdom takes its foothold in the church of God, it is the very same thing as saying the unsaved world of Babylon has taken over in the congregations of the world. If the unsaved world of Babylon rules in the churches at the end of time, causing the church to become extremely worldly, what else would we call the church, other than Babylon? She is the same thing as the unsaved world. She is the mother of all harlots because she once had the true gospel. She is a worse harlot than all harlots because she once had the truth.

Is there any wonder that when God pronounces judgment upon the unsaved corporate church, that He pronounces "fallen" twice in each instance? In Isaiah chapter twenty-one He says: Babylon is fallen, is fallen. We see the number two. In Revelation chapter fourteen we read in verse eight: "Babylon is fallen, if fallen." The number two is prevalent. In Revelation 18:2 we read: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." Again, the number two! Could this be coincidental? No, nothing is coincidental with God and His Word. Could God be telling us who Babylon is simply by using the number two in association with the word "fallen"Babylon is fallen, is fallen.

We see this same idea when we read of God's holiness. God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Thus the number three is prevalent. Isaiah 6:3 declares of God: "...holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts." The number three is prevalent, signifying the trinity of the Godhead. Again in Revelation 4:8 we read: "...holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Again the number three is used to reiterate God's holiness: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

GOD'S THRESHING FLOOR: VERSE TEN

As we conclude this vision, we see overwhelming evidence to support the fact that the vision of the fall of Babylon is indeed a vision of the fall of the corporate church at the end of time. After Babylon is declared fallen in verse nine, we immediately read in verse ten:

"O my threshing and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you." (Isaiah 21:10)

Isaiah is sorrowing over God's "threshing floor." It is fallen! This is again more substantial testimony showing that the apostate church at the end of time merges with the unsaved world of Babylon, and becomes Mystery Babylon the Great. She has opened her doors and has accepted the ways of the world into her once sanctified refuge. She can now only be called what the world is called - Babylon.

The church of God is pictured as a threshing floor where threshing is done in order to separate the wheat from the chaff. John the Baptist spoke of Christ who would come and baptize with the Holy Ghost. He spoke of Him by saying:

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:12)

The Word of God (through His church) fans the threshing floor, separating the wheat (which are believers) from the chaff (the non-believers).

Finally, we mentioned Genesis 49:11 earlier, saying to examine the word "colt," where it speaks of Christ binding His foal unto the vine, and his ass's "colt" unto the choice vine. We saw that in this particular verse only, the word "colt" signified "a son building his family." This word in Hebrew is pronounced "bane" and is found again in Isaiah's grievous vision, this time in verse ten as "corn." "O my threshing, and the "corn" [bane] of my floor." Corn is normally grain or seed. However, in this vision, amazingly the corn is not defined as normal corn, but it is defined as a male or female offspring. In this case it is defined in Strong's Hebrew as follows: "The emphasis is on "binding" a man to his offspring."

As Christ bound the ass's coat to the choice vine, so too we have the same things in view in verse ten. Christ is that spiritual seed, that spiritual corn, as He binds Himself to His spiritual offspring eternally, by taking on the flesh nature of sinful man and spending our eternities in hell for us. Christ is that seed, that corn that binds us to Him as He fans His threshing floor. Christ fulfills the passage of John 12:24:

"...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground
and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

FOOTNOTES:

8* "Baw-gad" #898 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; to cover (with a garment); fig. to act covertly; by impl. to pillage:- deal deceitfully (treacherously, unfaithfully), offend, transgress, (depart), treacherous (dealer, -ly, man), unfaithful (-ly, man)

9* "Shaw-dad" #7703 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; prop. to be burly, i.e. (fig) powerful (pass impregnable); by impl. to ravage: - dead, destroy (-er), oppress, robber, spoil (-er), utterly (lay) waste.

10* The Interlinear Bible of Hebrew, Greek, and English; Hendrickson, page 551

11* "Aw-vath" #5791 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; to wrest:- bow self, (make) crooked, falsifying, overthrow, deal perversely, pervert, subvert, turn upside down.

12* "Aw-rak" #6186 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; to set in a row, i.e. arrange, put in order (in a variety of applications):-put (set) (the battle, self) in array, compare, direct, equal, esteem, estimate, expert [in war], furnish, handle, join [battle], ordain, (lay, put, reckon up, set) (in) order, prepare, tax, value. Young's Hebrew: To arrange, set in array. Hendrickson Interlinear: Arrange

13* "Shool-khawn" #7979 Strong's Hebrew. From #7971; a table (as spread out); by impl. a meal:-table.

14* "Maw-shakh" # 4886 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; to rub with oil, i.e. to anoint; by impl. to consecrate; also to paint.

15* "Tsaw-faw" #6822 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; prop. to lean forward, i.e. to peer into the distance; by impl. to observe, await:-behold, espy, look up (well), wait for, (keep the) watch (-man).
Young's Hebrew: to look out; to watch

16* "Paw-rawsh" #6571 Strong's Hebrew. From #6567; a steed (as stretched out to a vehicle, not single nor for mounting [comp. 5483]; also (by impl.) a driver (in a chariot), i.e. (collect.) cavalry:-horseman.

17* "Mish-meh'-reth" #4931 Strong's Hebrew. Fem. of #4929; watch, i.e. the act (custody) or (concr.) the sentry, the post; obj. preservation, or (concr.) safe; fig. observance, i.e. (abstr.) duty, or (obj.) a usage or party:-charge, keep, to be kept, office, ordinance, safeguard, ward, watch.

18* "Tseh'-med" #6776 Strong's Hebrew. A yoke or team (i.e.pair); hence an acre (i.e. day's task for a yoke of cattle to plough):-acre, couple, together, two [asses], yoke (of oxen)
Young's Hebrew: A pair; yoke.

19* "Bane" #1121 Strong's Hebrew. From #1129; a son (as a builder of the family name), in the widest sense (of lit. and fig. relationship).

20* "Baw-naw" #1129 Strong's Hebrew. A prim. root; to build (lit. and fig.):-(begin to) build (-er), obtain children, make, repair, set (up).

21* "Eesh" #376 Strong's Hebrew. Contr. for #582 [or perh. rather from an unused root mean. to be extant]; a man as an individual or a male person. The Interlinear Bible; Hendrickson, "chariot of a man."

CHAPTER FOUR

The Woman In The Wilderness

Revelation chapter twelve speaks of a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The opening of this chapter declares that she is in pain and travailing in birth, ready to deliver a man child. This man child is to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5). Before this woman can give birth to the child, we see that Satan is watching closely at this birth; for he is compelled to devour this child as soon as he is born (verse 4).

Without question the identity of this woman is national Israel (God's Old Testament earthly representation). As she gives birth to the man child she transcends into God's New Testament earthly representation. She is the Church, the bride of Christ. She gives birth to a man child who is God incarnate, the LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.

Not surprisingly, we see that Satan is standing by ready to kill God's Messiah, the Anointed Prince of Peace. And so his age-old plan of rebellion continues into the New Testament era. As Christ ascended into heaven fifty days after His crucifixion, we see that this woman flees into the **wilderness** where she has a place in this world prepared for her by God (Rev. 12:6). This bride of Christ is adorned with the sun, and the moon under her feet. She is clothed with the saving light of Christ the Savior who is given the title of "The Sun of Righteous," Malachi 4:2. The Church is to radiate the light of Christ, who is our sun and shield, Psalm 84:11. The moon is under her feet. With the good news of salvation, the Church has power and authority to rule over darkness. The bride of Christ is symbolically crowned with twelve stars, representing the twelve tribes of ancient Israel and perhaps the twelve apostles of the New Testament Church. Verse fourteen also proclaims that this woman is taken into the wilderness.

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the **wilderness**, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent [Satan]." (Revelation 12:14)

She is given two wings of a great eagle, that she may fly into the wilderness where she is to be nourished for the duration of the Church-Age from the serpent. The "two wings of a great eagle" is again portraying the safety of our Heavenly Father as he protects all true believers while we sojourn on this earth.

The **wilderness** is where God the Father places His Church. She is not to be hid from the world in some far away desert. The wilderness is symbolic of the world itself, and it is there where God will safeguard His Church. It is there where God will nourish the whole body of believers. God pictured this grand event back in the days of the exodus when Israel was tested forty years in the literal wilderness of Sinai. Those years were a portrait of the Church-Age wherein believers pass through this life en-route to our eternal promise land, represented by the physical "promise land" of Canaan.

When we come to the end of the Church-Age and enter into the days of great tribulation, we wonder if this woman in the wilderness is still spiritually clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. Where is this God-glorifying woman - God's own earthly representation - after centuries of being nourished in the wilderness? The true bride of Christ will always remain true and faithful only because Christ has spiritually nourished her. None of Christ's elect will ever be lost. However, we must understand that the visible earthly church of Christ is only an outward representation of the kingdom of God. It is merely an outward shell in which anyone can enter into and claim to belong to Christ.

Even during the early days of the Church there were sure to have been many unsaved people within the church declaring to be a true disciple of Christ. Scripture teaches that this outward shell of the church will become totally apostate at the end of time, shortly before Christ comes to judge this earth. That does not mean that the true believers will become apostate. That is impossible, they will simply flee from this defiled and unclean church. The outer structure will still be standing as it was in the early Church-Age; the only difference is that it will no longer be preaching the straight and narrow way of salvation. The outward structure will have become the great spiritual harlot of scripture during this time.

Scripture allows us to see in great detail the end-time condition of this visible and outward shell of the church. The Church of Christ began as a woman clothed with the sun and placed in the wilderness (Rev. 12). Her end is as a harlot in the wilderness (Rev. 17 & 18). After her sojourn on this earth, this symbolic wilderness, she rapidly falls into spiritual adultery and is judged just prior to or during the great tribulation as "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots."

CHAPTER FIVE

The Woman upon the Scarlet Colored Beast

When we go to Revelation chapter thirteen we wonder why God reveals Satan to us in the form of two distinct beasts, and yet they are both symbolic of the kingdom of Satan? The first beast is pictured as rising up out of the **sea** (Rev. 13:1). The sea in scripture pictures unsaved humanity or even hell itself. "But the wicked are like the troubled **sea**, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," (Isaiah 57:20). God parted the Red Sea and saved the children of Israel from Pharaoh's army by providing a means in which to cross the sea and enter into their literal promise land. This miraculous event pictured God's true Israel being saved from eternal hell (The Red Sea) as Christ paid the price of our sins. He did so by enduring hell on our behalf. Christ confirmed a place for every true believer in His eternal kingdom, which is our spiritual "promise land." The beast that we see rising up out of the sea in Revelation 13:1 can only be depicting Satan at the time of the great tribulation as he is released from his spiritual prison (Rev. 20:7), which is hell or the bottomless pit (portrayed by the sea). This portrait of the beast may very well be the secular or worldly side of Satan who holds un-religious or pagan man captive.

When we go to verse eleven of Revelation chapter thirteen we discover another beast coming up out of the **earth**. This is again a picture of Satan at the end of time. This may well be the religious side of Satan, that is Satan in his holy attire as he comes as the anti-Christ (instead of Christ) to imitate Christ the Savior. It is interesting to note that this word "earth" ("and I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth") is used interchangeably in the New Testament as "earth" or "land." In the parable of the net in John chapter twenty-one, Simon Peter drew the net to land and it was full of fishes, one hundred and fifty-three to be exact. The "land" (same word as earth) portrayed as the kingdom of God, received all of God's elect, represented by the fish. In another account given in Acts 7:3 Peter recounts the days in which God tells Abraham to "... get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the **land** which I shall show thee." The "land" clearly being a picture of the kingdom of God. It is also the same Greek word used as "earth" in which this second beast arises from in Revelation chapter thirteen. Again, in the parable of the sower, the seed that fell upon the good ground is he that hears the Word and understands it, and bears fruit unto salvation. The good "ground" that this seed falls upon is also translated from the same Greek word as is "earth," from which this second beast arises from. This same word is again translated as "land of Israel" or "land of Judah" many times in the gospels, all typifying the congregations of the earth, which in turn are God's own representation of His kingdom while sojourning on this earth.

It may well be that the "earth" that this second beast arises from is indeed a term signifying the "land" of salvation or the "land" of Israel, in which the good "ground; i.e. earth or land" is found. It may be that this word "earth" from which this second beast arises from is representing the corporate church of Christ worldwide. The only place in scripture where this word "earth" is translated as "world" is in Revelation 13:3:

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

This would indeed explain all of the world following this religious counterfeit beast. This would not necessitate the entire world, but only the entire religious world; those within the congregations of the world; or those within the congregations of the land; or those within the congregations of the good ground. Those who have not fled this religious harlot, but are there for various reasons other than the worship of the true God of scripture.

After this beast arises from the earth in Revelation 13:11, we are immediately told that "... he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Satan is referred to in scripture as a man (Isaiah 14:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:3), therefore we should not be confused that Revelation 13:11 labels this beast a "he," even though he is symbolizing the false bride of Christ, the false and counterfeit church, who is the woman turned harlot in the wilderness. Satan, (he) is giving power to (her) the false bride of Christ to deceive religious man at the time of the end. As this beast arises from within the religious world, we see unwavering evidence that he is propagating a counterfeit church; a counterfeit gospel. We know this by the fact that he has "two horns like a lamb and spake as a dragon." Christ is the Lamb of God, and His true Church followeth the Lamb wheresoever He goes, Revelation 14:4. But this beast from the earth is only mimicking the true Church, as his appearance is like unto the Lamb of God, having two horns, representing the number of the Church (two witnesses, Rev. 11; two olive trees Zech. 4:3, Rev. 11:4; two candlesticks, Rev. 11:4; two anointed ones, Zech. 4:14. Christ sent His disciples out two by two, Luke 10:1. God sent animals into the ark two by two, Gen. 6:19-20). However, the reality in the unseen spiritual realm is that this second beast speaks from Satan himself, the great red dragon (Rev. 12:3) as we read in the last part of Rev. 13:11 ("... and he spake as a dragon").

Another bit of evidence to support the belief that Babylon the Great is in fact the latter day (tribulation era) corporate church of Christ, and not merely a symbol for all of the non-religious or secular world, is the fact that she is sitting upon a **scarlet** coloured beast. The color scarlet may indicate the fact that she is not merely a pagan religious symbol, but that she most likely represents Christ Himself! This beast is of course the kingdom of Satan, but could this beast be the beast of Revelation 13:11, the religious beast? It very well may be. Is the once faithful church of Christ now sitting upon this scarlet coloured beast? No wonder she has become a harlot!

It was no coincidence that the Roman soldiers stripped Christ, and dressed Him in a **scarlet** coloured robe (Matthew 27:28). What these soldiers did would have been their last desire, had they known the spiritual significance of the scarlet robe. God Himself bore witness that this crucified Christ was the Temple of God. Recall the words of Jesus when He told the Jews "Destroy this **temple**, and in three days I will raise it up," John 2:19. Verse twenty-one continues: "But he spake of the **temple** of his body." Christ, God incarnate, is the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20), and the head of His Church (Matthew 21:42), the spiritual Temple of God, which every true believer is a part of (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

Christ takes on this scarlet color in signifying the true and final Temple of God, which in past times had been prefigured, shadowed, and typified by first the tabernacle in the wilderness, and then by the literal and physical Temple of God, built in Jerusalem. The color scarlet played a large role in the furnishings of both the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem. Over and over again we read in the book of Exodus of the **scarlet** material used in the construction of the tabernacle. Again, both of these temples were pictures of God's New Testament Church, His spiritual Temple made up of true believers, and led by the Lamb of God, Christ Himself.

The materials, woods, ointments, stones, etc. which were used in assembling the tabernacle in the wilderness were all descriptions of how God's spiritual Temple would be furnished with precious arrays of the Gospel of Christ. These tabernacle materials were all given as offerings to God. God only accepted the materials given willingly from the heart (Exodus 25:2). The following is a list of items God singles out as a pertinent part of His Temple. These all have much spiritual significance throughout all of scripture, since God uses them in ultimately portraying the New Testament Temple.

(Exodus 25:1-8):

V1 ... "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

V2 ... speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.

V3 ... And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,

V4 ... and blue, and purple, and **scarlet**, and fine linen, and goats' hair

V5 ... And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood,

V6 ... Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense,

V7 ... Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.

V8 ... And let them make me a **SANCTUARY**, [Temple]; that I may dwell among them."

Throughout this report we shall see how many of these elements or "vessels" which rightly belong to Christ's true Church are no longer found in the corporate church, i.e. the religious harlot in the wilderness - the counterfeit church of Christ worldwide.

As leprosy in Old Testament days pictured man's sins, we can spiritually understand why the priests would use scarlet among many other offerings in sprinkling the leper who is to be cleansed. It can only allude to the blood of Christ which is the only cure for spiritual disease. Read Leviticus chapter fourteen.

In Proverbs chapter thirty-one we see a beautiful metaphorical picture of Christ's very own bride. The Church is righteous not on her own accord, but she is righteous and pure only because Christ has purchased and clothed her with His own righteousness. Proverbs 31:21 tells us that she is clothed with **scarlet**. Song of Solomon has the bride of Christ in view as well. Chapter four and verse three tells us: "Thy lips are like a thread of **scarlet**, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks." The prophet Daniel may have been a "type" of Christ in the Old Testament, in that he represented Christ in the Babylonian Empire and a great many parallels to Christ can be drawn from this account. As a result of Daniel's interpretation of King Belshazzar's dream, scripture details the following in Daniel 5:29: "... and they clothed Daniel with **scarlet** and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him..." These are only a few of the many passages of scripture that deal with scarlet in pointing to the sacrificial blood of Christ.

In the end of this woman's journeying in the wilderness, she - like Israel of old - has fallen into spiritual adultery. As in ancient Israel, some were truly saved by trusting God that He would someday send the promised Messiah. Today, for the most part, those who are the true elect of God have fled this spiritual harlot who follows after religious Satan, the **SCARLET COLOURED BEAST**, full of names of blasphemy, Rev. 17:3. Revelation 18:4 commands the true believer to flee from this spiritual harlot: "...Come out of her, **MY PEOPLE**, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." We find other parallel passages very similar to this in the Old Testament declaring the same thing. This is not a call to come out of the world (as many have taught), but this is clearly a command for believers (My people) to forsake this apostate church and flee her persuasion. Christ Himself commanded the true believer to "flee to the mountains," (Luke 21:21; Mark 13:14; Matthew 24:16) when we see this abomination of desolation standing in the **holy place**.

CHAPTER SIX

The Woman's Apparel

"And the woman was arrayed in **purple** and **scarlet** colour, and decked with **gold** and **precious stones** and **pearls**..." (Revelation 17:4)

In chapter five we saw that Satan was arrayed in the spiritual garments of the one true Church. Here again we see that the counterfeit church herself must also be clothed with the spiritual raiment of the one true Church. If one is to mimic another, it is logical that they would masquerade in appearance and in mannerism of the one they are imitating. By being arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls, this harlot is saying "I am the Church of Jesus Christ."

Proverbs Chapter Thirty-one describes the true "virtuous woman" (verse 10), of which can be no other recipient on earth other than the Church of Jesus Christ worldwide. In verse twenty-two we read of her: "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is **silk** and **purple**." Scarlet and purple can be shown to represent the same color in scripture. The Roman soldiers forced a **purple** robe upon Christ (John 19:2) while Matthew 27:28 says it was **scarlet**, which are the same colors.

In Acts 16:14 we learn of a woman by the name of Lydia who became converted to Christ. She is said to have been a "seller of **purple**." She no doubt dwelt in dyes and dyed goods. This historic parable takes only two verses (verses 14 & 15), however there is much spiritual insight hidden in these two verses. The fact that Lydia was a "seller" of purple tells us that she was a "merchant" of the gospel. Purple being a prominent spiritual representative and characteristic of the true gospel. Song of Solomon is a beautiful allegorical account of Christ and His bride, the Church. The symbolical descriptions are too numerous to mention. Purple is a prominent color used in this account also.

The religious harlot is also said to be decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. When King Solomon began to build the House of the LORD in Jerusalem upon Mount Moriah, it is no surprise that he garnished this temple with many precious stones. "And he garnished the house with **precious stones** for beauty: and the **gold** was gold of parauim," II Chronicles 3:6. The queen of Sheba heard of the fame and wisdom of King Solomon and traveled far to bring him much riches, including precious stones (1 Kings 10:10), of which much was used for the House of the LORD.

We also see that pearls is yet another segment of riches used in describing the gospel.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your **pearls** before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you," (Matthew 7:6).

SEEKING GOODLY PEARLS

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **merchant** man, seeking goodly **pearls**," "Who, when he had found **ONE pearl of great price**, went and sold all that he had, and bought it," (Matthew 13:45,46).

The counterfeit church/harlot has arrayed herself with the righteous attire reserved solely for God's Anointed Christ and His bride. She has decked herself with gold, precious stones and pearls. Of course these are but only a portion of her metaphoric lush and sumptuous adornment, worn that she might beguile all who come to inquire on the name of Christ.

The kingdom of heaven is not many pearls, it is only **one** pearl - one pearl of **great price** as we read in Matthew 13: 45-46. When we look further at the Greek word "heis" or "hice" (1520 in Strong's) meaning "one" we see that it does not mean "one of many" but a "specific" one. A good example is found in Matthew 8:19 where this same Greek word for "one" is translated as "certain."

"And a **certain** [one; heis; 1520] scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," (Matthew 8:19). God is speaking here of a specific scribe, and is not speaking in general of one of many scribes. Another example might be found in Matthew 6:24 where we read:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one [one; heis; 1520] , and love the other; or else he will hold to the one [one; heis; 1520] , and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Still another good example is found in Matthew 20:21, and reads:

"And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one [one; heis; 1520] on thy right hand, and the other [one; heis; 1520] on the left, in thy kingdom."

These are particulars spoken of here. **One** and **other** both refer to specific persons. There is only **one** goodly pearl and it is indeed of **great price**. Christ's kingdom, which is in heaven, is that one and only pearl of great price. The price was indeed great, but not for man. The price of this pearl was paid by God sending His only begotten son into this world to endure and pay for the sins of all of His elect whose names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life from before the foundations of the world. This is the pearl that God commands all (as spiritual merchants) to seek after. This is the Gospel plan for eternal salvation through the great price of God incarnate coming into this world to suffer rejection, to be crucified, to endure eternal hell on behalf of all His elect, and to resurrect from the dead on the third day - to ensure that the gates of hell can never prevent His salvation plan from going forth. This is God's **price** which no man can discern. This pearl contains riches that escape most of the world.

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater **riches** than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward," (Hebrews 11:26).

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. [5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," (Isaiah 53:4-5).

The global harlot of the last days and Great Tribulation period wears Christ's pearl with pride and cunning duplicity. She consists of the congregations and organized churches throughout every country upon the face of this earth. The masses flee to her for numerous reasons. She displays her pearl to all who unwittingly approach or enter in through her wide pathway. Multitudes find nothing amiss with the pearl she displays, for they are unlearned in the Scriptures. Neither can they hear or touch this greatly pearl apart from Scripture, as in the days of old. They see and accept a pearl that is worthless in all manner; a pearl that is tarnished and cracked, having no value or concept of keeping Christ's commandments and laws and ultimately no salvation to offer. She extends her hand which once held Christ's

golden cup, but now is filled with the abominations and filthiness of her fornications. The masses eagerly come in droves to purchase and accept this pearl and to worship it's image - whatever that might be.

“And the twelve gates were twelve **pearls**; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass,” (Revelation 21:21).

In addition to this spiritual harlot being arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, Revelation 17:4 tells us that she is also decked with gold, precious stones and pearls. Revelation chapter eighteen gives us similar language in describing her spiritual attire. “And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and **purple**, and **scarlet**, and decked with **gold**, and **precious stones**, and **pearls**,” (Rev. 18:16).

These are but spiritual attributes or metaphors of Christ's Gospel call to His bride, the true Church. We shall examine these and other adornments assigned to Christ in a latter chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Woman: Having a Golden Cup in 'Her' Hand

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in "her" hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." (Revelation 17:4)

The term "golden cup" is used only twice in scripture. Here in Revelation 17:4 and again in Jeremiah 51:7. It is very interesting that both renderings of this term are in reference to Babylon. In Jeremiah 51:7 we read "Babylon hath been a **golden cup** in the LORD'S hand." The theme of Jeremiah chapter fifty-one is God's judgment upon Babylon. Even though God brought this judgment to pass in ancient history, this chapter nonetheless prophesies of God's final judgment upon the end-time spiritual Babylon. God discloses much insight in this chapter with the use of shadows and types in portraying the final judgment upon Mystery Babylon. It must be emphasized again that God used ancient Babylon as a representative of all of the unsaved world, just as He used Egypt and Assyria to also represent the unsaved world. However, when we come to the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of the Book of Revelation we find that both of these chapters cannot be speaking of the world in general, but are speaking of the apostate condition of the church of Christ worldwide. This is precisely why this proposal is so misunderstood. We naturally want to separate the apostate corporate church from the unsaved world. But scripture clearly teaches this is what befalls the corporate church of Christ just prior to the great tribulation. It is termed as "a falling away" in 2 Thessalonians chapter two. To fall away from the truth of God is when the corporate church (minus true believers) becomes as the world. They think and act no differently than the world with regard to the pure doctrines of God. In other words, they become as the unsaved world; they become as Babylon (which typified the unsaved world). They have opened their doors to the world and have themselves become one with the world. It is little wonder the apostle John, while inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote "...and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration," Revelation 17:6. The Greek defines this as "I wondered; I was amazed, bewitched with great admiration or with great perception." Many Greek interlinears read similar to this: "and I wondered, having seen her, with great wonder." To be extremely mystified, bewildered, and to gaze in wonder.

Jeremiah 51:5-6 substantiates the idea that the church (typified by Old Testament Israel and Judah) in its end will be labeled by God as Babylon.

"For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the holy one of Israel." (Jeremiah 51:5)

During the great tribulation this verse will still carry its relevance. Israel and Judah (the True Church) will not be forsaken, even though their land (the corporate church; the outer shell) will be filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

"Flee out of the midst of **Babylon**, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence." (Jeremiah 51:6)

Verse six begins by saying: "flee out of the midst of the LAND of Israel and Judah?????" No, this is not what is being said, although this is the correct understanding. The precise reading is as we just read: "Flee out of the midst of **BABYLON**." God is typifying Israel as Babylon! God is clearly giving the commandment to flee or escape from among the sins of Israel and Judah (the corporate church at its height of apostasy); c.f. Matthew 24:15-16 "When ye

therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand); Then let them which be in Judea FLEE into the mountains." Jeremiah 51:6 goes on to say this is the time of the LORD'S "vengeance." As God brought judgment upon ancient Babylon, He did so as a spiritual "type" or illustration of His global judgment upon - not merely the world - but upon the unbelieving church; Babylon the Great. This appears to be the case, since the description of Babylon's "destruction" in Revelation chapter eighteen does not (contrary to popular belief) describe any physical destruction of any kind, but rather depicts the absence of the precious attributes of the true Gospel of Christ. It unveils and displays the scarcity of God's true spiritual merchandise, which is no longer to be found in this woman - now harlot.

Returning to Jeremiah 51:5-7 we see that the land of Israel and Judah (verse 5) was once a GOLDEN CUP IN THE LORD'S HAND, (Jer. 51:7). "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand..." The Hebrew defines the term "golden cup" as to "hold together; a valuable or **22***precious commodity." This golden cup is the cup of salvation! "I will take the **CUP** of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord," Psalm 116:13. Again in Psalm 16:5 we read: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my **CUP**: thou maintainest my lot." Psalm 23:5 we recall "...thou anointest my head with oil; my **CUP** runneth over." Babylon has been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand (Jeremiah 51:7). The corporate church, as a whole, has faithfully declared the Word of God throughout the Church-Age until the falling away and the abomination of desolation (Satan himself) being placed in the congregations worldwide. What is the condition of this golden cup within the end-time apostate church of the harlot? We read that it has become her self-righteousness! Revelation 17:4 declares that this harlot was seen "having a **golden cup** in **her** hand." Jeremiah 51:7 tells us that this harlot, this Babylon, was once a golden cup "IN THE LORD'S HAND."

Once the corporate church fell wholly into apostasy, the salvation that she once declared (the golden cup in the LORD'S hand) has become the golden cup in "HER" hand (Revelation 17:4). She is no longer proclaiming the truth of the Word of God. The salvation that she is declaring is a works gospel; thus the golden cup is no longer in the LORD'S hand, but it is in her own hand. No wonder God says of this cup, it is : "... full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication, (Revelation 17:4). The corporate church no longer cares for the true Gospel, but desires a gospel that they can design - a works gospel. Thus Isaiah 4:1 has come to fruition:

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name."

"Seven women," the spiritual completion of the false church will not eat of Christ, who is the "bread of life" (John 6:48), rather they will eat their own bread, Isaiah 4:1 says. Neither will they wear the righteous apparel of the true believer; they too will wear their own apparel. They will have their versions of the gospel. But will this false church acknowledge their need for the true Gospel? Will they view themselves as unsaved? Of course not. As we see in today's world, the multitude of false congregations eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, but at the same time declare firmly that they are the true Church. They **insist** that they are indeed true believers "**ONLY LET US BE CALLED BY THY NAME, TO TAKE AWAY OUR REPROACH.**"

It appears that today's corporate church - Mystery Babylon - is attempting to build a spiritual "tower," whose top will reach into heaven, as in ancient times - without the worship and acknowledgment of the Creator.

FOOTNOTES:

22* Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Woman: Drunken with the Blood of the Saints

"And I saw the woman drunken with the **blood of the saints**, and with the **blood of the martyrs of Jesus...**" (Revelation 17:6)

The very last verse of Revelation chapter eighteen makes the same type of statement:

"And in her [i.e. Babylon; the whore] was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Can we lay this charge to the world in general, or specifically to the corporate church itself? What of the Old Testament prophets, were they slain by the world or by the religious community of their day? That is to say were they slain by God's Old Testament congregations? Recall the words spoken by Christ when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee..."
(Matthew 23:37)

Christ rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees (heads of the Old Testament church) in this same chapter and admonishes them as hypocrites, pronouncing six woes upon them. It is important that we understand the fact that the majority of Old Testament national Israel were unsaved, with the exception of God's true remnant among them. Likewise, in the New Testament era scripture tells us "many are called, but few are chosen." There are many within the corporate church that are the enemies of God. It is they who are responsible for much of the killing of the prophets and of the saints. If we declare that the world is responsible for the shedding of the blood of the prophets and of the saints, we then must conclude that the Babylon of Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen is depicting the world in general. We would be forced to conclude this simply because chapter eighteen and verse twenty-four tells us that "in her [that is in Babylon] was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." However, as we examine scripture we find just the opposite to be the case. We find that it is in fact the corporate church dating all the way back to Old Testament Israel and even back as far as Cain who were responsible for the killing of the saints and prophets. This is not to say that the secular world is innocent of any and all torturing and killing of prophets and saints. Of course they were not, however scripture assures us that the false church is the arch enemy of God. In addition, it should be noted that if Mystery Babylon was representative of the outside world only, having no relationship with the corporate church, would it not be quite peculiar to say that "in her," (i.e. the world ?), was found "...all that were slain upon the earth?" If Babylon were the world, then naturally all that were slain upon the earth would be found in Babylon (the world). Where else would you find them? It would be doubtful that scripture is teaching that. Rather, it is saying "in her," being Mystery Babylon (the apostate church of Christ, Old & New Testaments), was found "...all [prophets, saints, believers, etc.] that were slain upon the earth." The Greek rendering of this word **23***"all" must be qualified. It is not defined as "entirety" or "completion." Rather, it is defined in the Greek as "the whole; as many as, etc." This **same word** is used in Romans 11:26 when God (in speaking of national Israel) states that **ALL** Israel shall be saved. Clearly there is only a remnant to be saved out of the nation of Israel, as there will be only a remnant saved out of all nations. Considering the true spiritual Israel, of course the "whole" or "all" will be saved and Christ shall not leave behind one of His elect. God uses this same word over and over again, wherein it must be qualified. Again, we read in Luke 2:1 "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from

Caesar Augustus, that **ALL** the world should be taxed." **Did Augustus tax the American indians and the Chinese along with the Roman Empire?** Of course this is conditional upon "all" within Augustus' empire or kingdom. The same rule holds true for "all" of Israel being saved or Babylon being the source of the blood of prophets, saints, and "**all**" that were slain upon the earth. "All meaning the wholeness of those whom God allowed to suffer persecution." Babylon is the source of much Christian persecution upon the earth.

Remaining in Matthew chapter twenty-three, let us examine a few of these verses.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous,

And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the **blood of the prophets.**" (Matthew 23:29-30)

Again we read in verse thirty-one:

"Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the **children of them which killed the prophets.**"

Does this evidence suggest that the world is guilty? No, it does not. It implicates the religious community - the Old Testament church of that day.

"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall **kill and crucify**; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and **persecute** them from city to city." (Matthew 23:34)

"That upon you may come all the **righteous blood shed upon the earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23:35)

Notice carefully the near identical pattern of language used in the above verses as compared to Revelation 18:24:

"And in her was found: 1. blood of prophets; 2. and of saints; 3. and of all that were slain upon the earth."

The context of this verse addresses true believers only. Prophets, saints, and **all** (true believers) that were slain upon the earth. Now notice the similarities:

Matthew 23:30: "blood of prophets"

Revelation 18:24: "blood of the prophets"

Matthew 23:35: "righteous blood shed upon the earth"

Revelation 18:24: "of all that were slain upon the earth"

Nearly identical language is used here, and yet Matthew speaks of the martyrdom of Old Testament saints, beginning with the blood of "righteous Abel," while Revelation speaks of Old and New Testament saints. In Matthew, God clearly identifies the perpetrator as corporate Israel, the unbelievers within national Israel. Likewise, Revelation speaks of the perpetrator as the great whore, the mother of harlots, (Revelation 17:1,5). This harlot was, according to Revelation 17:6, "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus".

Once again, it seems that it is not the world in general that was responsible for the shedding of the blood of the saints and of the prophets. Let us look to Revelation chapter 16:4-6:

"And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood."

"And I heard the angel of the waters say, thou art righteous, O LORD, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus."

"For they have **shed the blood of saints and prophets**, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy."

We know by studying scripture that "rivers and fountains of water" are pictures of the congregations of the world. These **represent** the pure gospel of salvation that comes forth from these congregations. But here we see the church being judged (and again this is the apostate church of the end-times); it is under the judgment of God. Why is it under God's judgment? Verse six gives us a partial answer. Because they have "shed the blood of saints and prophets." Yes, by understanding the last verse of Revelation chapter eighteen, one will come to realize that this Mystery Babylon is today's substitute for and representative of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is an abomination that God allows to make desolate the effective of His Word within the congregations of the world.

Finally, we see this same truth brought forth in the parable of the wedding feast. God calls a marriage feast for His son and sends His servants to call them that are bidden to the wedding. National Israel received the first call of God. As this wedding call goes out, those who were invited would not come (Matt. 22:3). Again God sends out His servants to "tell them which are bidden" (verse 4), but they made light of it, and went their own ways (verse 5). The remaining remnant from Israel "...took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and **slew** them," (verse 6). When God saw this, He was wroth, and sent forth His armies, and "... destroyed those **murderers** and burned up their city," (verse 7). There you have most of biblical history wrapped up in a few short verses. Who were these murderers of God's servants? National Israel, the religious Jew first, and then of course God's earthly representative transcended into the New Testament corporate church.

According to The Holy Bible, the unsaved church from the Old Testament and New Testament eras is responsible for the shedding of the majority of the blood of the saints. Think about it for a second. Who is doing the killing in Northern Ireland today? The confessing Christians. And in who's name did the Crusaders ravish and murder? In the name of Christ they did these ungodly acts. Why? Because they were carrying out God's wishes? Of course not but they did these things because they were in the church of Christ but not of Christ. True believers throughout the world have been murdered down through the centuries by those calling themselves servants of God.

FOOTNOTES:

23* "ALL" = "Pas" #3956 Strong's Greek. Include. All the forms of declension; appar. A prim. Word; all, any, every, the whole; -all (manner of, means), always (-s), any (one), daily, ever, every (one way), as many as, thoroughly, whatsoever, whosoever

The Interlinear Greek, Hendrickson; Zondervan Parallel Greek reads "of all [the ones] that were slain upon the earth.

CHAPTER NINE

The Woman Reigneth Over the Kings of the Earth

In this short chapter we shall see more evidence leading us to believe that Mystery Babylon is not the unsaved world in general, but is Satan's counterfeit end-time church masquerading as the true Church of Jesus Christ. Many students of the Bible and theologians down through the centuries have pondered the identity of this great city which **reigns** over the kings of the earth. The time for God's revelation of these end-time verses simply had not arrived for them. Daniel chapter twelve clearly indicates that many scriptures concerning the timing of the end would not be revealed until the very end of time itself. Probably speaking of the great tribulation period.

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which **reigneth** over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18)

Once again we will say that the city of Rome has taken front row in the lists of possible candidates. Yes Rome, the seat of the Pope who rules the nations of Catholicism. Others have speculated that this great city will be a European city, perhaps Brussels, that is destined to rule a ten nation European Common Market and eventually rule over all the kings of the entire earth. Still others say that ancient Babylon will be rebuilt in Iraq and rise to world prominence. Perhaps the United States, symbolized as a "city," will soon reign over all nations of the world? Who really is this great city that reigns over the kings of the earth? I believe scripture truly discloses her identity if we begin to search the Bible verses.

When we look to the original Greek, we find that the word "**reigneth**" (Rev. 17:18) is defined as denoting "sovereignty, royal power, dominion." It is pronounced "bas-il-i'-ah" which literally means "**hath a kingdom.**"

The "Zondervan Parallel New Testament In Greek and English" quotes this verse as follows:

"And the woman whom thou sawest is the city - great - having a **kingdom** over the kings of the earth."

The "Interlinear Greek-English New Testament" quotes this verse this way:

"And the woman whom thou sawest is the city great, which has **KINGSHIP** over the kings of the earth."

To have kingship or to hold a kingdom over the kings of the earth carries identical meanings. This Greek word "bas-il-i'-ah" is translated "**reigneth**" only once in scripture, while all other renderings of over two hundred verses translate it as "kingdom," most of which deal with either the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. Very interesting. When we read in Revelation chapter twelve of the birth of Christ, the man child, we are told in verse five that He will **RULE** all nations with a rod of iron. To rule all nations would indeed encompass ruling and reigning over the kings of the earth, would it not? "Rule" means to shepherd, guide, or to govern. This is the work of Christ, our Great Shepherd of the sheep. He it is who rules or shepherds over His church, which in turn spiritually reigns over the kings of the earth.

Can we say with any certainty and honesty that one literal city at the end of time will reign over the kings of the earth? Probably not. And so this great city must then be a symbol of some kind. We have already seen from Revelation 17:18 that the woman in the wilderness is this great city. The church of Christ has always ruled in the affairs of man. The Gospel of Christ does indeed rule and reign over every individual on the face of the earth, whether they want to

believe that or not makes no difference. God's infallible and holy Word indeed reigns over the kings of the earth. Abraham through faith looked for a CITY which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

"And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD; and thou shalt be called Sought out, a **CITY** not forsaken." Isaiah 62:12.

An almost identical Greek word to "bas-il-i'-ah" (reigneth; as in reigneth over the kings of the earth) is the word "bas-il-yoo'-o" which is derived from the same Greek word as is "bas-il-i'-ah," both meaning sovereign. The only difference is that this latest word is not translated "reigneth," but is translated "reign." It is basically the very same Greek word that is used in Revelation 17:18. It is given in only two places in scripture, Revelation 11:17 and 20:4.

"Saying, We give thee thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast **REIGNED**." (Revelation 11:17)

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and **REIGNED** with Christ a thousand years." (Revelation 20:4)

This is nearly the identical word used in describing the woman, now a harlot, who REIGNETH over the kings of the earth! Yes indeed, Christ and His kingdom does reign over the kings of this earth. Even though the visible church has fallen into degradation, its original principles and holy laws nevertheless continue to reign over the souls of unsuspecting man.

"...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:3)

The woman that reigneth over the kings of the earth is not some unknown worldly entity with a mysterious code name of "Babylon the Great," but she appears to be the faithful woman in the wilderness who was once Christ's own earthly representation. She is now the great harlot - Babylon the Great - because she has opened her doors to the world and has been overtaken by the world of Babylon. She has become Babylon herself; she and the world are one. She, who reigned over the kings of the earth is now being judged in the wilderness. The true Word of God is being taken from her, resulting in condemnation for the outside world, as well as for the corporate church. Every soul who has ever lived has been ruled and reigned by Christ Himself, regardless of whether that person died saved or unsaved. If the phrase "kings of the earth" in this context were meant to symbolize believers only, (since Christians are said to be kings and priests - Revelation 1:6;5:10) the outcome would still be the fact that this Mystery Babylon once ruled over the corporate church through Christ Jesus. However, the term "kings of the earth" can also be a negative term or have a negative fulfillment in scripture such as in the following verses:

Acts 4:26 - "The **kings of the earth** stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ."

Matthew 17:25 - "He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the **kings of the earth** take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?"

Psalm 2:2 - "**The kings of the earth** set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Psalm 2:3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Finally let us consider Lamentations 4:12 - "**The kings of the earth**, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem." The kings of the earth, whether the context is speaking of world rulers, corporate believers within the church or true believers in Christ, the fact remains that Christ rules and reigns over them. Up until God removes or "removed" (past tense) His candlestick from the corporate church, the light of the Christian corporate Church (Christ Himself) was the ruling entity in the souls of men throughout the world. As we just read in Lamentations 4:12, the kings of the earth along with the world would not have believed that the adversary (Satan; Lucifer), the enemy of the Gospel, would have **ENTERED** into the church of Christ worldwide! But he has! God's Old Testament Israel and His New Testament church have always ruled and reigned over the world in a spiritual sense because God Himself was and still is the omnipotent Ruler and Creator of all things.

Additional passages:

"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the **city** of our God, in the mountain of his holiness."
"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the **city** of the great king."
(Psalm 48:1-2)

Are there any doubts as to the identity of this great city of Revelation, which reigns over the kings of the earth? Which reigns over the whole earth (Ps. 48:2)?

"The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom **RULETH over all**." (Psalm 103:19)

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it."

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

"And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall **REIGN** over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever." (Micah 4:1,2,7)

"For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him."

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should **reign over them**, bring hither, and slay them before me."
(Luke 19:26-27)

"For he must **REIGN**, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." (1 Corinthians 15:25)

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of his Christ; and he shall **REIGN** for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the LORD God omnipotent **REIGNETH**." (Revelation 19:6)

"Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him **RULE OVER KINGS** [cf. Rev. 17:18 "reigns over the kings of the earth"]; he gave him as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow." (Isaiah 41:2)

CHAPTER TEN

Babylon the Great is Fallen, is Fallen

"How is the faithful city become an harlot!" (Isaiah 1:21)

When we look at Revelation chapter eighteen we are immediately confronted with a great proclamation: "Babylon the great is **fallen**, is **fallen**," verse two. We pick up this same language in Revelation 14:8 "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is **fallen**, is **fallen**, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

Apparently this is not a call for her immediate destruction, but it is a summons for her spiritual destruction. In Revelation 18:2, immediately after declaring that she is fallen, we read "and is **become** the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Babylon the great is still very much in existence at this time, the only difference is that she has fallen wholly and corporately into spiritual decay and adultery. She has **become** a habitation for "unclean" (a biblical term for the unsaved) animals. How could this harlot be representative of the world (the entire kingdom of Satan) as a whole, and yet only now has the announcement come that she is fallen? Didn't the entire world **FALL** back in the days of the Garden of Eden? One might argue that the declaration of her fall is in association to the destruction of the world at the last day. This cannot be, as we have already explained, Babylon the Great is very much in existence after her fall, although in a state of spiritual decay and filthiness.

God is declaring that the church (woman) in the wilderness, now "Mystery Babylon" is now being called into **spiritual judgment**. She will no longer be allowed to possess or maintain any genuine attributes of Christ. She, as the worldwide corporate church, has fallen into irreversible judgment.

The Greek word **24**"fallen" ("**pipto**," verb form) carries several meanings according to biblical context. It can be used in a literal manner as well as in a spiritual fall. For example:

"... I beheld Satan as lighting **fall [pipto]** from heaven." Luke (10:18)

"... every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house **falleth [pipto]**." (Luke 11:17)

"After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is **fallen [pipto]**..." (Acts 15:16)

"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which **fell [pipto]**, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shall be cut off." (Romans 11:22)

"But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses **fell [pipto]** in the wilderness?" (Hebrews 3:17)

"... but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye **fall [pipto]** into condemnation," (James 5:12)

"... Babylon the great is **fallen [pipto]**, is **fallen [pipto]**, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." (Revelation 18:2)

As a result of her **spiritual fall**, Babylon the Great has become a habitation of devils. Revelation chapter eighteen is not teaching the physical destruction of the world. This Mystery Babylon is not being physically destroyed at her fall, but she has **become** (meaning to transcend into something else) a source of astonishment and amazement to those who knew her once faithful character. She has transcended into a spiritual harlot.

When we examine the seventh vial judgment (Rev. 16:17-21), which parallels the seventh trumpet judgment (Rev. 10:7), we discover that both have the literal destruction of the world in view. Surprisingly, the seventh vial judgment makes mention of this "great city," which we discovered was quite probably the corporate church of Jesus Christ ... ("And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth," Rev. 17:18). Remarkably, we see that as the world is destroyed, God distinguishes the corporate church (that great city) from the unsaved world. The corporate church, of which symbolically two thirds will be judged and one third saved (symbolical figures only; Zech. 13:8-9) is pictured as being destroyed right along with the world at Judgment Day, since the corporate church consists of all unsaved Christian "appearing" people. However, the corporate church is distinguished from the unsaved secular world as we read in Revelation 16:19 by the fact that God declares "the cities of the nations fell" in reference to the destruction of the world at Judgment Day. But, in the same verse and in addition to this, God also declares that at this same time "the **GREAT CITY** [corporate church; Babylon the Great] was divided into **three parts**" and "Great Babylon came into remembrance." Why doesn't God include this great city in the phrase "the cities of the nations fell"? Possibly because this great city is **NOT** a literal city of the world as are the "cities of the nations." **It is Judgment Day!** When God destroys the cities of the nations (along with this earth and this universe), He will also physically destroy and judge the corporate church, that imitation great city. But, because true believers are the rightful proprietors of this great city, God will not judge the Christians (the true Church) along with the great city. And so God says "...the great city was **divided** into three parts..." (Rev. 16:19). Why? Because God will not judge the true Church, therefore He separates or divides the great city. Recall that Christ said He would separate the wheat from the tares at Judgment Day? Thus God will save His true remnant out of this doomed earth. Zachariah spoke of this corporate church long ago as it symbolized "two parts," one consisting of two parts, and the second consisting of the "third part" or the true Church.

"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, **two parts** therein shall be cut off and die, but the **third** shall be left therein," (Zechariah 13:8). The third part shall forever remain with God because they are God's elect, both those who are alive at His return along with those who died in Christ during past centuries.

The corporate church (great city/two parts) has become a harlot and is judged spiritually during the great tribulation, and finally judged physically at the last day along with the rest of the unsaved world.

FOOTNOTES:

24* "Pip'to" #4098 Strong's Greek. To fall (lit. or fig.): - fail, fall (down), light on.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Merchants of the Earth

Revelation chapter eighteen mentions "merchants" in four separate verses, all in regard to Babylon:

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the **merchants** of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." (Revelation 18:3)

"And the **merchants** of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more." (Revelation 18:11)

"The **merchants** of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Revelation 18:15)

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy **merchants** were the **great men** of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." (Revelation 18:23)

Each of these verses discloses a partial feature of these merchants. First we notice that the merchants of the earth are waxed rich because of their ability to trade with Babylon. They have become rich through the abundance of Babylon's delicacies (verse 3). Secondly, the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over Babylon's fall, because there is no one left to buy their merchandise any more, (verse 11). Thirdly, the merchants that were made rich from Babylon shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment; for the fear of her divine judgment. Finally verse twenty-three states that Babylon's merchants were the great men of the earth, and by thy (the harlot's) sorceries were all nations of the earth deceived.

Before we can grasp real truth out of these passages we must first understand two vitally important facts, which are:

1. These merchants are not merchandising in any literal and material commodities. They are trafficking **strictly** in spiritual merchandise.
2. Just as there are wheat and tares (believers and non-believers) dwelling together within the corporate church; likewise there are true merchants and false merchants, which is just another way of saying true and false Christians.

As we look to the New Testament in determining the truth behind the biblical term "merchant," we notice that apart from the Book of Revelation, this word "merchant" is used only in Matthew chapter thirteen, where we read a very short parable:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **merchant** man, seeking goodly pearls. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it," (Matthew 13:45-46).

God declares that if you will seek Him with all your heart, you will surely find Him. This merchant man was seeking the kingdom of God; the goodly pearls. When he had found God, the pearl of great price, he sold all that he had and purchased this great pearl. Naturally, the merchant man did not buy the pearl with money. When scripture declares that he sold all that he had and bought the pearl of great price, we must interpret this from scripture itself. The merchant man denied himself (sold all that he had), and bought the pearl (applied his life to the Gospel of Christ). The emphasis in this study is on the fact that the Gospel of Christ was given to a **MERCHANT MAN**. There is great spiritual significance in the term "merchant\merchant man." This merchant man became a true child of God, therefore the thought of selling this pearl of great price was not only impossible for him, but it would never come to mind, since every true born-again Christian can never lose their salvation. He bought the pearl and never sold it. However, when one buys and sells spiritual merchandise, it is a clear indicator that he is still unsaved and dead in his sins. He is a false merchant. Scripture straightly discloses that "...no man might **buy or sell**, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name," Revelation 13:17. The only possible way that anyone might spiritually buy and sell is to remain under the beguilement of Satan (the beast); to retain his spiritual mark upon your soul. Isaiah chapter fifty-five begins with a beautiful declaration:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, **buy**, and eat; yea, come, **buy** wine and milk without money and without price."

Notice that we are told to "**buy**" and yet we are told to buy "without money and without price." To "buy" the gospel of salvation is simply a metaphoric term in scripture which can only mean to seek God (as the parabolic merchant man did) and to come to Christ. Once we have genuinely come to Christ (as God the Father draws us, John 6:44) we have spiritually "purchased" the good news; i.e. the gospel.

Proverbs 23:23 confirms this biblical truth, wherein we read "**Buy** the truth, and **sell** it not... ". Once we have bought into these goodly pearls, we are not to discard it, or "sell" it as it were. This, of course, is virtually impossible for any true child of God, since our salvation is sealed for eternity (2 Corinthians 1:22). However, scripture indicates that many are called, but few chosen (Matthew 20:16). Many will fraudulently come to Christ superficially, but after a time will fall away (sell the gospel) for various reasons (see parable of the sower; Matthew chapter thirteen). Many will fall into half truths, having a "form of godliness, buy denying the power," (2 Timothy 3:5). These are "merchants" of the gospel, however they are false merchants. Their merchandise cannot bring man into the kingdom of God. Their merchandise will appear much like the true merchandise of the Gospel of Christ, nevertheless it is a false merchandise.

When studying the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins of Matthew chapter twenty-five, we find Christ returning at the spiritual midnight hour. At that time the five wise virgins trimmed their lamps and went out to meet Christ. The oil carried in their lamps being symbolic of the Holy Spirit, no doubt. These five virgins were wise, because they were filled with the Holy Ghost. Meanwhile, the five foolish virgins had no oil in their lamps; thus they were foolish, they lacked the Holy Ghost. They then begged the five wise virgins for some of their oil, for they could not meet the bridegroom, having no oil in their lamps. The wise virgins then answered them and said: "...not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that **sell**, and **buy** for yourselves," Matthew 25:9. Another **dramatic** picture of the reception of the gospel being spiritually termed as buying that which is for sale.

The only provisions for selling the true Gospel of Christ is to become as Lydia. Recall in chapter six we saw that Lydia was a seller of purple, which, when compared with scripture, we concluded that she too was a true spiritual merchant. To be a "seller" of purple symbolizes trading or peddling or sharing the true Gospel of Christ. The word "seller" means just that; to peddle or to share. As used in Acts 16:14, it comes from the same Greek word as does

"purple." Clearly we see that Lydia did not "discard" the gospel, as in "sell it not" (Proverbs 23:23); she shared or peddled the precious pearls; that is she was a "seller" or "peddler" for God, in that she shared God's Word with others. The word "seller" in this sense is in the positive nature.

Thus far we know that scripture designates two types of merchants. There are the false merchants who counterfeit the Gospel of Christ, and then there are the true merchants who, like Lydia, are "sellers" or "sharers" of the gospel. In both instances the word "seller" can be used, meaning simply to merchandise (wares) in these goods.

Now the question should be asked, are we on the right track when we state that the merchants spoken of in Revelation chapter eighteen are altogether those who peddle the Gospel of Christ? Does God state anywhere in scripture that His Word or His redeeming grace is to be equated with merchandise? **Yes He does!**

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the **MERCHANDISE** of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." (Proverbs 3:13-14)

God is indisputably stating that His wisdom and His understanding (which is the Word of God) is merchandise of which is better than literal merchandise of silver and fine gold.

God again defines His true merchandise in Isaiah chapter twenty-three:

"And her **MERCHANDISE** and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her **MERCHANDISE** shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing."

The true merchandise that God desires of His people is "holiness to the LORD," which is dedication and sanctification toward God. In the above verse we find that the true merchandise of a true child of God ("them that dwell before the LORD") is to **eat sufficiently**, and to wear **durable clothing**. To have eternal life we must EAT of Christ, who is our spiritual bread (John 6:53). God's **merchandise** for us is to see us eat sufficiently; that is to be full and satisfied with Christ, our spiritual manna (John 6:50). Our merchandise also is that we are to be adorned in "durable clothing." The Hebrew defines **25***"durable" as properly, splendid, or antique. We are to be clothed and covered with durable or splendid clothing, which only Christ and His righteousness can give to us. Christ will spiritually robe us with His purity and righteousness (Rev. 7:13, 19:8). Apart from being spiritually clothed in Christ's purity and righteousness, all of humanity is in the same condition as the man at the wedding feast who was not clothed in a wedding garment. This garment is the spiritual symbol of being accepted into God's eternal kingdom. Without this garment, all the world is as this man in the wedding parable, they are cast into outer darkness (Matthew 22:1-14).

It is true that Isaiah 23:17-18 pictures Tyre, who is one of several Old Testament types of the spiritual harlot of the tribulation days. Even though Tyre has become a harlot, God still divulges her once true spiritual merchandise which will never succumb to degradation, because it is the true and unchangeable pure Word of God.

As we examine the Hebrew word **merchant** in the Old Testament we discover that there are four different Hebrew words translated in the English version to the word "merchant." These four are:

1. Cachar (saw-khar') #5503; a primitive root; to travel round (specifically as a peddler); intensively, to palpitate: KJV - other renderings: go about, merchant (-man), occupy with, pant, trade, traffick.

2. Rakal (raw-kal') #7402; a primitive root; to travel for trading: KJV - other renderings: (spice) merchant
3. Tuwr (toor) #8446; a primitive root; to meander (causatively, guide) about, especially for trade or reconnoitring: KJV - chap [man], sent to descry, be excellent, merchant [-man], search (out), seek, spy (out).
4. Kena' aniy (ken-ah-an-ee') #3669; patrial from 3667; a Kenaanite or inhabitant of Kenaan; by implication, a peddler (the Canaanites standing for their neighbors the Ishmaelites, who conducted mercantile caravans): KJV - Canaanite, merchant, trafficker.
- 4.a Kena' aniy is rooted from the word Kana (kaw-nah), meaning properly, to bend the knee; to humiliate, vanquish: KJV - bring down (low), into subjection, under, humble (self), subdue.

The above four Hebrew renderings all carry biblical significance and are linked in their spiritual purpose. For example, the first rendering (Cachar) is used in the following passages, of which are only a few listed below:

1. Cachar (Saw-khar')

"And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and **trade** [Cachar; "merchant"] ye therein, and get you possessions therein." (Genesis 34:10)

As Jacob pitched his tent near the city of Shalem, in the land of Canaan, the invitation was extended to he and his sons to merchandise or trade in this land.

"Then there passed by Midianites **merchantmen** [Cachar; "merchant"]; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ish'-mee-lites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt." (Genesis 37:28)

As Egypt represents the unsaved world in scripture, Joseph was a symbol of the Word of God in a spiritually dead world. As Joseph was in Egypt, he typified Christ in the sin cursed earth. Joseph first had to endure the wrath of God, by being betrayed by his brethren, and made to endure the pit, in which his brethren cast him into "wherein was no water," (Genesis 37:24). This pit surely pictured Christ as He endured hell on behalf of all who would believe in Him. Finally, Joseph escaped from the pit when merchantmen of the Midianites passed by the pit, purchased him, and sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer to Pharaoh. All of this pictures God's salvation plan in highly symbolical and spiritual gestures. Joseph was the Word of God, spiritually purchased (bought and sold) from merchantmen, who are allegorically portraying those who spiritually buy and sell the Word of God. These Midianite merchantmen were led by God to take His gospel (Joseph) into Egypt.

"And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall **traffick** [Cachar; "merchant"] in the land." (Genesis 42:34)

Joseph, as ruler in Egypt, is giving his brethren permission to traffick (ultimately meaning to spiritually merchandise) in the land of Egypt.

"She is like the **merchants'** [Cachar; "merchant"] ships, she bringeth her food from afar." (Proverbs 31:14)

Throughout the Book of Proverbs we read of this virtuous woman, who can only be the true Church of Christ; Old and New Testament periods. God compares the Church's cargo or merchandise to merchants' ships, which carry her food from afar. The Church is equated to a ship throughout scripture. Our cargo is spiritual food which comes from afar, from the four corners of the earth and ultimately from God Himself.

2. Tuwr (toor)

Man is commanded by God to search and seek out God's Divine wisdom:

"And I gave my heart to seek and **search** [toor; "merchant"] out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." (Ecclesiastes 1:13)

"I applied mine heart to know, and to **search** [toor; "merchant"], and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness." (Ecclesiastes 7:25)

The sons of men are to search out the Word of God (wisdom) as merchant men trafficking about seeking only spiritual commerce. We don't traffic in the literal sense as in traveling here and there, but we traffic in the spiritual sense as we search here and there for the wisdom that leads to eternal life. Literal traffickers of Old Testament chapters were without question types and pictures of the spiritual trafficker seeking spiritual trade.

When the sons of men come inquiring into spiritual truth, it is as if we come as **spies** and **merchants** investigating and exploring a newly found land, as the parabolic "merchantman" of Matthew chapter thirteen went **seeking** those "goodly pearls."

"And Moses sent them to **spy** [toor; "merchant"] out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up his way southward [south: God / north: Satan], and go up into the mountain." (Numbers 13:17)

"In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt [spiritually representing the unsaved] into a land that I had **espied** [toor; "merchant"] for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands." (Ezekiel 20:6)

Our time of sojourning on this earth is a time of spiritual testing, as is indicated by the numbers forty, four hundred, and four thousand.

"And they returned from **searching** [toor; "merchant"] of the land after forty days." (Numbers 13:25)

3. Kena aniy (Ken-ah-an-ee')

"And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the **Canaanites** [Ken-ah-an-ee'; "merchant"] spread abroad." (Genesis 10:18)

"And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the **Canaanites** [Ken-ah-an-ee'; "merchant"], as he swear unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee." (Genesis 13:11)

"And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the **Canaanites** [Ken-ah-an-ee'; "merchant"], even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south." (Obadiah 1:20)

As mentioned earlier, the Hebrew word for "merchant" (Ken-ah-an-ee') is also translated as **Canaanite** and **trafficker**. This word is rooted from the Hebrew word kana (kaw-nah') which means to bend the knee; to bring down low, to bring into subjection, to humble oneself, or to subdue. As is plainly observed, these definitions are descriptions of the biblical "broken and contrite heart" that God molds into all true believers; all true spiritual "merchants" (Canaanites; Ken-ah-an-ee'). These are they who inherit the spiritual promise land - the eternal land of Canaan (ken-ah-an-ee').

Isaiah chapter twenty-three (The Burden of Tyre); Isaiah chapter forty-seven (O Virgin Daughter of Babylon); Jeremiah chapters fifty and fifty-one (Babylon); Ezekiel chapter twenty-seven (A Lamentation for Tyrus or Tyre); and Nahum chapter three (The Burden of Nineveh; which originated in the land of Babylon), are all chapters that display the Babylon of Revelation chapter eighteen, in that they prophesy of a once great city that has fallen. Descriptions are very similar and much too numerous to detail in this study. These chapters, once carefully studied, no doubt prophesy and convey (with many similitudes) exactly what Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen are teaching. The Book of Nahum pronounces judgment upon the city of Nineveh. Chapter three especially parallels many of the details given in Revelation chapter eighteen. Nahum 2:13 declares of Nineveh: "... and the voice of thy **messengers** shall no more be heard." Strong's Hebrew Dictionary defines the word "messenger" (mal-awk) as "to dispatch as a deputy; a messenger; specifically, of God i.e. an angel (also a prophet, priest or teacher). In other words, God's voice; His Word declared by His priests, His prophets. His messengers will no longer be heard in this symbolical city. Merchants can be found in all of these chapters, and of course their merchandise is the original and true Word of God.

When we return to the eighteenth chapter of Revelation we see, as we stated at the beginning of this chapter, that there are four verses which speak of merchants. What do we notice about these merchants? What familiarity characterizes them? They are in mourning; they are grieving, sorrowing, and lamenting over the fact that their merchandise is no longer in demand! These merchants appear to be sincere believers in Christ. They have become spiritually rich through the abundance of the Church's (Christ's) delicacies, Revelation 18:3, (see Chapter 13). Now, in this time of the great tribulation, "no man buyeth their merchandise any more," (Rev. 18:15). The voice of Christ and the voice of His true Church is heard no more in her. These merchants meant nothing to the world. They were obscure and inconsequential to the deceived eyes of the world. But God says of them: "... for thy merchants were the great men of the earth," (Rev. 18:23). As merchants are portrayed in scripture as both believers and unbelievers, in the same manner the term "great men" can signify both believer and nonbeliever. In 2 Samuel 7:9 we read what the Lord has to say to David:

"And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the **great men** that are in the earth."

David was a servant of God, of course. God states that He has made David a **great name**. God also states that He has made David to be among the **great men** of the earth. It may be doubtful that these other great men that God is referring to are worshippers of the one true God, however the fact remains that God relates to David as a **great man** of the earth. Again we must realize that both saved and unsaved men can be alluded to in scripture as great men.

Returning to our study, it is by this harlot's sorceries that all nations were deceived, (Rev. 18:23). The merchants stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, verse fifteen says.

Yes, this is the condition of every true believer today. We stand far off from the harlot church for fear of her judgment! A true child of God should not associate himself with the harlot (corporate) church of these final days.

This chapter states that these merchants of the earth are representative of the true Church, which has fled from the corporate church. To the contrary, a false merchant could never sorrow because the true Word of Christ has been silenced from the corporate church. This anguish and lamenting comes **only** from the true child of God, whose heart aches over observing the world's only hope for eternal salvation being suppressed and stifled as never before. The true merchant of God weeps because her merchandise is no longer being purchased; her true gospel is no longer being proclaimed.

At this point we should stress the fact that if this chapter has the literal destruction of the world in view, where then - we should ask - are this world's material merchants standing from in order to be "afar off" from her torment? The entire earth will be destroyed at that day. No one can stand "afar off" and watch in the literal sense. Not even in outer space can one hide, for the universe itself will be dissolved. No, only by staying in harmony with scripture can these verses make sense. God commands the true believer to "flee to the mountains" once we see the abomination of desolation occurring in the congregations of the world. To "flee to the mountains" is a phrase used to indicate fleeing to the kingdom of God. God also says "come out of her **my people**," (Revelation 18:4). To "flee to the mountains" or to "come out of her, my people" is indeed language indicating to "stand afar off" - "for the fear of her torment."

"The **merchants** of these things, which were made rich by her, shall **stand afar off** for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Revelation 18:15)

If this verse is read superficially, as if we were reading a mystery novel, then of course one's logical conclusion would be that these merchants are literally standing a long way off from the physical destruction of this great city. We would want to keep our distance from its destruction, by all means. When one witnesses a large building ablaze, do we run up close and stand directly under the burning embers? No, naturally we would keep our distance from this calamity. However, as we compare the Bible as a whole, we know that God is calling for the true believers to keep their distance from this great harlot. We are to be obedient to God's command. This great city is under God's spiritual judgment, thus we are to stand afar off from her torment. Please see Chapter 21. Incidentally, by studying this word "torment," one will discover that it has everything to do with God's eternal torment or wrath on the wicked of the world - all who know not Christ as Savior.

"And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way."

"And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to **torment us before the time?**" (Matthew 8:28-29)

FOOTNOTES:

24* "Aw-theek" #6266 Strong's Hebrew. Antique, i.e. venerable or splendid.

The Interlinear Bible; Hendrickson: "Choice covering"

CHAPTER TWELVE

Her Merchants Have Waxed Rich

How are we to interpret passages which state that these merchants have waxed rich?

"... and the merchants of the earth are waxed **rich** through the abundance of her delicacies." (Revelation 18:3)

"The merchants of these things, which were made **rich** by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Revelation 18:15)

"... wherein were made **rich** all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness..." (Revelation 18:19)

"For in one hour so great **riches** is come to nought..." (Revelation 18:17)

We have seen thus far in this study that these merchants deal in spiritual merchandise, therefore it is doubtful that scripture is suggesting that these merchants have become materially rich as a result of their marketing. Many, however, believe that this is the conclusive thought behind the teaching of these merchants. In other words, the world laments over its own destruction because they will no longer be able to enjoy their luxurious and sumptuous material goods. This idea is foreign to scripture, since the Bible focuses on eternal matters. The Bible provides us with plenty of clues concerning these spiritual matters. The proclamation of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is that Jesus Christ is our one and only way into the Kingdom of Heaven. This same proclamation holds true when we study Revelation chapters seventeen and eighteen.

Scripture warns of the dangers of being materially rich in this world. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," I Timothy 6:9. Christ's desire for all believers is to be **rich** in spiritual matters. For example, we read in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews that Moses cherished or "esteemed" the reproach of Christ as greater **riches** than the treasures in Egypt, verse 26. Moses, who was taken into Egyptian royalty as an infant, grew up in Pharaoh's household. Years later he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Heb. 11:24), and he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, (verse 25). The writer of the Book of Hebrews declares this of Moses: "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater **riches** than the treasures in Egypt...", (verse 26). This should be a great example to every true believer in Christ. God declares in Luke 12:20-21 that men are fools who lay up treasures for themselves, and are not "**rich**" toward God.

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same LORD over all is **rich** unto all that call upon him." (Romans 10:12)

(I Timothy 6:17-19):

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us **richly** all things to enjoy."

"That they do good, that they be **rich** in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."

"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

God's desire is that we are **rich** in His Word!

"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou are **rich**)....," (Revelation 2:9)

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be **rich**....," (Revelation 3:18)

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world **rich** in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5)

The Old Testament, in many areas, teaches material wealth being distributed to followers of God. King Solomon, for example, possessed a vast amount of physical wealth. These riches need to be understood in their proper biblical perspective. God granted material riches to some of the Old Testament kings of Judah and Israel, and even Daniel and Joseph, for the sole purpose of picturing the "child of God" as being spiritually rich. Yes, and as a matter of fact these Old Testament commodities were all listed as descriptions (word synonyms) of varying items which spiritually represented the Gospel of Christ. For example we read in Genesis 13:2 of Abram's riches:

"...Abram was very **rich** in cattle, in silver, and in gold."

Hezekial, a king of Judah, whose name means "strength of God" was said to possess many riches. II Chronicles 32:27 records his riches:

"And Hezekial had exceeding much **riches** and honour: and he made himself treasuries for **silver**, and for **gold**, and for **precious stones**, and for **spices**, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels."

The above riches, displayed as material riches, are ultimately the spiritual riches of the Gospel of Christ. Hezekiah was a good king of Judah and therefore a "type" of Christ.

King Solomon also was an Old Testament "type" or representation of Christ, therefore his material goods were also pictures of the gospel. We read of these riches in the following verses:

"And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in **riches** and wisdom," (II Chronicles 9:22).

Notice particularly that God equates Solomon's riches to his wisdom. King Solomon had much Godly wisdom, and yet was rich in material wealth. Material riches are a hindrance to the New Testament teachings on faith, and are contrary to the New Testament warnings concerning the "deceitfulness of riches." King Solomon's riches were again pictures of being spiritually **rich** in Christ. His riches surpassed all of the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom, (II Chronicles 9:22). We also read in II Chronicles 9:23:

"... all the **kings of the earth** sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart."

The phrase kings of the earth is not without its spiritual significance. Scripture tells us that every true child of God is called to the title of "king."

"... the honour of **kings** is to search out a matter." (Proverbs 25:1)

"It is an abomination to **kings** to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness," (Proverbs 16:12)

"... **Kings** shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee," (Isaiah 49:7).

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and **kings** to the brightness of thy rising," (Isaiah 60:3).

"All the **kings** of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth, " (Psalm 138:4)

"It is he that giveth salvation unto **kings**...", (Psalm 144:10)

We can easily go on and on with scripture after scripture that portrays the child of God as a "king" or even "kings of the earth." But let us sum up the matter by putting a New Testament cap or seal on this idea:

"And hath made us **kings** and **priests** unto his father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen," (Revelation 1:6).

"And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the **kings of the earth** do bring their glory and honour into it," (Revelation 21:24).

Indeed, the true child of God is perceived by God as a spiritual "king of the earth." We don't possess the material wealth that a literal king of the earth would possess. Our inheritance is something altogether foreign to what any earthly king or royalty would possess. Our inheritance is spiritual and everlasting life. This same idea is true in that as a spiritual king our inheritance is spiritual riches (not material goods), stored up in heaven.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:"

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." (Matthew 6:19-20)

Not surprisingly, scripture records that there are false kings of the earth as well.

"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed...", (Psalm 2:2)

As there are wheat and tares together in the corporate church, likewise there are true and false merchants as there are true and false kings within the church. These are all metaphors or symbols of true and false Christians (wheat and tares) within the corporate church. Therefore, when scripture records that king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom, it may well be allegorically depicting king Solomon as a picture of Christ. He held the spiritual rule in the earth, as does Christ. He was **rich** materially, which pointed to the spiritual richness of Christ and all who would inherit His eternal kingdom.

King Solomon was commissioned by God the Father to literally build the Temple of God in the literal city of Jerusalem. He typified Christ, as our LORD was commissioned by God the Father to build the spiritual Temple of God in the spiritual city of Jerusalem. The word "Jerusalem" means "the habitation of peace." Therefore, much of what King Solomon stood for and did was in shadowing the mission of Christ, the builder of God's final Temple. It is the opinion of this study that the merchants mentioned in Revelation chapter eighteen are representative of true believers, since they have waxed spiritually **rich** "through the abundance of her delicacies," Revelation 18:3.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Merchants Have Become Rich from Abundance of Her Delicacies

"...and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her **delicacies**."
(Revelation 18:3)

If we were reading these verses superficially we would have to conclude that these merchants were becoming materially rich through the abundance of Babylon's material goods, her delicacies and the such. But what is God really telling us when we read the phrase "the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies?" In defining the word "abundance" from the Greek, we find that it does not mean a large quantity or surplus, as one would normally assume. It is the Greek word **26***"doo'-nam-is" and is defined as force; specially, miraculous power (usually by implication, a miracle itself). This word is translated only once as "abundance" and of course that is in Revelation chapter eighteen. From everything we can gather, we see that the merchants of the earth have become spiritually rich through the **might and power** of this woman's delicacies. But what are her **27***delicacies? Many Greek New Testaments translate this word as luxury. One definition from the English language defines delicacies as "a luxury or dainty; something that is delicate in taste". Literally, this could be describing a delicatessen full of dainty foods, "an excess of sweetness or richness." We can certainly see the spiritual implications as God's Word is written in parables. Certainly these delicacies in which this woman - now harlot - possessed are not literal dainties of any sort. Of course they must be spiritual dainties. These dainties are symbolic of the true Word of God.

"And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." (Revelation 10:10)

"For we are unto God a sweet savior of Christ ...," (II Cor. 2:15).

"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! , than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103)

"... and the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, ... " (Amos 9:13)

Throughout scripture we read of God's Word being "sweet," and like "honey," and also being liken to "sweet" wine. God uses many soothing words to describe His good news of redemption to fallen man. The word "**delicacies**" is just one of many synonyms used in scripture for the gospel. This word is translated as "luxury" in the New King James Version. "Delicacies" is a hard word to translate since there are no other renderings of it in the New Testament. It is rooted from "ster-eh-os'," which is to remain "stedfast," "strong," or "sure". The only examples are:

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth **sure** ..." (II Timothy 2:19)

"But **strong** meat belongeth to them that are of full age..." (Hebrews 5:14)

As we said, the New King James translates delicacies as "luxury." Whether luxury or delicacies, we know that this word is somehow related to spiritual dainties. This will be examined in the following chapter. When examining the

phrase "**abundance of her delicacies**," we find many similarities in the Book of Lamentations. An interesting verse is found in Lamentations 4:5, which reads:

"They that did feed **delicately** are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills."

This section of scripture seems to be ultimately speaking of the abomination of desolation. Looking at verse twelve of the same chapter, we read:

"The **kings of the earth**, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem."

The "gates of Jerusalem" being parabolic language signifying the spiritual gates of heaven. That is to say that Christ is the door and the gate to the kingdom of God. He is the head and the cornerstone of the spiritual Temple of believers. His Church is the earthly gate that leads to heaven. Lamentations 4:5 seems to be portraying the end time abomination of desolation in similar language as we read in Revelation chapter eighteen. Lamentations tells us that "those who feed delicately" are desolate in the streets. The word "delicately" means **dainties** or delight. Those who feed delicately must be the true spiritual merchant; the true born-again Christian. Here in Lamentations 4:5 they are desolate in the streets. Their gospel has been desecrated or cut off as a result of the abomination of desolation. The merchants are desolate and in the streets; forced out of the harlot church and it's desecration of the true gospel. They are the true merchants standing afar off from these abominable congregations.

Lamentations 4:5 goes on to say "... they that were brought up in **scarlet** embrace dunghills." Again this is simply reiterating what has already been said. Those that were brought up in scarlet are God's elect, the true believer. Notice that God uses the figure or symbol of **scarlet** to depict His Truth. Just as we saw when looking at the apparel worn by the harlot Mystery Babylon. Those that were brought up in the Word of God NOW embrace **dunghills**! God uses the word "dunghill" in denoting or expressing man's unsaved spiritual condition. Those that were brought up in scarlet are now forced to embrace dunghills - they are still saved but now are forced out of the apostate churches, leaving them to embrace dunghills. The following are two examples:

"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the **dunghill**, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them. (1 Samuel 2:8)

"Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the **dunghill**; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (Luke 14:34-35)

As we look at Lamentation 4:1 we find that God's truth is being worn down or eroded. Note that if these occurrences have transpired in Old Testament time, they will indeed repeat themselves within the congregations of the end time church.

"How is the **gold** become dim! how is the most **fine gold** changed! The **stones** of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street." (Lamentation 4:1)

Here we see descriptive terms for God's Word and it's richness such as gold and fine gold paralleling the descriptions of the harlot's possessions in Revelation chapter 18. This is only a partial example of how God's Word is defined in biblical terminology as dainties, scarlet, gold, etc., etc.

FOOTNOTES:

25* "Doo'-nam-is" # 1411 Strong's Greek. Force (lit. or fig.); spec. miraculous power (usually by impl. a miracle itself): - ability, abundance, meaning, might (ily,-y,deed), (worker of) miracle (-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work. From #1410 "Doo'nam-ahee"; to be able or possible, might, be of power.

"Doo'-nam-is" is translated power in "The Interlinear Greek-English"; Berry, and in "The Interlinear Bible"; Hendrickson.

26* "Stray'-nos"; # 4764 from Strong's Greek. A straining, strenuousness, or strength, i.e. (fig.) luxury (voluptuousness):-delicacy.

From #4731 "Ster-eh-os"; solid, stable, , stedfast, strong, sure."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

All Things Dainty & Goodly are Departed from Thee

"And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were **dainty** and **goodly** are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all." (Revelation 18:14)

The true merchants of the earth are weeping because there is practically no salvation to be found in the corporate church. She has fallen into harlotry, therefore the fruits of her once Godly labor are departed from her. "The fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee," (verse 14). This word "lusted" means to look upon or to set the heart upon, and can be used in both a positive or a negative manner. It is translated "desireth" in the following two verses:

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he **desireth** [translated "lust" elsewhere] a good work." (1 Timothy 3:1)

"Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels **desire** [translated "lust" elsewhere] to look into." (1 Peter 1:12)

This is being addressed because there are those who believe that the biblical "lusting" is always in association with sin or the lusting of the things of this world. However, the saints of God comprise a righteous "lust" after holiness and other divine virtues of the Creator Himself, no doubt. This seems to be the condition of which Revelation 18:14 is making reference to, "...the fruits that thy soul **lusted** [desireth] after are departed from thee..." These **27***"fruits" are "ripe fruits"; summer or early autumn fruits only, as indicated in the Greek, and is used in one other place - Jude 12 - as **28***"autumn trees," but bearing no fruit when fruit should be expected. The book of Jude could well be making reference to the desecration of the corporate church during the days of the great tribulation. Today, spiritual fruit would normally be expected in the corporate church, as in past centuries, from Pentecost and forward.

All things that are dainty and goodly are also departed from her. Verse fourteen ends with the statement: "and thou shalt find them no more at all." This passage does not speak of this world's material luxury, nor does it allude to extravagant goods of any kind which may be termed as "dainty." God is not focusing on this world's costly merchandise. Verse eleven tells us that the merchants of the earth are weeping and mourning over this woman because her merchandise is no longer being (spiritually) purchased. Verses twelve and thirteen list her former Godly merchandise, (detailed in Chapter 15). She is no longer concerned with the true Christian walk. God is judging her by allowing Satan to spiritually desecrate her corporately, resulting in countless false doctrines and false gospels, and is evident by the lack of any true fruits of the spirit.

Those things which were dainty and goodly are departed from her, verse fourteen. As mentioned in the last chapter, her dainties must be spiritual dainties. The word "dainty" comes from the Greek word **29***"liparos" and properly signifies "oily, or anointed with oil." The Old Testament word for **30*** "dainty" carries the meaning of delicately or delight, and as seen in the following verses, it is in reference to the delight of salvation; the precious royal dainties of the Gospel of Christ in which believers are to feed upon.

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal **dainties** ["mah-ad-awn": delight, delicately]." (Genesis 49:20)

"Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give **delight** ["mah-ad-awn": dainties, delicately] unto thy soul." (Proverbs 29:17)

"They that did feed **delicately** ["mah-ad-awn": dainties, delight] are desolate in the street: they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills." (Lamentations 4:5)

This Hebrew word is rooted from "aw-dan" which is to be soft or pleasant:

"And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and **delighted** ["aw-dan"] themselves in thy great goodness." (Nehemiah 9:25)

These strong cities; this fat land wherein were houses full of goods, wells digged, vineyards, oliveyards planted, and fruit trees in abundance are all terms for God's magnificent and glorious plan of salvation. We find this parabolic language representing our spiritual rest and safety. These are the **royal dainties** that the soul of the true child of God will most certainly delight in. Yet, at the end of this age, as Christ is about to appear to institute Judgment Day, these wonderful attributes of the true Gospel will be seen no more in the corporate church. The analogy of spiritual dainties is but figurative language describing the precious plan of redemption that God the Father has chosen for His elect throughout all nations of the earth. These dainties, to a large degree, will only be found in small and scattered assemblies of believers; those who have fled from the spiritual harlot, for the fear of her judgment.

Verse fourteen of Revelation chapter eighteen also tells us that those things which were **31* goodly** are departed from her as well. This word "goodly" symbolizes Christ as "dainty" also signified Him. "Goodly" denotes the radiance and purity of Christ and His Gospel. "Goodly" is also translated as bright, clear, gay, goodly, gorgeous, white.

Let us recall James 2:2-4:

"For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in **goodly** ["lam-pros"] apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;"

"And ye have respect to him that weareth the **gay** ["lam-pros"] clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:"

"Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

Many read these verses understanding only its moral and historical content, while disregarding much of the spiritual account. We are to welcome any and all destitute unbelievers from the streets into our congregations just as eagerly as we are to welcome a rich man. This is taught in these few verses of James chapter two. God doesn't stop at this layer of teaching. In fact, God elevates the meaning into the spiritual level by correlating scripture with scripture. When James speaks of a man entering into our assembly wearing a gold ring, and dressed in **goodly** apparel, we picture this man as being well-to-do, respectable, and of good status. But over and above this historical meaning rests the spiritual interpretation. This man in **goodly** apparel represents a saved person, thus the goodly apparel. The word "goodly" comes from the same Greek word as does "goodly" in Revelation 18:14, of which "...all things which were dainty and **goodly** are departed from thee...". This man's spiritual apparel is the righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thus too, he is spiritually rich in salvation and in the Gospel of Christ. Not only was this man

robed in goodly apparel, he is said to also be wearing the **gay** clothing (James 2:3), meaning he presents himself as cheerful and happy. The word "gay" also comes from the same Greek word as does "goodly," meaning radiant, magnificent, and sumptuous in appearance. Not only is God telling us not to be partial and judgmental in our thoughts and deeds concerning the rich and poor of this world, yet He is also showing us how we are to receive the saved (man in "goodly" apparel and "gay" clothing) and the unsaved (the poor man in vile raiment) into our congregations or assemblies.

The following verses may help to substantiate the fact that "**goodly**" and "**gay**" (lam-pros') characterizes Christ Himself and His own Church:

"And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a **gorgeous** [lam-pros'] robe, and sent him again to Pilate." (Luke 23:11)

"And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in **bright** [lam-pros'] clothing." (Acts 10:30)

(God appeared to Cornelius in the form of a man in "bright" clothing.)

"And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and **white** [lam-pros'] linen...", (Revelation 15:6)

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and **white** [lam-pros']: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Revelation 19:8)

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, **clear** [lam-pros'] as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1)

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the **bright** [lam-pros'] and morning star." (Revelation 22:16)
(Jesus is the **bright** and morning star, which meaning is the same as **radiant**, the **magnificent**, the **clear**, the **gorgeous**, the **goodly** or **gay**.)

This word "goodly" (lam-pros') is rooted from the Greek word "lam-pas" which carries the meaning of lamp, light, or torch. All of which describes the God of the Bible. Some examples are:

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven **lamps** [lam-pas'] of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." (Revelation 4:5)

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their **lamps** [lam-pas'], and went forth to meet the bridegroom." (Matthew 25:1)

The word "goodly" [lam-pros'] being rooted from "lam-pas" is also associated with the Greek primary verb "lam'-po," which means to radiate brilliancy; to give light or to shine. Some examples are:

"Let your **light** [lam'-po] so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

"And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the **light** [lam'-po]. (Matthew 17:2)

"For God, who commanded the **light** [lam'-po] to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give light [lam'-po] of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (II Corinthians 4:6)

"And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a **light** [lam'-po] shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands." (Acts 12:7)

We see that the word "goodly" and "dainty" are associated with absolutely nothing of this material world. Jesus states that "He is not of this world," therefore neither should we attempt to understand and correlate His Word with the things of the world. We are to look for the spiritual meaning, and by finding the correct heavenly meaning, we are guaranteed of finding the Gospel in every sentence. The "goodly" and "dainty" things of Revelation chapter eighteen, which are now departed from the corporate church, are highly likely to be in reference to the way of the cross of Christ. The merchants of the earth weep and mourn because the way of salvation is heard no longer in the corporate church of Christ. No man buyeth (receives) their "Gospel" merchandise any more!

FOOTNOTES:

27* "Op-o'-rah" #3703 Strong's Greek. From base of #3796; prop. even-tide of the (summer) season (dog days), i.e. (by impl.) ripe fruit.

#3796 "Op-seh"; (through the idea of backwardness); (adv.) late in the day; by extens, after the close of the day: - (at) even, in the end.

28* Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

29* "Lip-ar-os" #3045 Strong's Greek. Signifies "oily or, anointed with oil" (from lipos, "grease," connected with aleipho, "to anoint"; it is said of things which pertain to delicate and sumptuous living; hence, "dainty."

30* Dainty/dainties in Hebrew: #4574 "Mah-ad-awn"; (or fem.) from #5727; a delicacy or (abstr.) pleasure (adv. cheerfully): dainty, delicately, delight. Also from #4516 "Man-am"; a delicacy: - dainty. Rooted from #5276 "Naw--ame"; to be agreeable (lit. or fig.): - pass in beauty, be delight, be pleasant, be sweet. Also from #4303 "Mat-am-maw"; a delicacy: - dainty (meat), savory meat.

31* "Lam-pros" #2986 Strong's Greek. Radiant; by anal.limpid; fig. magnificent or sumptuous (in appearance): - bright, clear, gay, goodly, gorgeous, white. From the same as #2985 "Lam-pas"; a "lamp" or flambeau: - lamp, light, torch. From #2989 "Lam'-po"; to beam, i.e. radiate brilliancy (lit. or fig.): - give light, shine.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (A)

The Merchant's Merchandise (no longer found)

"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise anymore"
(Revelation 18:11)

Scripture tells us that this great city is in fact this woman in the wilderness, Revelation 17:18. Scripture also tells us that this very woman (city) reigns over the kings of the earth. It is Christ and His Church who reigns over the kings of the earth. This woman has fallen into spiritual adultery. Now, in the final years of this earth's existence, she is termed the "Mother of Harlots." This is the manifestation and the unveiling of the abomination of desolation worldwide. In this chapter we will briefly examine the merchandise which rightfully belongs to the true merchant, i.e. Christ and His bride - the Church. It is the lack of this merchandise within the organized and corporate church that provokes the weeping and mourning of the true spiritual merchants. It is the time of Great Tribulation. Satan has shrewdly and cunningly taken his seat within the corporate church, unnoticed by any and all who are spiritually blind to this prophecy. The question is asked, are these literal merchants of the earth? Are they weeping over the loss of material goods that are being destroyed at Judgment Day? Or do we dare suppose that these merchants are spiritual merchants of the true Gospel weeping and mourning over the fact that the true Gospel is no longer heard in the corporate church?

The following is a list of the merchandise belonging to these merchants, of which are no longer to be found in this woman; this great city in the wilderness.

"The merchandise of **gold**, and **silver**, and **precious stones**, and of **pearls**, and **fine linen**, and **purple**, and **silk**, and **scarlet**, and all **thyine wood**, and all manner **vessels of ivory**, and all manner **vessels of most precious wood**, and of **brass**, and **iron**, and **marble**,"

"And **cinnamon**, and **odours**, and **ointments**, and **frankincense**, and **wine**, and **oil**, and **fine flour**, and **wheat**, and **beasts**, and **sheep**, and **horses**, and **chariots**, and **slaves**, and **souls of men**." (Revelation 18:12-13)

"THE MERCHANT'S MERCHANDISE"

GOLD

The gold of scripture characterizes Christ as our King of kings. Psalm 21:3 speaks of the Savior wherein we read: "...thou settest a crown of **pure gold** on his head." Verse one of the same Psalm declares Him to be "The King." This same truth is underscored again in Revelation 14:14, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a **golden crown**, and in his hand a sharp sickle." God the Father has crowned His son in pure gold, symbolically speaking. Christ is the one true King of kings and LORD of lords. All who come into this new birth in Christ are themselves spiritual kings and priests of Christ's kingdom.

Gold is also a symbol of the trials and faith of the Christian walk. In Revelation 3:18 Christ counsels us to buy of Him "**gold** tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." Notice particularly that Christ invites us to **buy** this gold. This gold is spiritual merchandise and we are to buy the gospel and sell it not (Proverbs 23:23). As we have already discovered, to "buy" the truth is simply a phrase termed for receiving the gospel. Once we have come into the true faith and have experienced the Christian walk, we are as gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich in faith. Zechariah 13:9 speaks of

God's true believers as the "third part." There we read: "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as **gold** is tried..." This world is a testing ground, and we indeed are being tried.

We read in Exodus of much gold that was used in the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. We also read in I Kings of the gold that King Solomon used in constructing the Temple in Jerusalem. Many other places in scripture we find gold being used, not only for construction of both the tabernacle in the wilderness and Solomon's Temple, but for their interior designs as well. Much of everything that was used in the dressings of these temples played a symbolical part in picturing Christ and His elect in the final and eternal spiritual Temple - the body of Christ and His believers.

SILVER

The true believer is also equated to silver in scripture. We are to be tried and refined as silver (Zechariah 13:9). "The words of the LORD pure words: as **silver** tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times," Psalm 12:6. Again we read in Psalm 66:10 "For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried." Ezekiel 16:13 speaks of the bride of Christ, typified by Old Testament Jerusalem. "Thus was thou decked with gold and **silver**; and thy raiment of fine linen..." Throughout scripture we read of silver being used in the tabernacle in the wilderness as well as in King Solomon's Temple, of which typified believers in the everlasting spiritual Temple - the body of Christ.

PRECIOUS STONES

Jesus Christ is the precious stone of scripture: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a **precious corner**, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste," Isaiah 28:6. The Hebrew rendering of "precious" carries the meaning of brightness, clear, excellent, or costly.

All true believers are identified with Christ, and typified not only as silver and gold, but as precious stones as well. We are all spiritual stones that make up the whole body of Christ. I Peter 2:5 tells us "Ye also, as lively **stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

We read in I Chronicles 29:2 a brief overview of the costly array that was to go into the building of Solomon's Temple: "Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for of gold, and the silver for of silver, and the brass for of brass, the iron for of iron, and wood for of wood; onyx stones, and to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, all manner of **precious stones**, and marble stones in abundance."

Concerning the New Heaven and the New Earth - the eternal Temple - we read: "And the foundations of the wall of the city garnished with all manner of **precious stones**...", Revelation 21:19.

As Revelation chapter eighteen lists the merchandise that is no longer found in this woman (now fallen harlot), do we attribute this gold, silver, and precious stones to simply being defined as some of the extravagant and expensive material goods of the world? Goods that are no longer to be purchased by the merchants of the earth? Even the worse of sinners will recognize that the end of the world will mean everything literal will be no more. The teaching behind all of the harlot's merchandise is that the corporate church has become universally apostate, therefore the true merchandise she once preserved (which is spiritual) is no longer there for the asking. The true merchandise she once harbored are the precious doctrines of the one true Word of God, and everything affiliated with Christ and His bride. The merchandise are the vessels and instruments of the true and spiritual Temple of God, prefigured by the Old Testament temple furnishings. All is gone from her. None is left. God has judged His outward church. Judgment begins at the house of God, and thus the true Christian merchants weep and mourn over the finality of her spiritual judgment.

PEARLS

We read in Revelation 18:12 that pearls are another cherished merchandise that is no longer found in this great city. Again in verse sixteen it is said that she is decked with pearls. There is no mention of pearls in the Old Testament other than Job chapter twenty-eight, which has only material pearls in view. Matthew chapter thirteen, however, declares that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a **pearl** of great price. Aside from the harlot being arrayed with pearls (Rev. 17:4; 18:12,16), we find only one other mention of pearls, and that being in Matthew 7:6, where pearls are being contrasted to "that which is holy." Not until Revelation chapter twenty-one, do we read of pearls.

"And the twelve gates were twelve **pearls**: every several gate was of one **pearl**: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." (Revelation 21:21)

We have a highly symbolical portrait of the eternal New Jerusalem. Pearls make up a portion of the symbolism. It is no surprise that the harlot church is decked with pearls, since Satan is the great imitator of God. This spiritual harlot is the counterfeit church of the end times. Because of the overspreading of abominations within her, God has made her desolate, even until the consummation (fulfillment or completion), and that which is determined shall be poured upon the desolate. See Daniel 9:27. She too, like the true and faithful Church, is spiritually arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls (Rev. 17:4). She is mimicking the true Church in every sense. She is the end-time deception, of which God declares "...if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect," Matthew 24:24.

FINE LINEN

Fine linen ultimately represents the righteousness of the saints. Concerning the bride of Christ, the wife of the Lamb (Rev. 19:8), we read the following:

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in **fine linen**, clean and white: for the **fine linen** is the righteousness of the saints."

When Christ returns to judge this earth, it is said that He will come with His armies of saints, all clothed in **fine linen**, (Rev. 19:14).

The first mention of fine linen in scripture is in Genesis 41:42, there Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in fine linen. Joseph was a magnificent "type" of Christ, therefore he typified the righteousness of Christ the Savior. As God demanded holy garments to be made for Aaron and his sons, who were to perform the priestly functions in the wilderness, we see that fine linen was a necessary part of the Ephod, (Exodus 28:39). Aaron, as the high priest of the children of Israel while in the wilderness, represented Christ, our high priest (Hebrews 9:11). Aaron's holy garments would therefore be made of substances and figures pointing to the spiritual substances and the attributes of Christ and His holy bride, the one true Church universal.

Christ in many places throughout scripture is typified by King David. Christ is prophesied in Isaiah 9:7 to reign upon the Throne of David. King David was arrayed in fine linen (I Chronicles 15:27).

God's eternal Jerusalem, being typified by Old Testament national Israel, was arrayed in **fine linen** back in Ezekiel 16:13.

PURPLE

As we mentioned in earlier chapters, the color purple is another figurative picture of Christ and His bride. It is seen in the tabernacle in the wilderness, as well as being a pertinent color of Aaron's holy garments. This color is used in describing the bride of Christ in Proverbs 31:22 and again in Song of Solomon 7:5.

Christ was robed in **purple** as He stood before His accusers, readied for His crucifixion. Lydia and her household became saved, as we read in Acts chapter sixteen. It is said of Lydia that she was a seller of purple. Spiritually she was a proclaimer of the Gospel of Christ, thus a "seller of purple." See chapters 5-6.

SILK

In Ezekiel chapter sixteen, while describing God's spiritual Jerusalem (Old and New Testament congregations), God uses a considerable amount of symbolical language, of which much of Revelation chapter eighteen is drawn from. In describing His earthly representation of His kingdom, i.e. Church, God says that He clothed her with **silk**, Ezekiel 16:10,13. Again in Proverbs chapter thirty-one we read of the virtuous woman whose price is far above rubies (v.10), who can only be the bride of Christ, Old and New Testaments. She is said to plead the cause of the poor and needy (v.9), and again she reaches out her hands to the poor and needy (v.20). All of which is picturing her corporately going about Christ's will in seeking God's lost sheep of the House of Israel. The poor and needy being all of God's elect, all who have been broken of their self-will, becoming poor in spirit and needy; not in need of material substances such as food and clothing, but in spiritual need of eternal salvation. This virtuous woman is said to be like merchants ships, in bringing her food (spiritual merchandise) from afar (v.14). This beautiful metaphorical chapter of the one True Church of Christ is dripping with figurative language in describing God's bride, His elect. Yes, she is also clothed in **silk** (v.22).

SCARLET

The virtuous woman (as mentioned in the above section on "silk") has her clothing (which represents the righteousness of Christ) made of silk. This silk is said to be **scarlet** in color, Proverbs 31:21. Scarlet usually represents the blood of Christ. Purple is the same in scripture as scarlet. The references pertaining to scarlet are too numerous to mention. Much scarlet was used in the garnishing of not only the tabernacle in the wilderness, but the garment of the High Priest as well. The High Priest being a representation of Christ Jesus, our only authority and High Priest, Hebrews 8:1. Exodus chapters twenty-five through thirty-nine speak of these things.

We read in II Samuel 1:24:

"Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in **scarlet**, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel."

God's one true Israel, the spiritual "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16), is clothed in Christ's righteousness of course. This spiritual apparel is represented by many different figures in scripture, scarlet being only one. However, the corporate church consisting of unsaved men and women will always insist that they too are God's elect, yet they have never been "born-again" and therefore cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These false Christians, the false church, mimics and impersonates the true Church, the only difference being that they leave out portions of God's doctrine, or they add their own beliefs to God's Divine Word, whereby exposing them as a false gospel. Nevertheless, they claim to be clothed in **scarlet**, as we are discovering in Revelation 17:4.

One final note on the subject of scarlet. Joshua is, in all probability, a picture and type of Christ. In chapter two of Joshua we read that he sent two men to spy out the land of Jericho. These men typified Christ's Church (represented

by the number two). We find that they escaped their pursuers only because of the **scarlet** thread made available to them in which to flee. Again, another dramatic portrait of Christ being our only escape from eternal hell and outer darkness. Scarlet is no longer found in the corporate church, as are any of the real spiritual figures or symbols of the truth.

THYINE WOOD

Among everything that is missing from this religious harlot's merchandise, thyine wood is included (Rev. 18:12). This is the only place in all of scripture where this particular type of wood is mentioned. **32***"Thyine" in the Greek denotes a certain fragrant tree (in the sense of blowing), and is derived from a word meaning "to do sacrifice". We find this word translated as "kill" or "killed" in Matthew 22:4; Mark 14:12; Luke 15:23,27,30; 22:7; Acts 10:13. It is translated as "slay" in Acts 11:7 and as "sacrifice" in Acts 14:13,18; I Cor. 5:7, 10:20. In most of these cases these sacrifices have everything to do with the ultimate sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He it is of whom the Old Testament sacrifices all ultimately pointed toward.

The fact that this merchandise is listed as wood (thyine wood) may be in keeping with the Old Testament pictures and allegories. Much wood was used in the building of Solomon's Temple. The varieties of wood mentioned all have their place in representing some spiritual aspect of the true spiritual Temple of Christ - His Body - the Church.

VESSELS OF IVORY

When we examine the word "vessel" in the Old Testament, we find that it is associated with many of the references, if not most of the references, to the many varying instruments or "articles" used in both Solomon's Temple and the tabernacle in the wilderness. For example, Exodus 27:19 reads: "All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, brass." Again in Exodus 30:26-28 we read:

"And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony."

"And the table and all his **vessels**, and the candlestick and his **vessels**, and the altar of incense."

"And the altar of burnt offering with all his **vessels**, and the laver and his foot."

Every major article of the tabernacle had many vessels which served that particular function. The Levities were given the priesthood. It was their job to perform the priestly functions of the sanctuary. We read in Numbers 1:50:

"But thou shalt appoint the Levities over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the **vessels** thereof, and over all things that (BELONG) to it; they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the **vessels** thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle."

The vessels belonging to this tabernacle in the wilderness were very important, for without them the priestly functions could not be performed. II Chronicles 5:5 says that these vessels were **holy vessels** that were in the tabernacle.

When we read the first two verses of Daniel chapter one, we see a dramatic picture of the "abomination of desolation," when Satan takes his seat in the Temple of God (II Thessalonians 2:4). Daniel 1:1 says that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar typifies Satan (the prince of this world) in scripture, as being king of Babylon. Verse two speaks of the vessels of the House of God (the Temple) being carried away into the land of Shinar, which is the land of Babylon. All of this language typifies Satan overtaking the congregations of the world (Babylon) at the end of time. It is important to note that the vessels of the House of God were taken captive into Babylon. These vessels may

represent the false believers who are taken captive by Satan. Because they are in the House of God, they are also characterized as vessels.

When we go to the New Testament we read of vessels in the following verses:

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one **vessel** unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Romans 9:21)

"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the **vessels** of wrath fitted to destruction."

"And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the **vessels** of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Romans 9:22-23)

"But we have this treasure in earthen **vessels**, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (II Corinthians 4:7)

"That every one of you should know how to possess his **vessel** in sanctification and honour." (I Thessalonians 4:4)

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a **vessel** unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (II Timothy 2:21)

Today's true believer is a **vessel of honour** in God's eternal kingdom. The non-believers within the church are vessels of wrath. These vessels of honour are also alluded to in Revelation chapter eighteen as merchandise of which are found **vessels of ivory**. Why?

Song of Solomon chapter five describes Christ in all of His glory as His bride's "beloved." The many wonderful figurative and spiritual depictions are too numerous to detail. Among the many depictions, we read "... his belly is as bright **ivory** overlaid sapphires." When we go to chapter seven we find Christ's bride, the Church, being described in allegorical terms. Verse four reads: "Thy neck is as a tower of **ivory**..." As God created a bride for Adam, we the Church of Christ have been created for Christ. We are the **vessels of ivory**; spiritual merchandise belonging to Christ and His Church, and masqueraded by Satan and his imitation (false) church. What will become of this false church at the end of time? Amos 3:15 says:

"And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD."

The "vessels of Ivory," being listed in Revelation 18:12, is a portion of the merchandise that is no longer found within the religious harlot. It is in no manner simply referring to worldly and costly material goods. This cannot be. These are spiritual descriptions of the things belonging to the true spiritual Temple of God. God's true vessels of ivory can no longer mingle with this spiritual harlot; they must flee from her, for the fear of her torment - her judgment.

FOOTNOTES

33* "Thoo'-ee-nos" from Strong's Greek. from a der. of #2380 (in the sense of blowing; denoting a certain fragrant tree); made of citron-wood:- thiyne.

From "'thoo'-o" #2380 Strong's Greek. A prim. verb; prop. to rush (breathe hard, blow, smoke, i.e. (by imply.) to sacrifice (prop. by fire, but gen.); by extens. to immolate (slaughter for any purpose): - kill, (do).

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (B)

The Merchant's Merchandise (Continued)

PRECIOUS WOOD

Precious wood also falls under the heading of "vessels," as we read from Revelation 18:12: "and all manner **vessels** of most **precious wood**." The children of God are indeed vessels of wood in God's eyes. The Greek word translated as "wood" (xoo'-lon) in the King James is also the **same** Greek word translated as "tree" in Revelation 2:7: "... to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the **tree [wood]** of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Again this same word is found in Revelation 22:2: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, the **tree [wood]** of life..." A picture of our eternal heavenly home. Christ Himself is pictured as an apple tree in Song of Solomon 2:3. Believers are clearly liken in scripture to trees, wood, and also a forest. The word "wood" in the Old Testament comes mainly from two Hebrew words, **33**"ates" and **34**"yah'-ar." Wood in the Old Testament is also translated as "tree" or "forest."

"She is a **tree** ["ates"] of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." (Proverbs 3:18)

"The fruit of the righteous is a **tree** ["ates"] of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." (Proverbs 11:30)

"Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the **trees** ["ates"] of the wood rejoice." (Psalm 96:12)

"Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a **forest** ["yah'-ar"]." (Isaiah 32:15)

"Is it yet a little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a **forest** ["yah'-ar"]."

"And in that day shall be deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." (Isaiah 29:17-18)

"Then shall the **trees** ["ates"] of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth." (I Chronicles 16:33)

"Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O **forest** ["yah'-ar"], and every **tree** [wood], therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." (Isaiah 44:23)

"Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the **wood** ["yah'-ar"], in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old." (Micah 7:14)

It is this "wood," among other terms, symbolizing followers of the one true Gospel that is no longer found within the harlot church. We must remember that God uses wood numerous times - over and over again - in showing what He meticulously chose to use in the building of His Holy Temple and the tabernacle in the wilderness. Wood is only one of numerous materials used in His careful building. Everything that went into the building of God's wilderness temple

and His Temple in Jerusalem represented some spiritual aspect of the New Testament Church of Christ, God's final Temple.

We read in Revelation 18:12 that not only is this wood precious, but it is most precious. By examining the Greek word **35***precious, we find that it must ultimately be associated with the atonement of Christ on the cross. Every person elect of God was purchased with the shed blood of Christ, causing them to become precious in His sight. The word "Tim'-ee-os" (precious) is listed in the following verses:

"But the **precious** [tim'-ee-os] blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1:19)

"That the trial of your faith, being much more **precious** [tim'-ee-os] than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:17)

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and **precious** [tim'-ee-os] promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (II Peter 1:4)

"Marriage is **honourable** [tim'-ee-os] in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4)

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandmen waiteth for the **precious** [tim'-ee-os] fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

"... and all manner vessels of most **precious** [tim'-ee-os] wood..." (Revelation 18:12)

Having compared scripture with scripture, and having examined the Greek and Hebrew words from which "precious wood" is derived from, can we now say in all honesty that this "precious wood," as viewed from Revelation chapter eighteen, is nothing more than worldly merchandise? Is it material goods, costly and precious to the businessmen of the world who trade in these commodities? The destruction of Mystery Babylon is described in spiritual and parabolic terms, and therefore cannot be correctly understood from a superficial reading of the chapter. Why do most, who have spent time studying this chapter, unanimously agree that "Babylon" of the great tribulation era is a "symbol" of some sort representing the kingdom of Satan, and yet interpret the entire eighteenth chapter of Revelation in a most literal manner?

BRASS

"But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of **brass** and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD." (Joshua 6:19)

God says that these vessels of **brass**, iron, silver, and gold are to be consecrated (made holy) unto the LORD. Joshua chapter six gives an account of the fall of Jericho. The word "Joshua," which means "salvation," is the Hebrew equivalent to the name of Jesus. Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 translate "Jesus" as "Joshua" in the Greek. Joshua led the Israelites in circling the city of Jericho once a day for seven day. On the seventh day they circled the city seven times for a total of thirteen encompassments. At that time the priests blew the rams horns and Joshua and the Israelites gave a great shout and the walls of Jericho fell. All of this being a dramatic miniature picture of Judgment Day, when all true believers will be raptured at the sound of the last trumpet and at the shout of God. Jericho being a picture of the unsaved world. The only thing that was saved out of Jericho were the vessels of brass, iron, silver, and gold. Of course Rahab the harlot and her household were saved, being a type of the Church,

because she hid the two messengers of God. She would spiritually be a vessel of brass, iron, silver, and gold. These vessels were taken and put into the treasury of the house of the LORD, which signifies the true Christian being taken into God's heavenly house or treasury for eternity.

Christ is described throughout scripture in many symbolical ways. His feet are like unto "**fine brass**" in Revelation 1:15 and 2:18. It is Christ with feet of fine brass who is the stone cut out without hands (Daniel 2:24), who smote Satan (typified by Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel chapter two). Christ smote Satan at the cross. Satan in scripture is pictured as a **MAN**: his head of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay, Daniel 2:32-33. We must not confuse ourselves when we read of gold, silver, iron, and brass throughout scripture. Many are in the negative sense while other passages plainly refer to Christ. All negative passages of these vessels are most probably in reference to Christ's adversary, who is the anti-Christ - Satan - depicted as a man in scripture. He is the great imitator of Christ, no wonder he and his harlot church are symbolically adorned in much identical apparel to Christ and His bride!

Zechariah saw in a vision the four spirits of the heavens which went forth from standing before the Lord of the earth (Zech. 6:5). These spirits of God were in the form of four chariots which came out from between the mountains of **brass**. Mountains are usually in reference to the kingdom of God.

Micah 4:13 speaks of all believers as "O daughter of Zion":

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thy horn iron, and will make thine hoofs **brass**; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth."

King Solomon's plans for building God's Temple in Jerusalem called for:

"...of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of **brass** eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron." (1 Chronicles 29:7)

Most, if not everything that God used in the literal sense to build and furnish His Old Testament Temple ultimately is describing and paralleling (with physical material) the spirituality of His completed Temple, the Church of Jesus Christ. There are none (perhaps few) of these symbolic and spiritual riches remaining in the corporate church, as we arrive at the conclusion of the history of unregenerate man.

MARBLE

In the New Testament Greek the word **37****"marble" (mar'-mar-os) is defined as "to glisten"; "sparkling white"; "marble." We know that Christ is spoken of in many passages as being white or white as snow. Daniel 12:10 declares that "many shall be purified and made **white**, and tried..." This Greek word is rooted from "mar'-toos," which is defined as "a witness; by analogy a martyr." It is also used as "record."

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be **witnesses** ["mar'-toos": root to "mar'-mar-os" - to glisten, sparkle white, marble] ..." (Acts 1:8)

"And I will give power unto my two **witnesses** ["mar'-toos"]..." (Revelation 11:3)

"And when the blood of thy **martyr** ["mar'-toos"] Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." (Acts 22:20)

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the **martyrs** ["mar'-toos"] of Jesus..." (Revelation 17:6)

"For God is my **record** ["mar'-toos"; the base of "mar'-mar-os": to sparkle white; to glisten; to be a witness, martyr, or record for Christ; the base of marble], how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:8)

When we go to the Hebrew Old Testament we find the word **marble 38*** ("shah'-yish") meaning to whiten; white linen; silk; to bleach stuff; or marble. For example, we read in 1 Chronicles 29:2 of King David's plans for God's Temple:

"Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, **glistening** [remember marble meant to glisten?] stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and **marble** ["shay'-yish": bleach; white linen; silk] stones in abundance."

As we mentioned earlier, Proverbs chapter thirty-one speaks of the bride of Christ as the virtuous woman (Proverbs 31:10). In verse eighteen we are told that she perceiveth that her merchandise is good. Clearly, this chapter is not speaking of merchants trafficking in precious cargo across the seas as in Revelation chapter eighteen. Yet, this virtuous woman's merchandise is essentially the same as that of Revelation chapter eighteen. **Why? Because her merchandise is spiritual in nature.** Her merchandise is symbolic; it represents all believers in Christ. It is characteristic of the spiritual traits of the Gospel of Christ and His Church. And again, her merchandise represents the many varying portraits of which God has meticulously painted throughout scripture in picturing Christ and His bride in pictures and symbols.

"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is **silk** ["shah'-ish": to bleach, whiten, silk, by analogy marble] and purple." (Proverbs 31:22)

Song of Solomon chapter five speaks of "my beloved" (verse ten), who is the bridegroom - Christ Himself. This entire chapter provides beautiful and metaphorical depictions of the Saviour.

"His legs are as pillars of **marble** ["shah'-yins], set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars."

Every believer is an inheritor of the kingdom of God, for Christ has given us this eternal promise. We inherit the righteousness of Christ and everything that goes along with it. We too are clothed with Christ' clothing. Ezekiel chapter sixteen displays much of this spiritual clothing belonging to Christ's bride:

"I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with **silk** ["Shah'-yish": to bleach as white linen; marble]. (Ezekiel 16:10)

"Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and **silk** ["Shah'-yish": to bleach, whiten, silk; by analogy marble], and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom." (Ezekiel 16:13)

Marble, like the rest of the merchandise that is no longer to be found in Mystery Babylon, is expressed throughout scripture as being only one of many different "picture symbols" spiritually signifying Christ and all of His elect. God speaks in symbolic and perhaps poetic language often in speaking of His beloved Son and His bride. Once again, we

must conclude that the merchandise of which this mystery harlot no longer possesses can only be Christ and His bride, revealed in highly figurative language. As we study the harlot's merchandise (of which she no longer possesses), it becomes evident that this merchandise is described in word pictures and figures, all of which are affiliated in one way or another to Christ and His true Church.

CINNAMON

Other than in Revelation chapter eighteen, the word "cinnamon" is used in only three other verses, all of which are Old Testament references. **38***"Cinnamon" was a substance or an ingredient used in holy oil for anointing. We find this word used in Exodus 30:23, where God commands Moses to make a holy anointing oil, that he should anoint the following: the tabernacle of the congregation; with the ark of the testimony, the table and its vessels, the candlestick, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering with all its vessels, the laver (wash bowl) and its foot (stand), and Aaron and his sons. This was done as God requested. "This shall be a holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations," (Exodus 30:31). To be anointed with holy anointing oil is surely depicting the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon all of God's elect within His completed Temple - the body of Christ.

Proverbs chapter seven teaches the shrewdness and craftiness of the religious harlot; "... a woman the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart," (verse 10). This is not simply any non-Christ centered religion. This harlot is taught to be disguised and masquerading as the one true religion. Neither is she presumptuously bringing some bizarre but recognizable false gospel. No, she is a harlot; spiritually defiled, and yet is successfully deceiving multitudes with her imitation of Christ. She has "cast many down wounded: yea, many strong have been slain by her, (Proverbs 7:26). Her house is the way to hell, verse twenty-seven. She is suggesting that her virtues and traits are true, and indistinguishable from that of God's true Church. Her resting place, by analogy her bed (Proverbs 7:16), is decked with coverings of tapestry. In comparison, we read of the true Church of God in Proverbs 31:22 "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry..." Everything about this religious harlot is only **mimicking** God's true Church. She continues: "I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and **cinnamon**, (Proverbs 7:17). Christ's true Church possesses, among many allegorical figures, "**cinnamon**, myrrh, and aloes," Song of Solomon 4:14.

ODOURS

"Odours" is yet another segment of God's merchandise that has been taken away from this religious harlot of Revelation chapter eighteen. Strong's Greek defines **40***"odours" as "an aroma, i.e. to offer aromatic fumes; burnt incense."

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of **odours**, which are the prayers of saints," (Revelation 5:8).

We know from the above verse alone that "odours" are representative of the prayers of the saints. The word "odour" is also translated as "incense" in Revelation chapter eight, and again is associated with the prayers of the saints.

"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much **incense** [same word as "odour"], that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne."

"And the smoke of the **incense** [odour], which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand," (Revelation 8:3-4).

Our prayers to God are indeed a pertinent part of our spiritual sacrifices (odours).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." (Hebrews 13:15)

Christ Himself was given as the ultimate sacrifice, of which was symbolically pictured as a sweet-smelling savour.

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an **offering** and a **sacrifice** to God for a **sweet-smelling savour**." (Ephesians 5:2)

As "odours" is defined as to offer burnt incense, we saw that it represents (in addition to Old Testament burnt offerings), the prayers of the saints. Odours are seen in the Old Testament being affiliated with the tabernacle of the congregation and also Solomon's Temple.

"According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot [duty] was to **burn incense** [odours] when he went into the Temple of the Lord." (Luke 1:9)

Someday Satan and all of fallen man will acknowledge that Christ is LORD of LORDS. As Daniel typified Christ in the Old Testament, so King Nebuchadnezzar was a type of Satan, no doubt. All of creation, saved and unsaved will bow to Christ at His second coming:

"Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him." (Daniel 2:46)

The Old Testament Hebrew word for **41***odours carries the meaning of "spices," "fragrance," and even "restful," "pleasant," or "delight." The LORD commanded Moses to speak to the congregation of the children of Israel. In doing so, Moses said: "...whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD..." (Exodus 35:5). Among the many offerings for the tabernacle in the wilderness was "...oil for the light, and **spices** [odours] for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense," (Exodus 35:8). Spices (odours) was just one of many ingredients used for the service in the Old Testament tabernacle. When we go back to Song of Solomon we find the Hebrew word for "odour" is also used as "spices." Chapter four and verse ten has the bride of Christ in view:

"How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse [bride in Hebrew]! How much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!"

The Church of Jesus Christ is no doubt a sweet smelling fragrance to Christ, figuratively speaking. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints at Philippi (Philippians chapter four) he expressed his gratitude and thankfulness that even when he was in Thessalonica the saints at Philippi "sent once again unto my necessity," Philippians 4:16. Whatever the gift was, Paul continues in verse seventeen by saying "Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound [be added] to your account." Finally in verse eighteen Paul states: "But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things from you, **an odour of sweet smell**, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God."

Because Paul was loved by many saints in the churches he helped to establish, he was, no doubt, given physical substance by some, like those at Philippi. In the above verse Paul states that he received from Epaphroditus the "things" which were sent from Philippi. Immediately he reflects upon them: an odour of sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God. Is it reasonable to assume that the saints at Philippi, in attempting to help Paul in his travels, would determine and conclude that he needed some type of odors or "incense" to help him reach his next destination? Of course not. Paul is not disclosing what the gift was, he simply refers to it as "the things."

Whatever the gift (no doubt a collection from the church; perhaps money and food), Paul says of it that he desires not a gift, but he desires Christian fruit, that may abound to your account. The gift to Paul was not perfume or anything of that nature, but it was material goods to help him in his journeys. This was done by the brethren to demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit; Christian love to Paul and to God. This then is precisely why Paul says of it: "...an odour of sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." As small as it may have been, it indeed was a sacrifice to God. "... inasmuch as ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done unto me ...," (Matthew 25:40). Hebrews 13:16 absolutely confirms this: "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such **sacrifices** God is well pleased." Our good works, once we are saved, are performed not as any type of work to get us into heaven, but our good works (whatever they may be) are done as a spiritual sacrifice unto our Heavenly Father. Faithful prayer (the **odour** of the saints, Rev. 5:8, 8:4) is a good work and a spiritual sacrifice, well-pleasing unto God.

When we look back to Song of Solomon chapter five we see a beautiful metaphorical portrait of Christ, the bridegroom. "His cheeks as a bed of **spices** [odours], sweet flowers: his lips lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh," (Song of Solomon 5:13). In addition to Christ and His bride both being referenced as "sweet spices," Song of Solomon tells us in chapter eight and verse fourteen that the kingdom of God is as the "mountains of **spices**." Throughout scripture the Kingdom of God is typified as a mountain or mountains. For example, "mountain of his holiness," Psalm 48:1. "Mountain of **myrrh**," Song of Solomon 4:6. "Hill of **frankincense**," Song of Solomon 4:6. "Mountains of **brass**," Zechariah 6:1. Notice particularly that spices, myrrh, frankincense, and brass and **all** included in Mystery Babylon's list of **merchandise** that has been taken from her, as God's righteous judgment upon her. Of course these are all spiritual word pictures (symbols) of God and His magnificent plan of salvation.

Neither will odours and spices (saintly prayers and good works?) be found in Mystery Babylon. This is one more indicator that the apostate church (the religious harlot) of the tribulation period is mimicking the true Church of God, while lacking the true power of Christ. She is strictly representative of the apostate church after the abomination of desolation has set in, and Satan has taken his seat in the Temple (Church) of God, II Thessalonians 2:4.

FOOTNOTES:

35* "Yah'-ar" #3293 Strong's Hebrew. From unused root probably meaning to thicken with verdure; a copse of bushes; hence honey in the comb (as hived in trees): - [honey] comb, forest, wood.

36* "tim'-ee-os" #5093 Strong's Greek. From #5092; valuable, i.e. (obj.) costly, or (subj.) honored, esteemed, or (fig.) beloved:-dear, honourable, (more, most) precious, had in reputation.

37* "mar'-mar-os" #3139 Strong's Greek. From "mar'-mai-ro" (to glisten); marble (as sparkling white).

38* "shah'-yish" #7893 Strong's Hebrew. From an unused root meaning to bleach, i.e. whiten; white, i.e. marble. See #8336

#8336 Hebrew "shesh-ee"; for #7893; bleached stuff, i.e. white linen or (by anal.) marble:- blue, fine [twined] linen, marble, silk.

39* "kin-naw-mone" #7076 Strong's Hebrew. From unused root (mean. to erect); cinnamon bark (as in upright rolls):__ cinnamon.

40* "thoo-mee'-am-ah" #2368 Strong's Greek. From #2370; an aroma, i.e. fragrant powder burnt in religious services; by impl. the burning itself: - incense, odour.

#2370 "thoo-mee-ah'-o": From a der. of #2380 (in the sense of smoking); to fumigate, i.e. offer aromatic fumes: - burnt incense.

41* "Bo'-sem" #1314 in Strong's Hebrew. Fragrance; by impl. spicery; also the balsam plant: - smell, spice, sweet (odour).

"Nee-kho'-akh" #5207; restful, i.e. pleasant; abstr. delight: - sweet (odour).

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (c)

The Merchant's Merchandise (Continued)

OINTMENTS

When we go to the New Testament we find that **41***ointment is a word derived by the ancients from "muro," meaning "to flow," or from "murra," meaning "myrrh-oil"; (it is probably of foreign origin, see MYRRH). This "ointment" is mentioned in connection with the anointing of the Lord on the occasions recorded in Matt. 26:7, 9:12; Mark 14:3-4; Luke 7:37-38, 46; John 11:1; 12:3,5.

In the Old Testament we find from Exodus 30:25 that this "ointment" was derived from, and in conjunction with, myrrh; cinnamon, calamus, cassia, and olive oil. It was to be used specifically as a holy anointing oil. The Old Testament uses four different Hebrew words that translate as **42***ointments."

Hezekiah, king of Judah, whose name means "strength of Jehovah" was one of the best kings to reign over Judah. He was one of the many types of God in Old Testament scripture. We read in II Kings 20:13 that his house contained a great many precious things, including silver, gold, spices, and ointments. These too being a part of the instruments for temple worship.

Psalms 133:1-2 gives us a great insight as to how God defines the word ointments in spiritual terms:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

"It is like the precious **ointment** upon the head, that ran down the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments."

God clearly associates ointments with the unity of the saints. It is like precious ointments upon the head. God may be using Aaron in this example because he was a high priest and therefore a type of Christ, who is every believer's eternal High Priest. The unity of the true Church is like ointment upon the head of Christ, running down His beard and continuing down to His garment. In other words Christ is spiritually anointed with oil, which signifies (throughout scripture) the spiritual anointing of the Holy Spirit. Aaron's head was anointed with oil. In the twenty-third Psalm we read: "...thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." God elsewhere equates ointments with the unity of believers, as we see in Proverbs 27:9:

"**Ointment** and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."

Song of Solomon 1:3 speaks of Christ, our Bridegroom this way:

"Because of the savour of thy good **ointments** thy name is as **ointment** poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." (The virgins being representative of all true believers in Christ, Revelation 14:4).

All of unsaved humanity is described as exhibiting spiritual wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, of which have not been closed up; neither have they been bound up or cured with God's eternal cure of Christ Jesus, as we read from Isaiah 1:6:

"From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up [cf. Christ came to bind up the brokenhearted, Is. 61:1], neither mollified with **ointment**," (Isaiah 1:6)

The only spiritual cure for one's sin-sick soul (of which all of humanity inherits), is God's holy anointing oil or **ointment**, which typifies one being born-again and baptized with the "holy ghost," symbolized by ointment or oil. It must be acknowledged that ointment may not always be symbolic in scripture for the holy spirit. Once again we see that the biblical word "ointment" has nothing to do with material wealth or possessions. Mystery Babylon no longer (corporately) possesses the true ointments of God; this **ointment** (the holy ghost?) will be taken from her as judgment upon the unsaved corporate church. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he [holy spirit: oil, ointment] who now letteth [restrain] , until he [holy spirit: oil, ointment] be taken out of the way [cf. Rev. 18:11-13 "for no man buyeth their merchandise any more?"]." "And then shall that Wicked be revealed [The Abomination of Desolation], whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming," II Thessalonians 2:7-8.

FRANKINCENSE

Frankincense is another word that is closely associated with incense. It is derived from a Hebrew word meaning **43**"white," and is defined as frankincense (from its whiteness or perhaps that of its smoke: -frank- incense). Frankincense was a pertinent ingredient of the Old Testament meat offering. We know that all offerings and sacrifices in the Old Testament ultimately pointed to the sacrifice of Christ Himself for the sins of all who would become saved. Concerning frankincense, we read of it in Leviticus 2:1:

"And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put **frankincense** thereon:"

Frankincense was again used with other spices in the making of an holy perfume. This perfume was to be placed before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where God tells Moses "... where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy," (Exodus 30:36). The Israelites were forbidden to make this perfume for themselves, and whosoever made this perfume for use, other than for the LORD, would be cut off from the people (Exodus 30:37-38).

God also commanded Moses to have lamps burning from evening to morning continually in the tabernacle of the congregation. These lamps were to be placed upon the pure candlesticks before the LORD continually (Leviticus 24:4). Then God commands Aaron to order the baking of twelve cakes, which were to be placed upon the pure table in two rows, six per row. Pure **frankincense** was then to be placed upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, which was an offering made by fire unto the LORD. This was to be placed there before the LORD continually every sabbath from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant (see Leviticus 24:1-8).

Frankincense, as we have seen, is another important ingredient that God has placed in the tabernacle of the congregation. Every article of clothing worn by the High Priest was not without its spiritual symbolism and significance. Every instrument and vessel in the tabernacle had its spiritual meaning as well. All, ultimately and finally points to Christ - the true Temple of God. Let us, once again, draw from the spiritual portraits laid out in Song of Solomon.

"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and **frankincense**, with all powders of the merchants?"

This of course could only be Christ, our Temple, and His bride - (the merchants?) - the Church. God speaks specifically of His bride in Song of Solomon chapter four.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of **frankincense**," (Song of Solomon 4:6)

The Kingdom of God is spoken of here as the "hill of frankincense." God does not use names, symbols, terms, phrases, or numbers without comprising some hidden spiritual link to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,"

"Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of **frankincense**; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:" (Song of Solomon 4:13-14)

Believers are depicted in scripture as trees, thus trees of frankincense in verse fourteen.

In Jeremiah 17:19-27 we read about God's commands for keeping the sabbath, which He directs to the kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Spiritually and ultimately these are all believers who stand to inherit the eternal and heavenly city of Jerusalem. By keeping God's laws, God responds to us in the following way, keeping in mind that Old Testament Israel is a picture of the New Testament Church:

"Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever."

"And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense [same word as frankincense], and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD." (Jeremiah 17:25-26)

These Old Testament offerings and sacrifices were only a shadow of the Christian spiritual sacrifices that we are to bring into the house or Temple of God; which is the Lord Jesus Christ, our eternal Holy Temple. To this cause the wise men sought out the long prophesied arrival of the Christ child, Israel's Messiah. Upon falling down and worshipping Him, they presented gifts, of which were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This was done, no doubt, in keeping with God's appropriate law concerning what was allowed to be brought into the temple as a sacrifice.

Once more we have total harmony of scripture when we look at the merchandise that is no longer found in the religious harlot - Mystery Babylon - of Revelation chapter eighteen. Certainly, no one knows precisely how all of this merchandise (symbolized by Old Testament historical and literal events) is linked to the holy possessions of Christ and His Church. We do know that it is all typified by much food and drink for sacrificial offerings in the Old Testament tabernacle of the congregation, as well as in Jerusalem's Temple. Many tools utilized in the religious services are not without their symbolic gestures; displaying that which was spiritual and which was to come. Even throughout the Old Testament God uses this same symbolic language, drawn from the tabernacle in the wilderness, as we find in the Book of Revelation. We see this allegorical language being displayed throughout scripture, of which reveals Christ and His wonderful plan of salvation for His Church.

WINE, OIL, FINE FLOUR, AND WHEAT

The spiritual goods that belong to Christ and His Church are no longer being taught in the corporate church of Jesus Christ. These goods also include her spiritual goods of wine, oil, fine flour, and wheat.

"For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he."

"Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for **wheat**, and for **wine**, and for **oil**, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." (Jeremiah 31:11-12)

Is the above verse not speaking salvation language? Once we have become saved we come and sing in the height of Zion (spiritual Israel; the Church; the congregations). Doesn't God speak of His Church as a watered garden in scripture? Yes, He does. We shall not sorrow any more at all. This statement will become more meaningful at the last day when our salvation is completed and we receive our eternal resurrected bodies. God speaks, in the above verse, of all of His children (those whom He has redeemed) flowing together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil. Does the Lord have need of literal wheat, wine, and oil? Of course these are merely figures of the Holy Spirit, and of Christ, and of the believer. Wheat is very often used to represent the true believer. "...and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire," Matthew 3:12. Oil is symbolic for the Holy Spirit. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," Hebrews 1:9. When one is anointed by God with the "oil of gladness," it can mean only one thing; you have been spiritually baptized in the Holy Spirit and have become a new creature in Christ. You have become eternally saved. When scripture speaks of the wine, it is most often in reference to the shed blood of Christ, which was absolutely necessary to shed in order that God's elect would become saved. At the Last Supper Jesus took a cup representing the wine, held it up and stated to His disciples: "This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of me," I Corinthians 11:25. Yes, these are all spiritual symbols of varying features of the Gospel of Christ.

Christ spoke a parable of a man who fell among thieves, was wounded and left half dead as he journeyed down from Jerusalem to Jericho. A priest came by, and immediately crossed the road so he would not have to look on him. Likewise, a Levite did the same thing. But when a certain Samaritan passed by, he had compassion on him and he poured oil and wine into his wounds and bound them up in order that he would become healed. Who was this certain Samaritan? And who was this man left half dead? Would oil and wine be a superior cure for him, by pouring it into his wounds? Only in the spiritual sense. The Samaritan was portraying the Son of God - God incarnate - as He had compassion on this "half dead" man (Luke 10:30). Man is half dead before Christ saves him. He is spiritually dead first, and will soon become physically dead as well. But Christ, our good Samaritan, saved this destitute man by giving him the oil of His Holy Spirit and the wine, which was the shed blood of Christ. Wounds in scripture pertain many times to our sins. By having received the Holy Spirit and the blood of Christ (oil and wine), this man's sins were healed. No priest, no Levite, no man can accomplish this miraculous task but Christ the Messiah.

When Revelation chapter eighteen speaks of the oil, the wine, the fine flour, and the wheat, we know we must search the scriptures to find their true meanings. The Old Testament is full of types and symbols pointing to Christ and His salvation plan. Every offering spoken of in the Old Testament ultimately pointed to God offering His only Begotten Son for our redemption. Oil and fine flour were pertinent ingredients in the meat offering. Oil was also used as an anointing oil and also as an anointing oil for the high priest. Finally, this anointing oil would come to represent the Holy Spirit of God as He anoints His chosen from the four corners of the earth. We cannot possibly do an adequate

study on wine, oil, fine flour, and wheat, since this would require a great deal of research and space. We do know that they are (as given in Revelation) not without great spiritual significance.

The land that God promised to Abraham and to his "spiritual" seed (Genesis 17:7,8) is the eternal and spiritual "promise land," of which the literal promise land of Canaan was merely a type or representation. God speaks of this eternal land in the following two verses:

"For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;"

"A land of **wheat**, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey;" (Deuteronomy 8:7-8)

"There is treasure to be desired and **oil** in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." (Proverbs 21:20) [Remember the five wise virgins who had oil at the coming of Christ? And the five foolish who had no oil?]

Joel 1:10 speaks ultimately of the abomination of desolation in the great tribulation:

"The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted; the new **wine** is dried up, the **oil** languisheth." [The land (the corporate church turned religious harlot) no longer preaches the true Gospel, hence the spiritual merchandise of wine and oil is no longer found in her!]

Wheat is usually a word representative of true believers. It can also be representative of Christ. Jesus said "...whoso eateth my flesh, [wheat] and drinketh my blood [wine] hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day," John 6:54. Why do we say that Christ's flesh is pictured in scripture as wheat? Because Jesus plainly stated that He was the bread (which is wheat) of life (John 6:35). Many times we read that Christ was that spiritual "bread" or "manna" which came down from heaven. Wheat pictured Christ in Old Testament symbolism, as did wine and oil.

Fine flour was used in the meat offering, being mingled with oil (Leviticus 2:1,4,7; 14:10,21; 23:13). Fine flour was also used in the sin offering without the oil or the frankincense (Leviticus 5:11). Fine flour was again used for the peace offering (Leviticus 7:11,12). Christ is surely our sin offering, our peace offering, and our meat offering. When we come to Ezekiel chapter sixteen we find a highly symbolical portrait of the House of God; the Old Testament congregations and the New Testament congregations are both ultimately in view. Before both national Israel of old and spiritual Israel (corporate church) turned to harlotry, she is partially described as follows:

"Thus was thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat **fine flour**, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom." (Ezekiel 16:13)

"My meat also which I gave thee, **fine flour**, and **oil** and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and thus it was, saith the Lord God." (Ezekiel 16:19)

"But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the **harlot** because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was." (Ezekiel 16:15)

God displays to us the final outcome of this religious harlot who was once God's true representation upon the earth. This earthly embodiment of the Church of Christ will always be known as God's **CITY**, the heavenly and spiritual

Jerusalem. However, it is destined (as prophesied from scripture) to spiritually fall into irreversible judgment from God near the end of time. All true believers will go on to become an eternal part of God's never ending heavenly city. The earthly outward shell (the corporate church), however will become apostate, being led by Satan, while continuing to retain the biblical term "city," even though it is a false church, and thus a **fallen city** in spiritual terms.

"...come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great **whore** that sitteth upon many waters:" (Revelation 17:1)

"With whom the kings of the earth have committed **fornication** [harlotry], and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." (Revelation 17:2)

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her **fornication**:" (Revelation 17:4)

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF **HARLOTS** AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Revelation 17:5)

"And the woman which thou sawest is the **great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18)

"Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that **great city** Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come." (Revelation 18:10)

"And saying, Alas, alas, that **great city**, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought..." (Revelation 18:16-17)

"And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this **great city**!" (Revelation 18:18)

"And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that **great city**, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate." (Revelation 18:19)

The identity of the "great city" found in Revelation eighteen is unquestionably provided to us in Revelation 17:18. This woman, this religious harlot is that great city. This great city was once the corporate House of God here on earth. Numerous verses attest to this fact, of which we will list only a few:

"And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD; and thou shalt be called, Sought out, a **city** not forsaken." (Isaiah 62:12)

"How is the **faithful city**.....BECOME AN HARLOT! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers." (Isaiah 1:21)

"That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the **golden city** ceased!" (Isaiah 14:4) [Could the "golden city" be representative of - not the world - but the faithful "city" before its fall? Now Satan's imitation "great city"?]

"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong **city**; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." (Isaiah 26:1)

"And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a **city** for habitation;" (Psalm 107:36)

"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a **city**." (Hebrews 11:16)

As mentioned earlier, this Holy and Great City will be holy and great throughout eternity. It has **never fallen** while sojourning on this earth. Its outer shell, or its outer court, is comprised of non-believers only; being led by Satan. They make up a major part of the earthly "city" of God, but they will not inherit the kingdom of God; for they have never become born-again.

FOOTNOTES:

41* "Moo'-ron" #3464 Strong's Greek. Probably of foreign origin' "myrrh," (by impl.) perfumed oil: - ointment.

42* "Mosh-khaw" #4888 Strong's Hebrew. A consecratory gift; - to be anointed (-ing); ointment. From #4886 "maw-shakh"; a prim. root; to rub with oil, i.e. to anoint; by impl. to consecrate; also to paint.

"Mer-kah-khaw" #4848 Strong's Hebrew. A seasoning (with spicery); concr. an unguent-kettle (for preparing spiced oil): - pot of ointment.

"Ro'-kakh"; #7545 Strong's Hebrew. An aromatic: - confection, ointment.

"Sheh'-men"; #8081 Strong's Hebrew. Grease, espec. liquid (as from the olive, often perfumed); fig. richness: - anointing, X fat (things), X fruitful, oil, ointment, olive, pine. From #8080.

"Shaw-mam" #8080 Strong's Hebrew. A primitive root; to shine, i.e. (by anal.) be (cause, make) oily or gross; - become (make, wax) fat.

43* "Leb-o-naw" #3828 Strong's Hebrew. From #3836; frankincense (from its whiteness; that of its smoke) ; - (frank-) incense.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (D)

The Merchant's Merchandise (no longer found)

VESSELS AND INSTRUMENTS

The words "vessels" and "instruments" found in the Old Testament come from the Hebrew word **44***"kel-ee'." It is defined as follows: "Something prepared, i.e. any apparatus (as an implement, utensil, dress, vessel or weapon)." from Strong's Hebrew. Throughout Old Testament scripture we read of the many instruments or vessels of the House of God. The House of God being another name for the tabernacle of the congregation or the tabernacle in the wilderness, or even Solomon's Temple. These instruments or vessels of service include the High Priest, his temple servants, the great many utensils of which is nearly impossible to mention in this study. The wheat, flour, oil, wine, etc. used in the many offerings as well as the animals used in the sacrifices. The various materials used in the dressing of the House of God were also an important part of the worship of God. Everything used in the temple service pointed to (in one way or another) the worship of Jesus Christ, as we assemble together in the congregations. Apart from the assembling of ourselves together, (if we are truly saved) we still remain a part of the true Temple of God, thereby being symbolically portrayed by many of the Old Testament "vessels" or "instruments" of service for the temple.

"And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the **vessels** thereof; and it shall be holy." (Exodus 40:9)

"Some of them also were appointed to oversee the **vessels** and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices." (I Chronicles 9:29)

Leviticus 8:9-11 reads:

"And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle, and all that was therein, and sanctified them."

"And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his **vessels**, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them." [Moses was a definite "type" of Christ, as he led his people toward the promise land. Moses anointed the altar and all of the vessels, whom God spiritually anoints with the Holy Ghost - all of His true vessels in His Holy Temple.]

Christ tells Ananias (who was frightened of Paul) "Go thy way: for he is a chosen **vessel** unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:" (Acts 9:15). The book of Romans tells us that God had afore prepared us as **vessels** of mercy, that He might make known the riches of his glory (Romans 9:23). To be a true vessel of God's Temple, we must be covered by the shed blood of Christ our Savior.

Hebrews chapter nine confirms this from Old Testament types and symbols, as we read in 9:20-23:

V.20 - "Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you."

V.21 - "Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the **vessels** of the ministry."

V.22 - "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

V.23 - "It was therefore necessary that the "patterns" [an exhibit for imitation] of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

God has just stated something of profound consequences that is readily overlooked by many. We have just been told that the Old Testament tabernacle with all of its "vessels of the ministry" were sprinkled with blood. These are all

"patterns" of things in the heavens. The heavenly things themselves will be anointed with better sacrifices than these, speaking of the new covenant confirmed with Christ's own blood. Clearly the Old Testament tabernacle and all of its vessels and instruments were patterns or pictures or types of the spiritual (not earthly) Temple of Christ; His Church.

As we come to Revelation 18:12 we sadly discover that these same Old Testament "patterns" and "symbols" of Christ's Church are no longer found where they ought to be. They are (for the most part) no longer found in the worldwide corporate church. It is the time of the end. Christ is about to appear. He has given Satan authority to desecrate the corporate church as God's own judgment upon this once faithful city, which has now merged into the world of Babylon. She is the harlot of harlots, the mother of all harlots because she once had the truth and turned from it. The only comfort in all of this is the fact that God will not allow any of His true believers to be deceived by her. They are commanded to come out of her.

BEASTS

The word **45**"beasts" as used in Revelation 18:13 is the Greek word Ktenos (ktay'-nos), meaning property i.e. specifically a domestic animal: - beast. Its derivative verb ktaomai (ktah'om-ah-ee) means to possess and/or property in flocks and herds. As near as we can tell, when Revelation 18:13 speaks of beasts, it is depicting ownership or possession of beasts. Ktay'-nos (beasts) is found in only three other New Testament passages:

"And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast [ktenos], and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." (Luke 10:34)

"And provide them beasts [ktenos], that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor." (Acts 23:24)

"All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts [ktenos], another of fishes, and another of birds." (1 Corinthians 15:39)

This word seems to strongly convey the idea of any domestic animal. Its derivative verb "ktaomai" bears the meaning of **possession**, as we see from the following passages:

"**Provide** [ktaomia] neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses," (Matthew 10:9)

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I **possess** [ktaomia]." (Luke 18:12)

"In your patience **possess** [ktaomia] ye your souls." (Luke 12:19)

"Now this man purchased [ktaomia] a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." (Acts 1:18)

"But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be **purchased** [ktaomia] with money." (Acts 8:20) "And the chief captain answered, with a great sum **obtained** [ktaomia] I this freedom. And Paul said, but I was free born." (Acts 22:28)

"That every one of you should know how to **possess** [ktaomia] his vessel in sanctification and honour;" (1 Thessalonians 4:4)

The general meaning or the symbolism of these beasts found in Revelation 18:13 first details possession and ownership of beasts. The apostle Paul was provided with beasts to carry him safely to Felix. The man who fell among thieves was finally rescued by a certain Samaritan, who set him on his "own" beast and brought him to the inn. The Greek word "ktenos" and its verb "ktaomai" only tell us that possession or ownership of beasts is in view. The Greek language - of course - will not interpret the spiritual meaning that God has in view for us. For that, we must search the scriptures.

The merchandise of gold, and of silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, etc., etc. all belong solely to Christ and His Church. These were **purchased** with a price; the shed blood of Christ at the cross at Calvary. These are the spiritual and symbolic attire that array the everlasting House of God. Yes, beasts as well, have been assigned as a **possession** in this Temple of God. These are the figurative types and symbols used in Old Testament scripture foreshadowing the spiritual goods and merchandise that - through Christ our Redeemer - would be brought into God's eternal storehouse; the spiritual Temple of the Church-Age and beyond. All of the Church's merchandise of Revelation 18:12-13 played its pictorial role in the Old Testament tabernacle and temple.

The first mention of beast in scripture is seen in Genesis 1:24:

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and **beast** of the earth after his kind: and it was so."

In the above verse, the words "living creature" and "beast" come from the Hebrew word chay **46***(khah'-ee), meaning alive, or living thing, whether literally or figuratively. Even though the cattle are a living thing, they are not defined from this Hebrew word. Neither is creeping thing (which is another source of "living things"). God uses the Hebrew word "chay (khah'-ee)" to define living creatures in general, but then peculiarly adds a specific such as beasts to this definition. Remarkably, we find the translation of the twenty-four beasts that stood round about the throne in Revelation to be more properly rendered "living creatures." It seems that God uses beasts to represent various animals throughout scripture. God also uses beasts to symbolize both believers and non-believers in scripture as well.

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills."

"They give drink to every **beast** of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst." (Psalm 104:10-11) Scripture teaches that God's springs and waters are pictures of the Gospel of Christ. We examined the above verse in our Old Testament commentary and found that some wild asses do represent believers. Now we see that the beasts of the field in this passage can also be a figure of believers as they spiritually drink from God's wells of salvation. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," John 7:38. Jesus Christ said "...I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE...", John 14:6. In Isaiah chapter forty-three God speaks of this "way" and declares that the **beasts** of the field will come to this **WAY**!

Isaiah 43:19-20:

"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth: shall ye not know it? I will even make a **WAY** in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."

"The **beast** of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls; because I give **waters** [the Gospel] in the wilderness [the world], and rivers [the Gospel] in the desert [world], to give drink to my people, my chosen."

From the above verse we learn that rivers and waters are synonyms for the "way" of Christ. It is only Christ who came into this spiritual wilderness and spiritual desert that He might bring the way of salvation; that He might make a way in the wilderness. Verse twenty of the above passage declares that the beasts of the field and also the dragons

shall honour God - that is also Christ - because God gives them waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert - to give drink to my people, my chosen. Do we see God's people or God's chosen drinking from these rivers and waters in the wilderness and in the desert? Yes we do. His chosen people are portrayed by the beasts of the field, and again by the dragons of the desert who honour Him because of the gospel waters and rivers! God speaks to us in parables much of the time throughout scripture.

Beasts were also used as an offering in the Old Testament temple:

"And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with **beasts**, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is Jerusalem."

"And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with **beasts**, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered." (Ezra 1:4,6)

Notice in the above verses that beasts were a pertinent part of the freewill offerings to God. Also notice in these verses that God adds "**goods**" to the list of silver, gold, precious things, and beasts. The Hebrew defines "**goods**" as property and riches. These were material riches that were used in the decoration of the Temple. It is these same Old Testament material riches that pictured the New Testament spiritual riches to be found in the spiritual Temple of Christ and His church. Sadly, however, with the realization of the abomination of desolation, and Satan being allowed to silence the corporate church, we see from Revelation 18:12-13 that this wonderful merchandise is no longer found in her. It is no longer found in the worldwide corporate church. The truth has fled mainstream Christianity and is no longer found in her.

SHEEP

When we come to sheep in Revelation 18:13 we have no trouble identifying with this analogy. Psalm 144:13 may not be the clearest description of this analogy, but perhaps it is one of the most beautiful of all verses:

"That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our **sheep** may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:" (Psalm 144:13)

When we examine the New Testament word for sheep, we find that every verse translates as sheep. We do not have to search for other meanings. All of Christendom would agree that sheep is a symbolical term for the believers. Sheep were used for the sacrificial offerings in Old Testament days, ultimately picturing the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

HORSES

To equate horses to the House of God is a more difficult task than to equate sheep, wine, oil, etc. Nonetheless, horses are indeed perceived in scripture as a symbolical element of the Church of God. In all fairness, horses are portrayed more often in scripture as representing the forces of Satan. Let us briefly observe how they are figuratively typified as relating to God.

"Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly **horse** in the battle." (Zechariah 10:3)

The New Testament Church is typified by Israel or by Judah of old. Many more cities of Israel picture the New Testament Church as well. The above verse speaks of God punishing the goats (unbelievers) of Judah, and yet has made "His flock" as His "goodly horse." Goodly signifies honor, beauty, and majesty in this illustration, having

everything to do with Christ and His elect. God has prepared His people for the battle, and has called them His goodly horse. This battle is the age-old war between the kingdom of Christ and the fallen kingdom of Satan.

"I will be as dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."

"His branches shall spread, and his **beauty** [same word as goodly] shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." (Hosea 14:5-6)

This is another depictive way in which God characterizes His Church with pictures and earthly illustrations. The Church is without question typified as the olive tree (Rev. 11:4; Romans 11:17,24; Zech. 4:3,11,12). The word "goodly" appears in more verses, all of which relate solely to the Creator.

In Jeremiah chapter forty-six God speaks to the prophet Jeremiah that he may warn Israel of the imminent danger from the Egyptians. In verses three and four we read:

"Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle."

"Harness the **horses**; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines."

This is the Christian's spiritual defense of today. Yes, all typified by literal weapons of war. At the cross these weapons of war were transformed into spiritual weapons designed for spiritual warfare. Isaiah 59:16-17 speak of Christ as our intercessor, having been armed with spiritual weapons, of which are the Christian's weapons as well.

"And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him."

"For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak." (Isaiah 59:16-17)

This is **precisely** what is ultimately in view as God calls for the weapons of warfare in the above verses of Jeremiah chapter forty-five. "Harness the horses" is a part of that call. Let us look at a few more references which mention horses in relation to the kingdom of God.

"Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes, sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on **horses**, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever." (Jeremiah 17:25)

To enter into the gates of the city is a figure of speech indicating one coming into salvation, i.e. entering into the spiritual gates of the eternal city of Jerusalem. All believers are typified in scripture as kings and princes (Rev. 1:6, 5:10, 21:24; Ps. 45:16). Christ inherits the throne of David, which pictured the eternal Throne of God where Christ will rule and reign at God's right hand (Heb. 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22). This city is the eternal city which will remain forever, as Jeremiah 17:25 so beautifully declares. The believers come through the gates of this celestial city riding on **horses** and in chariots, figuratively speaking of course. Christ is portrayed in Revelation chapter six - at His first coming - as riding upon a white **horse**. White signifying the purity of the Anointed One. Christ came to this earth pictured upon a white horse and having a bow, and a crown was given unto Him. He went forth conquering and to conquer with the two edged sword of salvation (Rev.6:2). When Christ comes to judge the earth, He comes again symbolically upon a white **horse**. "And the armies [WHICH were]in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean (Rev. 19:11-14). At Christ's second coming those who have previously died in Christ will be coming with Him to judge this earth. They too are clothed in fine linen, white and clean, and figuratively riding

upon horses. Recall that fine linen was another spiritual quality found within the true Church of Christ and hence no longer found in the harlot church of Revelation chapter eighteen. Fine linen (as the righteousness of Christ) is associated with the **horses** of heaven, and both being a spiritual part of God's eternal kingdom.

"And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon **horses**, and upon chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD." (Isaiah 66:20)

When the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea on dry land, God says that He "...led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, [THAT] they should not stumble," Isaiah 63:13. God again compares His Israel (His true Israel) to a company of horses:

"If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of **horses** in Pharaoh's chariots." (Song of Solomon 1:8-9)

"And Ahab said unto Obadiah, go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the **horses** and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts." (I Kings 18:5)

I Kings speaks of a land wherein are found fountains of waters, brooks, and grass. These are figures of the Gospel. This land can only be the kingdom of God, the promise land. Many times in the Old Testament we read of God declaring that His Word is a fountain of living waters. It is this grass and these brooks and fountains of water that "**save**" the **horses and mules**, as we read in I kings 18:5. Mules are also pictured in scripture as representing believers.

King Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for a period of forty years. He is an Old Testament type of Christ. His wealth in material goods simply staggers the mind. But why did God allow King Solomon to be this rich in worldly goods? Solomon most probably pictured Christ, in that he was commissioned to build God's Holy Temple in Jerusalem as Christ is commissioned to build God's spiritual and eternal Temple. Solomon's wealth is too awesome to detail. His possessions included camels, spices, gold, precious stones, algum trees, harps, psalteries for singers, silver, ivory, apes, peacocks, raiment, mules, 4,000 stalls of horses and chariots, etc. Doesn't this sound a bit like the merchandise we've been studying in Revelation chapter eighteen? Of course it does. It is picturing the merchandise of Christ's spiritual Temple. II Chronicles 9:22 declares: "And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom." Recall in Chapter 13 "The Merchants Have Become Rich From the Abundance of Her Delicacies," that we saw the many merchants of the earth becoming spiritually rich because of the merchandise that this woman (now harlot) once possessed. They became rich in the Word of God because of the abundance of spiritual merchandise possessed by the once faithful Church. But now it has become apostate. Satan is seated in the Temple of God and the true merchandise is no longer to be found in the mainline corporate church of today.

King Solomon surpassed all of the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom, which typified Christ, as He, being God incarnate, surpassed all of the kings of the earth (believers) in spiritual riches and in wisdom.

FOOTNOTES:

45* "ktay'-nos" #2934 Strong's Greek. From #2932; property, i.e. (spec.) a domestic animal: - beast.

46* "khah'ee" #2416 Strong's Hebrew. Alive; hence raw (flesh); fresh (plant, water, year), strong; also (as noun, espec. in the fem. sing. and masc. plur.) life (or living thing), whether lit. or fig.: age, alive, appetite, (wild) beast, company, congregation, life, live, living (creature, thing), maintenance, merry, multitude, (be) old, quick, raw, running, springing, troop.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (E)

The Merchant's Merchandise (no longer found)

CHARIOTS

The Old Testament defines the word "chariots" from two Hebrew words; **47**"reh'-keb" and **48**"mer-kaw-baw'."

"The **chariots** [reh'keb] of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the LORD is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." (Psalm 68:17)

Chariots would seem to indicate angels in this particular verse, however this rendering of "angels" is a once only usage of the Hebrew word "shin-awn," which means change or repetition. Either way, God is distinguished in scripture with chariots of righteousness, unlike the many references we read of which the chariots are vehicles used in defiance of God, as when the Egyptian army pursued the Israelites to the Red Sea. The following verse was used in our last section on horses:

"And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in **chariots**, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD." (Isaiah 66:20)

When the salvation of believers is achieved at the resurrection of the last day, it is then that we enter, with full spiritual inheritance, into the new and eternal Jerusalem. All whom God has saved are an offering for the eternal house of the Lord. We are symbolically portrayed as coming into the new heavens and the new earth upon horses, and in chariots. Before this will transpire however, we read five verses previous that Christ will come with His **chariots** to judge the earth:

"For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his **chariots** like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." (Isaiah 66:15)

The possible interpretation is that this is indeed speaking of Judgment Day when Christ will come with all of His saints (c.f. Jude 14) to judge the unsaved and create a new heaven and a new earth. At that time (in conjunction with verse 20 above) all of the brethren (meaning all of God's elect) will be an offering unto the Lord from all nations, both those who have died in times past and those alive at Christ's second coming. We are an offering to the Lord, and we come upon horses, and upon chariots, and in litters, and upon swift beasts to the holy mountain Jerusalem, i.e. the eternal Jerusalem. We come in a clean vessel. That is the only way we can come into God's kingdom, by being washed clean by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The horses, chariots, mules, etc. are once again symbolic language depicting (besides heavenly traits) perhaps ancient modes of travel as Jews journeyed to the literal city of Jerusalem to offer up sacrifices to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now, every born-again Christian is an offering to God's celestial city, the heavenly Jerusalem. Believers, both Jew and Gentile (brethren) are indeed an offering to God. The apostle Paul writes the following in Romans 15:16:

"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

Isaiah 66:22 seems to confirm this suggestion as God is saying that the new heavens and the new earth, which He shall make, will remain before me, so shall your seed (the brethren of verse 20) also remain with God. God is accepting this offering, made only by the sacrifice of His dear son at the cross. And so we come into eternity riding upon the many figurative things of Christ and His Church, even upon the **chariots of God**. As stated in the following section in Jeremiah:

"Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in the **chariots** and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever." (Jeremiah 17:25)

In Habakkuk 3:8 God likens His chariots to "**chariots of salvation**." But in Nahum chapter two we read of chariots in a very negative way.

"The **chariots** shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings." (Nahum 2:4)

What is this speaking of? It has been taught by ultra literalists that this verse is simply prophesying of a time wherein vehicles or automobiles would be so numerous that they would smash up against one another in the broad highways. They have even suggested that the "torches" in this verse symbolizes automobile headlights. Scripture is written in parabolic language and must be interpreted by scripture itself and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. God is addressing the apostate churches in the above verse and likens the peoples of these congregations to chariots, maybe because man is a spiritual vehicle indeed. When scripture mentions "streets," it is usually in reference to the streets of only one city - the spiritual Jerusalem - which can and is represented by the Church of Christ here on earth. This earthly representation of eternal Jerusalem consists of both believers and non-believers. These chariots of Nahum chapter two have another gospel. Why? Because they are seen in the streets of God's city, His earthly representation, the congregations. When one symbolically occupies the streets, he is in actuality passing through the Church of God and/or the Church of Christ. That is the spiritual city of Jerusalem, which is represented here on earth, or it can also portray the New and heavenly Jerusalem, which is to come.

These chariots jostle one against another in the broad ways, Nahum 2:4. Automobile accidents? Never. These chariots jostle each other, meaning that they are seeking their own greedy will. They run to and fro with the appetite of greed. That is what jostle means in the Hebrew text. This portrays the apostasy of the churches perfectly in today's world. They jostle one another in the broad ways. This can only be so, since they are depicted as unsaved. They are seen in the broad way - why? Because Jesus said:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Nahum 2:4 also says that these chariots **seem** like torches. In other words they appear to be crusading for the Gospel of Christ, who is the true light of the world. The word "torches" means shine; lamp, light, etc. As we see, these chariots are impostors masquerading as true believers, and many are deceived into thinking that they are indeed true believers in Christ, but their fruits prove otherwise.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:22-23)

The chariots of Nahum chapter two are these workers of iniquity. What is the end result of these non-believing chariots? Nahum 2:13 reads:

"Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her **chariots** in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard."

We have briefly seen both sides of biblical chariots. They are seen in the spiritual city of Jerusalem for the purpose of worshiping God the Father through His son Christ Jesus. On the other side, false believers are also seen in spiritual Jerusalem (the corporate church), but are not of the sheep fold of Christ. **God's true chariots are a part of God's spiritual merchandise that is no longer found in Mystery Babylon, the corporate church.** These chariots are again depicting the true gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. God has taken away His truth from the corporate church and has allowed Satan to foster an imposter and counterfeit gospel as we near Judgment Day. No longer will God's true chariots be found in this woman.

SLAVES

The merchants of the earth - those who have spiritually traded in the true gospel - are weeping and mourning over the church. She has no real merchandise in which to offer the unsaved. No wonder Christ said of this time: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world ...," Matthew 24:21. God is judging His own "corporate" church for their unfaithfulness. His elect are told to flee from her. As we approach the end of this long list of merchandise (all of which is spiritual), we come across slaves as belonging to this merchandise as well, Revelation 18:13. The word **slave** "so'mah" is translated over one hundred and forty times in the New Testament as "bodies, body, or bodily." It is translated only once as "slaves," and of course that is here in Revelation chapter eighteen of the King James Bible. More accurately it too is translated as "bodies" in most Greek texts. Man in his mortal state, having been made a new creature in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17), nonetheless is still imprisoned in his corruptible and degenerate body. There is a time coming when true Christians shall shed these imperfect bodies (I Corinthians 15:51-55), but until that time our bodies are still a part of Christ's Church.

SOULS OF MEN

The Greek rendering of the word soul can be shown to refer to both the eternal soul and spirit and the mortal body as well.

"He that loveth his **life** [same as soul] shall lose it; and he that hateth his **life** in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (John 12:25)

Along with the Christian's temporary but mortal body, we have received a resurrected soul.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and **soul** and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thessalonians 5:23)

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the **soul**: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both **soul** and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28)

Revelation 18:13 concludes the list of merchandise with slaves (bodies) and souls of men. Perhaps God is stating that the believer's literal and physical body (slaves) is preserved as merchandise along with the gold, the silver, the fine linen, and all of the spiritual merchandise belonging to the true Church. The believer's physical body goes back to the dust of the earth in death, yes, but Christ will resurrect that body into a glorious heavenly body. Until that time, the bodies of the elect of God are anticipating this glorious time. Our bodies are indeed a part of Christ and of His Church awaiting the resurrection.

The eternal soul of the believer is found within the heavenly Jerusalem. All souls belong to God. "Behold, all **souls** are mine ..." God says in Ezekiel 18:4. He also states in this verse "...but, the **soul** that sinneth, it shall die." So then, the "souls" seen as merchandise must be the eternal souls of all of God's elect that are differentiated from the souls that sinneth and die. Therefore, they are an eternal part of Christ's body. Thus, they too are spiritual merchandise that are no longer to be found in the global, but corrupt church of Mystery Babylon. It is the great tribulation and God is pouring out His spiritual judgment upon first the unsaved church at the end of the age, to be followed immediately by God's physical wrath, the destruction of the heavens and the earth.

FOOTNOTES:

47* "reh'-keb" #7393 Strong's Hebrew. from #7392; a vehicle; by impl. a team; by exten. cavalry; by analogy a rider, i.e. the upper millstone: -chariot, (upper millstone, multitude, wagon. #7392 "raw-kab"; a prim. root; to ride (on an animal or in a vehicle); cause to place upon (for riding or gen.). to despatch; - bring (on [horse] back) , carry, get [oneself] up, on [horse-] back, put, (cause to, make to) ride (in a chariot, on.), set.

48* "mer-kaw-baw" #4818 Strong's Hebrew. Fem. of #4817; a chariot. #4817 "mer-kawb"; a chariot; also a seat (in a vehicle): - chariot, covering, saddle.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Her Merchants are Weeping; Tyrus' Mariners are Wailing

"And the merchants of the earth shall **weep** and **mourn** over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more." (Revelation 18:11)

"The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, **weeping** and **wailing**," (Revelation 18:15)

"For in one hour so great riches is come to nought [nought: same word as desolation; cf. abomination of desolation]. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off."

"And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like this great city!"

"And they **cast dust on their heads**, and cried, **weeping** and **wailing**, saying, Alas, Alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costiness!..." (Revelation 18:17-19)

It is essential to understand that the fall of this great woman has resulted in much weeping and wailing from the merchants of the earth only. The world is not in view as lamenting over her fall, as many are teaching today. The true merchants of the earth - those who spiritually deal in God's merchandise - are lamenting because there is little truth left in the corporate church. This cutting off of the true gospel can only effect the true believers worldwide, while the unsaved within and outside of the church have no idea what is happening. All is well with them, they assume, and the church seems to be flourishing as never before. However, **BE WARNED** - it is not the true Gospel of Christ that is thriving. Only true believers can see this spiritual truth, while there is no possibility that a non-believer could understand what is occurring. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," I Corinthians 2:14.

It is only the true merchants of the earth whose eyes spiritually see that God is using Satan to judge His corporate church. These merchants are given many names or titles in scripture. In Revelation chapter eighteen the merchants are also seen as "... every **shipmaster**, and all the company of **ships**, and **sailors**, and as many as trade by sea ...," Revelation 18:17. These stand afar off and cry when they see the destruction of this woman - this great city.

Believers are told to flee from Judea when they see the abomination of desolation taking place (Matthew 24:15). Again, only believers will be allowed to spiritually discern this time. We are to flee from her, i.e. spiritual Judah, which is another term for God's New Testament spiritual Israel - the congregations worldwide. "... come out of her [the apostate church/Mystery Babylon/spiritual Judah] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," (Revelation 18:4). No wonder we are seen in Revelation 18:17 as standing afar off! But how do we know that these ships, sailors, and shipmasters are figures of believers? Because it is they who are casting dust upon their heads, weeping and wailing, as we read in verse nineteen. The spiritual merchants of the Gospel of Christ are depicted in allegorical language, as is much of everything else in the Book of Revelation. The lamenting of the sailors and shipmasters is great. Let us examine cross references to the words "sailors" and "shipmasters" that we may see their spiritual identity. Every **shipmaster**, and all the company of **ships**, and **sailors** stood afar off (v. 17),

and cried (v. 18), and cast dust on their heads, weeping and wailing (v. 19). When we examine the word **49**"shipmaster" (koo-ber-nay'-tace), we discover that it means to steer or pilot, and can be used figuratively as directorship or government - in the church! Remarkably, this is precisely what is in view by the symbolical "shipmen" of Revelation chapter eighteen.

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, **governments** [koo-ber-nay'-tace: "shipmaster"], diversities of tongues." (I Corinthians 12:28)

"Nevertheless the centurion believed the **master** [koo-ber-nay'-tace: "shipmaster"], and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul." (Acts 27:11)

When we examine the word **50**"sailors" as used also in Revelation chapter eighteen, we find its definition to mean "boatman, a seaman, sailor, or mariner." It is used in verses twenty-seven and thirty of Acts chapter twenty-seven:

"But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the **shipmen** [now'-tace: sailors, mariners, seamen, boatmen] deemed that they drew near to some country;" (Acts 27:27)

"And as the **shipmen** [now'-tace: sailors, mariners, seamen, boatmen] were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship," (Acts 27:30)

The above two verses are strongly paralleling the great tribulation when the church (symbolically pictured in scripture as a ship) runs aground. The Apostle Paul states in verse thirty-one that "... except these **abide in the ship**, ye cannot be saved." Great spiritual truth is drawn from this one verse alone. Except ye abide in the one true Church where Christ is the head, ye cannot be saved! Ships are indeed associated with the true gospel in many places throughout scripture, and not merely in Revelation chapter eighteen.

When we go to Lamentations chapter two we read of the lamenting of the elders of the daughter of Zion and also of the virgins of Jerusalem. These again are other depictions of true believers:

"The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have **cast dust upon their heads**; they have girded themselves with **sackcloth**: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground."

"Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the **city**."

"They say to their mothers, Where is **corn** and **wine** [the Gospel]? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom." (Lamentations 2:10-12)

When we examine the word **mariners** in the Old Testament we find that almost all of these references are found in Ezekiel chapter twenty-seven. This chapter is the Revelation eighteen of the Old Testament. It deals with a city of merchants; a city that trades with the world; a city that has finally fallen. This city is symbolically portrayed by the ancient city of Tyrus. The parallels of this chapter to Revelation chapter eighteen are staggering. Tyrus has arrogantly declared: "I of perfect beauty," Ezekiel 27:4. The harlot church of Revelation eighteen has declared the same thing: "... I sit a queen, and am no widow ..." Rev. 18:7. Tyrus was adorned in fine linen, blue and purple (Ezekiel 27:7). The wise men of Tyrus were her pilots (shipmen in Hebrew, v. 8). She traded in vessels of brass (v. 13), and with horsemen and horses and mules (v. 14). Tyrus also traded in wheat, oil, honey, balm (v. 17), and ivory (v. 15), and

wine and white wool (v. 18). Tyrus traded for iron, cassia, calamus (v. 19), and precious clothes for chariots (v. 20). Verse twenty-one tells us that she traded in lambs and rams and goats, along with spices, and gold, and all precious stones (vs. 21-22). Tyrus was rich in blue clothes, brodered work, and rich apparel bound with cords (signifying the tabernacle in the wilderness). Cedar was among her (v. 24). All of her merchandise indeed was real and physical. However, the ultimately teaching of these parabolic passages is spiritual in nature, figuratively picturing the gospel of salvation through Christ.

"The **ships** of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy **market**: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas." (Ezekiel 27:25)

This great spiritual city once heard the voices of believers singing praises to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the congregations - i.e. "thy market." The word "market" in this Hebrew text denotes - among other things - to undertake, to engage, or to occupy. In Luke 19:13 Christ states "...occupy till I come ..." "Occupy" is translated as **trade** in the following: Greek/Hebrew Interlinear Bible (Hendrickson); The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament (Berry); The Zondervan Parallel New Testament in Greek and English. Unfortunately, the King James translation should have been a more precise rendering. The Revised Standard also translates "occupy" as "trade." The New King James translates it as "do business till I come." This is actually more accurate than "occupy," however the business that Christ would have us conduct is to "... be about my Father's **business**," Luke 2:49. This "business" is the spiritual task of proclaiming the good news of salvation through Christ Jesus.

And so Tyrus was said to be very glorious in the earth, which denotes possessing glory and honour. She was glorious as the bride of Christ. Finally, she falls (cf. Babylon is fallen, is fallen) into spiritual decay, (Ezekiel 27:27). This seems to be yet another entire chapter depicting the fall of the corporate church and the abomination of desolation at the end of time. Her mariners (merchants) are bitterly crying and casting dust upon their heads. They are girding themselves with sackcloth, while weeping and wailing (vs. 30-31). Why are they crying? Because no one buys her merchandise anymore! The spiritual merchandise of salvation through Jesus Christ is no longer being preached. Everything in this chapter confirms and identifies with Revelation chapter eighteen. Tyrus enriched the kings of the earth with her merchandise of the Gospel.

"...thou didst **enrich** the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise." (Ezekiel 27:33)

Cross reference: "...and the merchants of the earth are **waxed rich** through the abundance of her delicacies." (Revelation 18:3)

Cross reference: "The merchants of these things, which were made **rich** by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, **weeping and wailing**." (Revelation 18:15)

When we read of mariners in Ezekiel chapter twenty-seven we find that two different Hebrew words are used. In verse eight mariners is also defined as "rowers." This is translated in Strong's Hebrew as "to push forth (figuratively) to lash, i.e. (the sea with oars) to row; by implication, to travel." "Mariners" has absolutely **everything** to do with searching for the true Gospel of Christ. Scripture teaches that Christ is the true manna which came down from heaven. As the children of Israel wondered in the wilderness, God rained down upon them literal food called manna, which was a picture or symbol of Christ, our spiritual food from heaven. In Exodus 11:8 we read of the people seeking and gathering this manna:

"And the people **went about** [same Hebrew word as "mariner"] and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil." (Exodus 11:8)

"Went about" is the same Hebrew word used for "mariners." What is the mission of the mariners and their ships of scripture? To travel to and fro with the gospel. The children of Israel daily "went about" (mariner) gathering the manna which spiritually typified traveling to and fro for the Gospel.

In II Samuel 24:2 God commands David to go through all the tribes of Israel and number them. The words "go through" **also** come from the Hebrew word translated as "**MARINER**." Could this signify running back and forth or to and fro? II Chronicles 16:9 begins with "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth ..." Yes, "run" and "fro" are **again** the Hebrew word for "**mariner**." We find the phrase "to and fro" mainly in reference to God, however in Job it is God who allows Satan to roam the earth to and fro. This phrase means to travel back and forth. In Jeremiah 5:1 we read the following:

"Run [mariners] ye to and fro [mariners] through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it."

This chapter ultimately speaks of the spiritual harlotry of the church at the end of time. However, the great commission is to take the gospel into all nations. That is precisely what the mariners of Ezekiel chapter twenty-seven are doing. They traded with all nations; they traveled to and fro (as spiritual mariners) with their spiritual merchandise. When the merchants traded fine linen, they presented the gospel, spiritually speaking. When they took the wine and the bread into other nations, they took the blood of Christ to the unsaved. Tyrus commissioned mariners to take her precious wood and precious stones to the heathen nations as well as to the civilized nations. She presented scarlet and thiyne wood abroad for the souls of men. She offered rams, lambs, and goats, which pictured God's perfect sacrifice - His only Begotten Son - that many would spiritually trade with her. The mariners of Tyrus traveled to and fro that many would buy this truth and sell it not (Proverbs 23:23).

As God begins to judge His corporate church for its unfaithfulness, we expect to see much of the true Gospel silenced. Amos 8:12 says:

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall **run** [mariners] to and fro [mariners] to **seek** the word of the LORD, and shall not find it."

Notice that the above verse says they wander from sea to sea seeking God's Word. Does scripture not teach that it is the mariners who travel in the seas? Are they not merchandising in God's Word? When we say merchandising in God's Word, we do not mean that they are physically merchandising or making money by marketing God's Word. No, the merchandising that scripture focuses on is the taking of the Gospel of Christ to the unsaved world.

FOOTNOTES:

49* "koo-ber-nay'-tace" [kubernetes] #2942 Strong's Greek. Helmsman, i.e. (by implication) captain. From #2941 "koo-ber'-nay-sis" [kubernaos] of Latin origin, to steer; pilotage, etc. (figuratively directorship (in the church). "The pilot or steersman of a ship," or, metaphorically, "a guide or government."

50* "nautes" [now'-tace] #3492 Strong's Greek. From #3491; a boatman, i.e. seaman: - sailor, shipman.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Praise No Longer Heard: Tyrus Too

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be **heard no more** at all in thee ..." (Revelation 18:22)

"And I will cause the noise of thy songs to **cease**; and the sound of thy harps shall be heard no more." (Ezekiel 26:13) [In reference to Tyrus]

As stated in our last chapter, Ezekiel chapter twenty-seven is very similar to Revelation chapter eighteen. This would include Ezekiel chapter twenty-six and a portion of chapter twenty-eight as well. Much of what is taught pertaining to Mystery Babylon is also taught concerning Tyrus. These sections of scripture seem to be describing the same dreadful event at the end of time. While it is true that they had partial fulfillments in Old Testament history, nonetheless they seem to be ultimately focusing in on the Church of Christ as God brings judgment upon it's corporate and outward body. When Revelation chapter eighteen states that the voice of harpers shall be heard no more at all in thee, we see in the Greek that the word "voice" is also translated as noise or sound. The harpers will be heard no more at all in this religious harlot. But don't we see a vast number of churches today singing and praising God with many instruments and huge choirs? True, but we must realize that music of praise brought forth from a congregation that is no longer faithful to God's Word will not be praiseworthy to God. Therefore, the sound or voice of harpers shall be heard **no more** at all in thee.

We also read in Revelation 18:23 that the voice of the bride and the voice of the bridegroom shall be heard **no more at all** in this harlot. The bride being Christ's elect and the bridegroom being Christ Himself. We need to fully understand that the Word of God which is the "voice of the bridegroom" is not being faithfully declared any longer from most congregations. Therefore, it has become another gospel in most cases. When God declares that the voice of the bride and the voice of the bridegroom is no longer heard, it is because God has taken the truth of His Word from these unfaithful congregations.

The word "harper" simply means one who plays the harp. Whenever scripture mentions the playing of a harp, we can rest assured that this music is - in most instances - played for the worshiping of the God of creation. In other words scripture does not speak of the playing of the harp in any worldly sense, or for one's own glory. Therefore, we know beyond any doubt that the harpers which are no longer heard in Tyrus and/or Mystery Babylon are depicting the harpers of the true Church which, in most cases, are no longer found in the unfaithful congregations. They are the true worshipers of God. They have fled because Satan has taken his seat in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God, II Thessalonians 2:4. All that remain, for the most part, are harpers harping to the music of defiled gospels. Isaiah 24:8 confirms this: "The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the **harp ceaseth**." Isaiah chapter twenty-four goes on to say that there is crying for wine in the streets. There is no gospel to be found. The city is left in desolation (cf. the abomination of desolation), and the gate is smitten with destruction, Isaiah 24:11,12.

The true meaning of harp playing in scripture is for the worshiping of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

"And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on **harps**, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals." (2 Samuel 6:5)

"Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and **harps**." (2 Chronicles 15:28)

"Praise the LORD with **harp**: sing unto him with psaltery and on instrument of ten strings." (Psalm 33:2)

"I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the **harp**, O thou Holy One of Israel." (Psalm 71:22)

"Sing unto the LORD with the **harp**; and the voice of a psalm," (Psalm 98:5)

"Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God," (Psalm 147:7)

"Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and **harp**," (Psalm 150:3)

We also read in Revelation 18:22 that the voice of the musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters shall be heard no more in thee. "Musicians" is defined as minstrels: the playing of musical instruments in praise to the Lord; or to sing to the harp. A "piper" is defined in the Greek as a flute player. Naturally, it is this true musical praise that, along with the spiritual merchandise, is no longer to be found in this great city.

How must we interpret the remainder of verse twenty-two? "... and no **craftsman**, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more in thee ..." At first glance it would appear that God is speaking of the craftsmen of the world. This, however, will not harmonize with the rest of the chapter. The word **51**"craftsman" in the Greek denotes an artisan, or figuratively symbolizes a founder or the Creator. It is translated also as "**builder**," specifically a trade or skill. We see this word used in Acts 19:24,38 which signifies a worldly trade in the historical setting:

"For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the **craftsmen** [tekh-nee'-tace]," (Acts 19:24).

"Wherefore if Demetrius, and the **craftsmen** [tekh'-nee'-tace] which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another," (Acts 19:38)

In addition to its usage in signifying a trade, we find it's usage in Hebrews 11:10 to mean something much more than a mortal craftsman:

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose **BUILDER** [tekh-nee'-tace: craftsman] and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10)

As "builder" or "craftsman" are no doubt in reference to the Creator, this verse also designates God as "maker." In the Greek the word "maker" means a worker for the people, i.e. mechanic (spoken of the Creator). We do not have to limit ourselves to literal or worldly interpretations simply because a certain Greek or Hebrew word will be used in

many literal ways. Let us not forget that Christ speaks in parables, and a parable will always leave a heavenly and spiritual meaning to be interpreted.

In Revelation 18:22 we find that the pipers, harpers, trumpeters, and musicians are symbolizing the worship of the one true God through music. The word "craftsman" and "builder" (same Greek word) carries a highly spiritual and symbolical connotation to God Himself, and to all of His elect who are partaking of the body (Temple) of Christ. In verse twenty-two we see that all of the craftsmen "of whatsoever craft he be" are found no more in thee (Mystery Babylon). Could these "craftsmen" be a reference to the spiritual builders, makers, or craftsmen of the New Testament Temple? We know that Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone of His Church, the Temple, and all true believers are spiritual stones and builders of this Temple.

"Ye also, as lively stones, are **built** up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Peter 3:5)

In 1 Corinthians 3:10-14 we read:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise **masterbuilder**, I have laid the foundation, and another **buildeth** thereon. But let every man take heed how he **buildeth** thereupon.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

"Now if any man **build** upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;"

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." (I Corinthians 3:10-14)

From the above verses we see that all believers in Christ are to be spiritual builders of the Temple of God. We are to build upon Jesus Christ, who is our only foundation. The above usages of the word "build" and "buildeth" carries the strict meaning of building thereupon, as does the following references:

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

"And are **built upon** the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"

"In whom all the **building** fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:"

"In whom ye also are **builted** together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22)

All true believers make up a portion of Christ's house, Hebrews 3:6. Jesus Christ is our Apostle and High Priest, Hebrews 3:2, and it was He who built our spiritual house, Hebrews 3:4. We are to continue to build upon Christ's foundation; that is we are to continue to build upon the Word of God and the works of Christ as spiritual sacrifices to God, our heavenly Father.

Going back to Revelation 18:22 we now should have a clearer picture of what is meant when we read that no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in this harlot woman of the wilderness. Those who are spiritually building a spiritual house, and whose foundation was laid by Christ Jesus, are exercising their spiritual **craft** by building upon the foundation of Christ. This is the true born-again Christian. They have left the corporate church and have fled to Christ!

FOOTNOTES:

51* "tekh-nee'tace" #5079 Strong's Greek From #5078; an artisan; fig. A founder (Creator): - builder, craftsman

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Her Plagues: One Day Her Desolation: One Hour

Therefore shall her plagues come in **one day**, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." (Revelation 18:8)

Scripture assures us that before Christ will return, there will come a falling away first, and then that man of sin (Satan) will be revealed, II Thessalonians 2:3. This falling away is strictly in reference to the apostasy in the corporate church worldwide. It is the falling away from the truth of God that is in view in II Thessalonians. This is the time wherein Satan is to be loosed from his spiritual prison, from which he was bound at the cross (cf. "loosed," Rev. 20:3,7; "wound by the sword," Rev. 13:3,5,12). Satan is to be allowed to deceive the nations by hindering the work of the Gospel of Christ, because his deadly spiritual wound was healed (cf. "his deadly wound was healed," Rev. 13:3; "and did live," Rev. 13:14); until his time is finished, (cf. Rev. 20:8-10). This then is the time appointed by God as spiritual judgment upon the worldwide corporate church of Jesus Christ. This judgment is a short duration of time, probably twenty-three hundred literal evenings and mornings (see Daniel chapter eight), represented by the symbolical numerical and spiritual figures of "**three days and a half**," (Rev. 11:8); "**forty and two months**," (Rev. 13:5); "**little season**," (Rev. 6:11, 20:3); "**the hour, and the day, and the month, and the year**," (Note - "the" hour, etc. **not** "an" hour, etc. in the Greek), (Rev. 9:15); "**hour**," (Rev. 4:7, 17:12, 18:10,17,19); "**half an hour**," (Rev. 8:1); and "**day**," (Rev. 18:8). These are all figures of the duration of the great tribulation, in which Satan will be allowed to desecrate the Temple of God immediately after the great "falling away."

Why do many interpret this time as encompassing a literal day of twenty-four hours, as we read in Revelation 18:8, when all other time factors with reference to the great tribulation are viewed as figurative?

When we read in verse eight that her plagues shall come in **one day**, we must understand that the Greek rendering of "one" is used in different ways. It is used in the plural in Revelation 2:10 "... and ye shall have tribulation **ten days**." The word "days" being "hay-mer'-ah" in the Greek, which is the same as "days" in Revelation 18:8. The ten days surely must be figurative for the completeness of one's persecution, as applied in this particular verse. Many times in scripture the term "one day" will mean precisely one literal day, and yet its spiritual fulfillment will have a time era in view. Likewise, when Revelation 18:8 speaks of this woman's plagues coming in one day, we know this must be figurative of a time span, since her plagues are clearly spiritual in nature. Therefore, her plagues must complete the duration of time appointed by God in which to fulfill the great "falling away" and the "twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings" of Daniel chapter eight.

Is it inconsistent with scripture to assign a literal period of time to the twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings and yet assign a spiritual equivalent to the other numerical renderings? Maybe not, since Daniel chapter eight seems to differentiate between the spiritual and the literal by embedding "morning" and "evening" in which to emphasize a twenty-four hour period.

When we consider the Greek word (hay-mer'-ah) used for **52***"day" in Revelation 18:8 (her plagues shall come in one day), we find its definition to include not only a day, but age, years, while, for ever, and judgment as well. It's emphasis is on a similar Greek word "ho'-rah," used also as day but defined additionally as hour, instant, season, and time. By examining the word "day" throughout the New Testament, we find many references suggesting a literal day,

and yet some will require a fulfillment of a time span. For example, Christ spoke of the Gospel Age as a "day" in John 9:56:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my **day** [hay-mer'-ah]: and he saw it, and was glad."

Could this be speaking of a literal twenty-four hour day? Not at all. It speaks of Abraham's spiritual insight (given by God) to foresee and envision a Gospel Age. Abraham through faith looked for that spiritual city whose builder and maker is God, Hebrews 11:10. Abraham looked for that marvelous **day** of which Christ confirmed to the Jews by stating that Abraham rejoiced to see "my day." Abraham rejoiced to see the Messianic Age!

This Gospel period or Messianic Age is again spoken of by Christ in John 9:41 as "day":

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is **day** [hay-mer'-ah], the night cometh, when no man can work."

And again in the following verses we find the Gospel Age mentioned in reference to a day:

"The night is far spent, the **day** [hay-mer'-ah] is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." (Romans 13:12)

Do we suppose that Paul is speaking of one literal day in which we are to cast off all the works of darkness and put on the armour of light? Of course it must be a symbolical figure of the Church-Age. The following verses confirm Romans 13:12:

"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the **day** [hay-mer'-ah] of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; now is the **day** [hay-mer'-ah] of salvation.)" (II Corinthians 6:2)

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the **day** [hay-mer'-ah]; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (I Thessalonians 5:5)

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil **day** [hay-mer'-ah], and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:13)

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the **day** [hay-mer'-ah] time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;" (II Peter 3:13)

[Again, there appears to be a time span depicted by the phrase "day time." To riot in the **day** time is viewed in this verse as being done by the ungodly among the church, e.g. "while they feast with you." To riot in the day time is tantamount to being an unbeliever in the Church-Age, i.e. day time.]

We find the usage of the word "day" translated a "**while**" in Acts 18:18:

"And Paul after this tarried there yet a good **while** [hay-mer'-ah: same as "day"], and then took his leave of the brethren ... "

Again in Acts 15:7:

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know that a good **while** [hay-mer'-ah: same as "day"] ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."

We also find the word "**day**" used as "**time**" in the following verses:

"And it came to pass, when the **time** [hay-mer'-ah: day, while, judgment, for ever] was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." (Luke 9:51)

"And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at the **time** [hay-mer'-ah]." (Luke 23:7)

The word "days" can also be translated as "**years**" from the same Greek word:

"And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in **years** [hay-mer'-ah: same as days, etc.]." (Luke 1:7)

"And Zacharias said unto the angel, whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in **years** [hay-mer'-ha: same as "days"]." (Luke 1:18)

We see also that this word can be translated as "**judgment**" in the following verse:

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's **judgment** [hay-mer'-ah: same as "day"]: yea, I judge not mine own self." (I Corinthians 4:3)

Finally, we see that "day" is translated as "**ever**" in 2 Peter 3:18:

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for **ever** [hay-mer'-ah], Amen."

The Greek word "hay-mer'-ah" is translated three hundred and fifty-five times in the New Testament as "day." However, as we have seen only a portion of this evidence, we know that not all of the New Testament verses can possibly be speaking of a literal twenty-four hour day, even though the majority of them do in their historical settings. The spiritual plagues that God brings upon the corporate church during the great tribulation must cover a short span of time represented throughout scripture by symbolical references. Time is needed for these plagues to silence the gospel, although the corporate church will have already been ripe for this apostate condition to culminate. Not to begin, but to culminate, because her sins (the Great Falling Away) will have made her ripe for God's judgment. Even as this earth begins to go into convulsions as God commences to destroy it, nonetheless it will last longer than one literal hour. Not that God can't destroy the earth in one hour - He surely can - but we read verses in scripture that indicate the passage of days being required immediately after the great tribulation before the earth is totally destroyed.

As we have seen, the term "one day" is a symbolical or figurative phrase that does not and can not require a literal interpretation. Likewise, when we read in Revelation 18:10,17, & 19 that her judgment will come in **one hour** we must also carefully harmonize this with scripture. Verse seventeen says of this harlot:

"For in one **hour** so great riches is come to nought..."

The word "nought" is the **same** Greek word as "desolation" in verse nineteen: "... for in **one hour** is she made **desolate**." Not surprisingly these two words "nought and desolate" come from the same Greek word "desolation" in the gospels when Christ spoke of the abomination of desolation. As the symbolical world of Babylon enters into the Temple of God, this Temple is then defiled and made a desolation by this abomination. These plagues do not come in one literal day, nor do they come in one literal hour. God again is using figurative and parabolic language.

When Revelation 8:1 states that the seventh seal was opened, there was silence in heaven about the space of **half an hour**, are we to understand this to encompass thirty earthly minutes in heaven, of which time is non-existent? No, we simply interpret this along with the way the rest of scripture is to be interpreted. The Greek word used in Revelation chapter eighteen being translated as **54**"hour" is ho'rah, and can be defined not only as hour (majority of renderings are translated as "hour"), but can also be translated as day, instant, season, short, eventide, or high time. Let us look at a few of these verses:

"And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the **time** [ho'rah: also hour] is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals." (Matthew 14:15)

"At the same **time** [ho'rah] came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matthew 18:1)

"And when the **day** [ho'rah: same as "hour"] was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the **time** [ho'rah: same as "hour"] is far passed."

"He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a **season** [ho'rah; same as "hour" Rev. 18] to rejoice in his light." (John 5:35)

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the **time** [ho'rah] cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

"But these things have I told you, that when the **time** [ho'rah] shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them ..." (John 16:4)

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high **time** [ho'rah] to awake out of sleep for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." (Romans 13:11)

"But we, brethren, being taken from you for a **short** [ho'rah] time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire." (I Thessalonians 2:17)

"For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a **season** [ho'rah]." II Corinthians 7:8

"For perhaps he therefore departed for a **season** [ho'rah], that thou shouldest receive him for ever;" (Philemon 1:15)

"Little children, it is the last **time** [ho'rah]: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." (I John 2:18)

We have quoted only a portion of verses that translate the Greek word "ho'rah" as season, time, short time, hightime, and day. This being the very same Greek word that is translated in Revelation chapter eighteen as "**hour**." This Greek word is translated in many places throughout the New Testament as "hour," however we have shown that it too can take on a different meaning, as in a longer span of time, rather than one twenty-four hour period. Indeed, this must be the case in reference to God's spiritual plagues that He pours upon the corporate church at the end of time. It is a short span of time, represented by the term "one hour," however it is a relatively long space of time when compared to one literal hour. On the other hand, it is a relatively short span of time when compared to the complete length of the Church-Age. Perhaps this is why God symbolizes it as one hour? We do know that it is a short season, and God comforts the believers by stating that " ... but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened," Matthew 24:22. It is this symbolic hour in which God brings his corporate church to its end. It is this "hour" in which all things that were dainty and goodly have departed from her. This is the spiritual hour in which so great riches have come to nought or "desolation." The church no longer will sound the trumpet. She no longer will voice the Word of God. The voice of the bride and of the bridegroom shall be heard no more at all in thee. The "light of the candle" will no longer shine in her. The light of the world - Christ Jesus - is no longer preached in the corporate church. The voice of the true worshipers harping, and of the pipers piping, are no longer found in her. The sound of the millstone (the gospel being declared) shall be heard no more in her. The woman's true gospel merchandise is gone, never to be revealed in her again! What great city was like unto this great city? The majority of the elect of God have fled this great spiritual harlot. They have fled to the mountains; i.e. the kingdom of God. "My people" - God's people - have "come out of her, as commanded in scripture. They are now standing "afar off" in a spiritual essence, that they receive not of her plagues and torment. God is the great preserver of His people.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the **HOUR** of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Revelation 3:10)

FOOTNOTES:

52* "hemera" (hay-mer'-ah) #2250 Strong's Greek. Meaning day, age, for ever, judgment, (day) time, while, years.

53* "ho'rah" # 5610 Strong's Greek. An hour (lit. or fig.) : - day, hour, instant, season, short, [even] time, (high) time.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Babylon is 'Become': Habitation of Devils; Hold of Foul Spirits; Cage of Unclean and Hateful Birds

The corporate church of the Great Tribulation will be demon possessed. Some parallels are found in the account of the man in Luke chapter nine and Mark chapter nine.

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is **become the habitation of devils**, and the **hold of every foul spirit**, and a **cage of every unclean and hateful bird**." (Revelation 18:2)

Notice carefully that God is saying "Babylon is **BECOME**" "To become" signifies a change of condition. If Babylon of the Book of Revelation were meant to portray the world as a whole at its destruction, how could it be that at its physical destruction it has become something other than non-existent? How could this world be so thoroughly destroyed as II Peter 3:10 so vividly testifies to: "... and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," and yet the world continue to become a habitation of devils, a hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird? One may argue that this is the condition of the world before its literal destruction at the last day. Revelation 18:2 declares Babylon to have fallen first, and then states that she has become a defilement and such. To spiritually fall would necessitate a "becoming" or "moving" into degradation. Those who say that the fall of Babylon is depicting the destruction of the world at the last day would be hard pressed to explain why she becomes something other than non-existent after her fall.

The spiritual condition of the world in general has not progressed into a fallen state. It was suddenly thrown into a fallen spiritual condition back in the Garden of Eden, at the fall. It is true that the world's spiritual condition has gradually deteriorated over the centuries and has become even more apostate, but again this was the reason why God destroyed the world at the flood. The world has been - since the fall - in a fallen spiritual condition. However, the church of Jesus Christ worldwide has never been declared by God to have fallen. Not until we enter the great tribulation (Matthew 24:21) does scripture teach that the corporate church as a whole will fall into spiritual decay. The corporate church during the great tribulation (Mystery Babylon) will "become" a habitation of devils, and a hold (prison) of every foul (impure; unclean) spirit, and a cage (prison) of every unclean and hateful (detestable) bird. It is no wonder God gives the command to "Come out of her, **my people**," Revelation 18:4.

Please notice in Revelation 18:2 that God states ... Babylon has become the habitation of devils, and the hold of **every** foul spirit and a cage of **every** unclean and hateful bird. We emphasize the word "every" because God is telling us that there is nothing that is dirty, unclean or foul that is left out. She is an adulterous, a spiritual harlot that has opened her doors to all foul spirits (every) and to all (every) uncleanness. In other words the corporate church, as a whole, has fallen into the world and as a result her morals and ethics are no holier or God fearing than those of the unsaved world.

"For among **my people** are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men."

"As a **cage** is full of **birds**, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich," Jeremiah 5:26-27.

God is clearly speaking of Israel in the above two verses, both national Israel and spiritual Israel. God does not have the general world in view in these verses, and yet the language is very similar to Revelation 18:2. Old Testament Israel, which typifies the New Testament church, i.e. the New Testament spiritual Israel, is compared in Jeremiah 5:27 to a cage of deceitful birds which have waxed great and rich. It is in their own eyes they have become great and rich, much the same way as the early Babylonians had their pride lifted up. By reading Jeremiah chapter five carefully one will discover that its theme is firmly established around the abominations of Jerusalem, which also can symbolize the New Testament church. This entire chapter is a dramatic picture of the "falling away" of the church at the end of time and during the great tribulation. Yes, this chapter had its partial fulfillment during the Old Testament era when national Israel (Old Testament church) sinned greatly against God. Is it merely coincidental that God equates the apostate condition of His Old Testament congregations with the same analogy used in describing His end-time corporate church? God likens them to houses full of deceit as a "cage is full of birds". Since Jeremiah chapter five is unquestionably making reference to Old Testament Israel's defilement of spiritual truth, how then do we interpret the nearly identical analogy with regard to the end-time Mystery Babylon? Do we assign it to the world in general? Not at all, if we are to interpret biblically by comparing scripture with scripture.

FOUL SPIRITS

In Mark 9:2 and Revelation 18:2 we see the word foul being used to describe an unclean spirit or spirits. This same Greek word is translated throughout the New Testament as **UNCLEAN**.

"When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the **foul spirit**, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him," (Mark 9:25).

When we search the New Testament we read of a foul spirit (other than Revelation chapter eighteen) in only one other verse, that being the above verse in Mark 9:25. Christ rebukes this spirit and charges it as being a **dumb** and **deaf** spirit.

Dumb: Please note that the Greek rendering of the word dumb has many variations such as meaning the inability to speak; voluntary refusal to speak; to be calm; figurative unmeaning or insignificant; to be deaf and dumb and so on. The word dumb as used in the New Testament is associated with dumb idols (1 Corinthians 12:2); a lamb dumb before his shearer (Acts 8:32); the ass of 2 Peter 2:16; but the majority of verses using the adjective 'dumb' are affiliated strictly with people, however it is indeed associated with **SPIRITS** as well. When Christ spoke of the foul spirit in Mark 9:25 He referred to it as a "dumb and deaf spirit."

There is one other New Testament verse that speaks of a spirit as being "dumb," and that is in Mark 9:17 where we read:

"And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a **dumb** spirit."

Christ refers to the dumb and deaf spirit of (Mark 9:17) as being **FOUL** in Mark 9:25. It is the same incident! Let us remember that God declares Mystery Babylon to be full of foul spirits. Keep this in mind as we further examine the incident and passages in Mark 9:14-29. This occurrence may carry a close relationship and spiritual parallel to the judgment of God and eternal darkness.

Mark 9: 14 - 29

14- And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15- And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

16- And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17- And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a **dumb spirit**;

18- And wheresoever he taketh him, he **teareth** him: and he **foameth**, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

Points to Consider

The beginning of verse 18 states “wheresoever he taketh him.” This word taketh is translated in most Greek interlinears as “**seized**” and also in Strong’s Concordance. It is speaking of the unclean or foul spirit seizing hold of this possessed man wherever he goes. In today’s society of modern medicine and a so-called enlightenment of knowledge there are sure to be those who would state that this man simply had a medical condition. They would suggest perhaps epilepsy as a diagnosis. They will look to their modern studies for a believable explanation. We who believe in the flawless Word of God must realize that this incident, and many others like it, literally and physically occurred in the Old Testament era before Satan was bound and defeated at the Cross of Christ. Satan is no longer able to torment people in that manner. When he is loosed for a short while at the Great Tribulation (which we may well be in at this writing) he may indeed be manifesting himself in this manner.

Returning to verse 18 we see a father bringing his son to Christ because he is demon possessed. Yes, all who are not worshiping the one true God of creation are in actuality possessed by Satan in many subtle and non-subtle ways. This man, however, displayed a strong outward manifestation of being demon possessed.

Verse 18 continues by stating of this demon - “it **teareth** him.” The demon or devil first seizes the man wherever he goes and then “teareth” him. The word “teareth” in the Greek literally means “to throw one to the ground” or “to dash down or dash to the ground.” God may be using this occurrence in depicting the spiritual realities of being under the wrath of God. Scripture indicates that to be thrown to the ground or to be thrown down is tantamount to being under God’s judgment. There are many passages throughout scripture that indicate this. The following verses speak of the judgment of God’s outward representation of His Temple - the corporate church worldwide.

Matthew 24:2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be **thrown down**.

Mark 13:2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be **thrown down**.

Luke 21:6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be **thrown down**.

Rev. 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be **thrown down**, and shall be found no more at all.

Mark 9:18 continues to give us insight in describing the spiritual realities of being under the wrath of God. This verse continues by stating of this man possessed of Satan: "he **foameth**, and **gnasheth** with his teeth."

The above word "foameth" is defined as "to foam at the mouth." Foam is foam whether it be on the mouth or upon the waters or upon the seas. God's true meaning for foam is found in Hosea 10:7 -

"As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the **foam** upon the water."

The Hebrew word that is used as "foam" [Strong's Hebrew; #7110] is also translated over and over again in the Old Testament as **wrath**, meaning God's wrath!

Consider how Jude 1:13 relates unbelievers to foam. In addition to them being clouds without water, trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Jude 1:13 says they also are:

"Raging waves of the sea, **foaming** out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

Remember Hosea 10:7 tells us that foam upon the water is a picture of being cut off from God. And what does all of this have in relation to the demon possessed man of Mark and Luke chapters nine? They do indeed seem to show forth spiritual insights pertaining to God's pictorial or metaphoric portrayal of being under the curse of God. These depictions can be on an individual level or on a broad and corporate level, such as the wrath of Mystery Babylon. The allegorical depictions are the same, whether it is shown for one person or for the entire world. God is no respecter of persons.

Mark 9:18 continues by telling us that this possessed man "**gnasheth** with his teeth." Many are aware of the biblical phrase "gnashing of teeth." It is altogether associated with being under the wrath of God and being assigned to eternal darkness. This phrase is found in the following verses: Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:42; Matthew 13:50; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:30; Luke 13:28.

Psalm 112:10

The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall **gnash with his teeth**, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Mark 9:18 continues - "And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and **pineth** away ... "

The word "pineth" is also translated in the New Testament so dried, ripe, and withered. In the one verse that renders this word as "ripe" it is spoken in the context of being ripe for God's judgment, Revelation 14:15. Pineth is translated most of the time as withered. It has everything to do with being spiritually dead and thus **withered** [pineth] and **ripe** [pineth] for God's judgment. Some examples are as follows:

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is **withered** [pineth]; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Matthew 21:19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree **withered** [pineth] away.

Mark 11:20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree **dried** [pineth] up from the roots.

Luke 8:6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it **withered** [pineth] away, because it lacked moisture.

God likens unbelievers to trees that are dried and **withered**. Christ tells us to let our light so shine before men. Apart from the Word of God we have no light. The light that God speaks of is of course the light of the candle (the Word of God) that we are to proclaim to this world.

Matthew 5:14-16 Ye are the **light** of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. [15] Neither do men light a **candle**, and put it under a bushel, but on a **andlestick**; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. [16] Let your **light** so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The corporate church as Mystery Babylon has **withered** away; become spiritually **dried** and **ripe** for God's judgment. The true light of Christ shines no more at all in her. The true voice of the Bridegroom and His true bride are heard no more in her. The purity of God's spoken Word can be found nowhere in the corporate church in these tribulation days. As with the possessed man, Satan had him to the point of withering away. The corporate church has withered away in it's own lust and pride. Unlike the possessed man of Mark chapter nine, Christ spiritually healed him; Mystery Babylon cannot be healed.

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee ... " (Revelation 18:3)

Returning to Mark Chapter Nine

19- He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20- And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and **wallowed foaming**.

Points to Consider

Here in verse 20 we find a very interesting statement. Satan causes this possessed man to fall to the ground while foaming (presumably at the mouth) and **wallowing**. In the Greek we find that the word "wallowing" comes from "koo-lee-o'-o" [Strong's Greek #2947]. This word is derived from # 2949 "kuma" which is rendered in the English as **waves**. Very interesting!

God teaches in many places throughout Scripture that waves are symbolic language representing the works of Satan.

Jude 1:13 Raging **waves** of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

Acts 27:41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the **waves**.

Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the **troubled sea**, when it **cannot rest**, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

An incident recorded in the gospels tells of a time when Christ was on a ship with His disciples. A great storm arose, insomuch that the ship was covered with the **waves** (Matthew 8:24). The disciples thought that they would surely die (Matthew 8:25). Jesus then awoke and rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm (Matthew 8:26). This occurred exactly as scripture describes it to us. It is also an historic parable meant to display God's power over Satan. God uses a poetic type of language throughout His Word; one of parables, metaphors, allegories, portraits and the like. Scripture many times uses the word 'waves' in describing the forces of Satan as it attacks the Word of God. These waves can and are in the form of nice law abiding men and women, grandmothers and grandfathers, children and grandchildren, great men and poor of the world, good people and the law breakers - all and everyone who denounces the Creator's Gospel of salvation. These who have their own belief of a salvation apart from Christ are in actuality pictured throughout scripture as the waves in the sea. These waves have always been with us since man's fall in the Garden, however as we press on toward the end of this world and the second coming of Christ these waves will increase in intensity

and strength. As the ship (God portrays His church as a ship) sails on toward the end of the age it will endure the spiritual winter ('winter' in Scripture means storm, foul weather, or tempest) of history (Great Tribulation) in which the waves will come up against the church and only the true believers will be able to withstand the storm. The multitudes of unbelievers within the church will be swallowed up by the waves of Satan's attacks. These attacks are in no way blatant or obvious Satanic attacks against Christ and His Gospel. No, they are cunningly and cleverly disguised false doctrines designed to lead astray those who believe they are following a traditional Christian doctrine. Why will they be deceived? One reason is that they refuse to study the Word of God and would rather accept anything and everything their pastor tells them. God's true elect will search out the scriptures in order to find truth.

Jeremiah 51:42 The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the **waves** thereof.

The city of Babylon during Old Testament days was never covered by the waves of the sea. When we consider this verse by comparing scripture with scripture we can see the spiritual ramifications. The Bible has much to say about the spiritual condition of the world near the end of this present age and the second coming of Christ. Scripture teaches that the main battles will be solely spiritual and they will not be fought in the streets and cities of the world but rather they will be fought within the churches of Jesus Christ worldwide. Once Satan has taken his seat in the temple of God - the church - (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) he will begin to wear out the saints of the most high (Daniel 7:25) until Christ Himself - God Incarnate - returns. Thus the many false gospels and false doctrines will increase as **spiritual waves** upon the worldwide corporate church, transcending her into her just reward as Mystery Babylon ... Mother of Harlots (Revelation 17:5).

Returning to Mark Chapter Nine

21- And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22- And oftentimes it hath **cast him into the fire**, and **into the waters**, to **destroy him**: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

Points to Consider

We wonder why Satan would harass this individual by seizing him; throwing him to the ground, causing him to foam at the mouth and gnash his teeth until he withers away or physically faints. The above verse 22 tells us that Satan often times casts him into **fire** and into **water** because he wishes to destroy this man. That is the overall purpose of Satan; to destroy. Not physically but to destroy spiritually.

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to **destroy**: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Psalms 119:95 The wicked have waited for me to **destroy** me: but I will consider thy testimonies.

Daniel 8:24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall **destroy** wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall **destroy** the mighty and the holy people.

Daniel 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall **destroy** the city and the sanctuary [the Abomination of Desolation]; and the end thereof shall be with a flood [waves; spiritual winter; Great Tribulation], and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Satan possesses this man and casts him into the fire at will. Why do we suppose God is telling us about this seemingly isolated event? First and foremost might be that this man is overcome by a foul spirit. The corporate church at its end will be overtaken by foul spirits. True believers will be forced to flee out of her in obedience to God's Word. The meaning of being overtaken by a foul spirit can easily and simply be that you have believed in a Christ oriented gospel that seemingly exalts Jesus Christ but in reality does not follow the true Christian doctrines of scripture. Perhaps it cunningly exalts man's "decision" to accept Christ when God's Word tells us that we have nothing to do with our own salvation - it is Christ who draws us to Him. We make no decision to accept Him until He first draws us to Him. There are many man glorifying doctrines that appear to be Christian in nature. Beware! The waves of Satan's attacks within the organized churches worldwide are as sly and deceitful as one could imagine. If it were possible even the elect would be deceived, scripture tells us. It is the winter of our sojourn and we must flee from these harlots to the mountains of our God.

Thus Satan continues to buffet this possessed man by throwing him into the **fire**. Whether one man or the entire world of unbelievers; all will metaphorically be cast into the fire at Judgment Day. God's Word is the SAME yesterday, today and forever. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever," (Hebrews 13:8). I am not giving you some outdated superstitious myth, there is a Judgment Day coming and very soon!

This man of Mark chapter nine might well be an example of the unseen spiritual ramifications of unbelief. By being cast into fire is altogether tied in to God's final judgment, known as the second death; i.e. the real judgment of spiritual death. The second death is the horror of maintaining an eternal conscience of being outside of Christ for evermore. This is what God calls outer darkness and is likened to being cast into the fires of hell. We do see evidence that this possessed man of Mark chapter nine does reflect all of the spiritual ramifications of receiving God's judgment. Yes, Satan is responsible for tormenting him just as Satan is responsible for tormenting and spiritually killing most who have ever lived. Man's original parents brought it all on in the Garden of Eden and that means that all of us are guilty as charged. Only Christ can change that guilt for us. He seemingly changed it for the possessed man in Mark, however there is no repenting for Mystery Babylon.

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and **cast them into the fire**, and they are burned.

We also see in this verse of Mark 9:22 that Satan casts this man into waters as well as into the fire. What would this represent in the spiritual realm of God's Word?

Exodus 15:4 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he **cast into the sea**: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.

Rev. 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and **cast it into the sea**, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be **thrown down**, and shall be found no more at all.

Exodus 15:1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he **thrown into the sea**.

Returning to Mark Chapter Nine

23- Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24- And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

25- When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the **foul spirit**, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26- And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27- But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28- And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29- And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

Christ did indeed cast out this foul spirit from the possessed man in Mark chapter nine. This surely was done to show forth the power of God and to prove that Christ was of the Father. This and many other miracles were done during Christ's ministry to demonstrate the power of Christ. The subject of this miracle was a demon possessed man, but did he become saved once Christ removed the unclean spirit? Scripture does not reveal that information in stark confirmation. However, Mark 9:27 does tell us that afterwards Jesus "lifted him up" and he "arose." To "lift up" and to "arise" are terms that God uses in describing the act of salvation.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be **lifted up**:

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall **lift you up**.

Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and **lift up** your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Psalm 28:9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and **lift them up** for ever.

Ephes. 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and **arise** from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Luke 17:19 And he said unto him, **Arise**, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Perhaps this man was eternally saved, since Christ lifted him up and he arose. This seems to be salvation language altogether. Before this man was saved, he exhibited many physical characteristics that are parallel to and typical of God's use of allegorical terms in describing false doctrines and the workings of Satan.

Just as national Israel as a whole never repented and thus God blinded their eyes to their true Messiah, so likewise God blinds the congregations during the Great Tribulation, and they are left to their own vain imaginations.

Speaking of National Israel:

John 12:40 He hath **blinded** their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

Romans 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were **blinded**

Speaking of the end-time Corporate Church:

Rev. 18:5-7

For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. [6] Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. [7] How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

Rev. 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be **thrown down**, and **shall be found no more at all**.

Habitation of Devils

Rev. 16:14

“For they are the spirits of **devils**, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

The verse we are considering in this chapter is Revelation 18:2

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the **habitation of devils**, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

The great whore Mystery Babylon will/has become a habitation of devils. During the great tribulation we must ask the question, what is their purpose? Of course every believer knows that the purpose of Satan and his fallen angels is to lead mankind away from God and into eternal damnation. As we near the Second Coming of Christ we see additional information concerning their purpose. That is, as we just read in the above verse of Revelation 16:14 - “... **to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.**” The Greek word for “gather” means to lead; to assemble or to gather together. Satan most definitely has the great multitudes of souls gathered for judgment and has had them this way since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. God, on the other hand, has been calling a remnant out of their hell-bound destinations since this time also, however on a much more rigorous pace since the Day of Pentecost and the going forth of the Gospel of Christ. The word “remnant” means what is left or remains. If you think the scales are tipped you are correct but remember that God Almighty is not obligated to save even one person from this fallen human race. It is His grace alone that He has chosen to save a remnant. Also remember that this remnant is extremely large that no man can number it!

“After this I beheld, and, lo, **a great multitude, which no man could number**, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,” (**Revelation 7:9**)

The devils go forth unto the whole earth to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. This is Judgment Day spoken of here and it is indeed a great spiritual battle. It's prelude - The Great Tribulation - is when Satan musters his greatest and final attack for the souls of men. His assault is not on the unbelievers out there in the unsaved world but rather his target is of course the churches and congregations where his real enemies are. How does he gain entrance to these congregations worldwide? Because of man's rebellion, God simply lifts His Spirit from the global churches and allows Satan to enter in for his final and finest assault. This is done in accordance with God's righteous will. The Abomination of Desolation has thus been initiated or “set up” as Scripture shows us in so many places but especially in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. Satan then launches (with ease) his attacks on a world of unsuspecting congregations. Churches that have years since been primed and readied to fall through the **Great Falling Away**, 2 Thessalonians 2:3

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a **falling away first**, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; [4] Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

The congregations of the world have been sliding into irreversible degradation for decades. Slowly God has allowed the forces of darkness to slip in unaware and gradually dilute the pure waters of the Gospel in every area of Christendom. That is he - Satan - who has changed God's holy laws (Daniel 7:25) in the congregations of the world to soften them and prepare them for his final assault in the great tribulation. This softening (for lack of a better word) is in fact what scripture calls the **Great Falling Away** and must precede the Great Tribulation.

Daniel 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to **change times and laws**: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

True believers will have been spiritually killed and as it were - spiritually cast into the streets of that great city, the corporate church worldwide.

Rev. 11:8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the **great city**, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

The great city where our Lord was crucified was Jerusalem. This name means peaceful habitation. Jerusalem is also known as the spiritual city of believers and throughout scripture the assemblies or congregations are referenced as Judea or Jerusalem. At the end of time God refers to Jerusalem as Sodom and Egypt. God is not making reference to the heavenly Jerusalem nor is He making reference to the literal and physical city of Jerusalem over in Israel. God is speaking of the spiritual Christ preaching churches and congregations as ... Jerusalem. She is the same great city as the great city of Mystery Babylon. She is now likened in Revelation chapter eleven to **Sodom** and **Egypt** - a reference to being unsaved and morally and spiritually **unclean**. She is inhabited by teachings and doctrines of devils.

Will you assume that these false teachings are so obvious as to be noticed by confessing Christians who never blow off the dust of their bibles in order to read them? Many of these doctrines will be so deceptive that Scripture declares:

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect**.

These false Christs mentioned in the above verse are indeed the spirits of **devils**, working miracles (as Revelation 16:14 already showed us), ... which go forth unto the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. They have entered into - and most importantly - been **accepted** into the once faithful congregations of the world. They have become 1) Mystery Babylon, that great city and 2) Sodom and Egypt - that great city - where also our Lord was crucified.

Mark 13:14 But when ye shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be **in Judaea flee** to the mountains:

Luke 21:21 Then let them which are in **Judaea flee** to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it **depart out**; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

Matthew 24:15-16 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) [16] Then let them which be in **Judaea flee** into the mountains:

Jeremiah 51:6 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

Rev. 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people**, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD

Finally we read in Revelation 18:2 that this Mystery harlot is a cage of every hateful and unclean bird. We have already assessed the word unclean and of course it has everything to do with non-Christian doctrines. Birds are for the most part unclean animals (fowls) from Old Testament days. In the context of this verse they too surely represent the unclean spirits of Satan.

It is the word hateful that we want to examine here. It's meaning is hatred; to detest (especially to persecute); by extensions to be loveless or hateful, Strong's Greek #3404.

John 3:20 For every one that doeth evil **hateth** [#3404] the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Matthew 10:22 And ye shall be **hated** [#3404] of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Luke 6:22 Blessed are ye, when men shall **hate** [#3404] you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will **hate** [#3404] the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 19:14 But his citizens **hated** [#3404] him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

John 7:7 The world cannot **hate** [#3404] you; but me it **hateth** [#3404], because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

John 15:18-19 If the world **hate** [#3404] you, ye know that it **hated** [#3404] me before it **hated** [#3404] you. [19] If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world **hateth** [#3404] you.

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath **hated** [#3404] them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

1 John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world **hate** [#3404] you.

Hebrews 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and **hated** [#3404] iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

The above is just a partial list of New Testament references. Almost every verse we read where #3404 "mis-eh-o" is used is in reference to persecution or hatred of Christ - the Word of God. It is small wonder why the end-time corporate churches are filled with unclean and hateful birds. These are those people lead by the spirit of Satan to preach lies in the form of half-truths to their congregations. These are the preachers, ministers, church teachers and others who tickle the ears of those in their pews by avoiding the strict accuracy and discipline of God-Inspired Scripture. To successfully build their congregations they need to please their people. They must give them a false feeling of goodness and worthiness while all the time parading it as doctrines and truths of the Christian faith. If they are not striving for large numbers of attendance they will build something else with self-interest as it's sole purpose. Many cults have began by embracing a particular false but nice appearing doctrine. The root of evil is man's sin. This basic doctrine is all but totally removed from today's corporate body. Perhaps not as much in word as in deed, as we see their abominations on display to the entire world. She (the harlot) has fallen to such an extent that she even dares exalt man-made religions that crucify Christ over and over and deny the Christ as the only God of Scripture. People view these masses of congregations as Christian churches!

Rev. 18:21-23

And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. [22] And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; [23] And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

The hidden truth behind the harlot's deeds or causes is her corporate HATRED for the core doctrines of the true Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Mystery Babylon is a Great City

"And the woman which thou sawest is that **GREAT CITY**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18)

When scripture speaks of a "great city" we must realize that for God to exalt a city this way (in that it is great) would classify it as having something very special about it. The word "great" is used in a wide variety of applications, and so we cannot determine God's definition of "great city" simply from the Greek or Hebrew word "great." As we have seen in this study, scripture teaches that there is one (and only one) true spiritual city, and that is the eternal dwelling place of all of God's elect. It is this great spiritual city that so much of scripture focuses on. It is the new Jerusalem, or the "**city**" of which Abraham through faith looked for. However, as Satan enters into the congregations "... so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (II Thessalonians 2:4), he will come with his own version of the true gospel. He will come with his "city" in attempting to be as great and as wonderful as God. He will come with his own city masquerading it's pretense as the true spiritual city of God.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the **ministers of righteousness**; whose end shall be according to their works." (II Corinthians 11:14-15)

We find only seventeen references in all of scripture to "great city." Among these references is the account of "Resen" as a great city, Genesis 10:12. In Joshua 10:2 we read that "Gibeon" was a great city. We next come to Jeremiah chapter twenty-two. It is there that we read once again of God's judgment upon His church, Old and New Testaments. The gospel decree goes out in parabolic form as we read from Jeremiah 22:3:

"Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoil out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the **stranger** [those who are aliens of the gospel], the **fatherless** [those who have no relationship with our heavenly Father], nor the **widow** [those who do not know Christ as their eternal husband], neither shed innocent blood in this place."

This gospel decree is given to the king of Judah and all of his servants. God tells these servants that if they obey His command, they will be allowed to enter into the gates of this house as kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, Jeremiah 22:4. However, if they do not obey, their house will be made a desolation, Jeremiah 22:5. In verse six God likens this house of Judah to Gilead, "... thou [ART] Gilead unto me...". God declares that He will prepare destroyers against this house, and they shall cut down the choice cedars (v. 7), a reference to the silencing of the gospel, or the spiritual killing of the true Word of God. In verse eight God says that many nations will pass by this city, and they will say "...wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this **great city**?" We see that these congregations, whether they be ancient Israel, as in this historic parable, or the corporate church of Christ - thus it is the church (corporate) and not the world that is viewed as a great city.

When we go to the book of Jonah, we find that the city of Nineveh is characterized as a "great city" in four verses, Jonah 1:2; 3:2,3; and 4:11. Why does God depict Nineveh as a great city? Could Nineveh also be a picture of the corporate church? Very possibly, for two reasons. First, she is typified as a great city. Secondly, we read in Jonah chapter three that it's people believed God, and they repented from the greatest of them even down to the least.

Nineveh was spared the judgment of God. When we go to the book of Nahum we find that all three chapters speak of Nineveh's destruction. In verse one of chapter three Nineveh is called the bloody city. The word 54*"bloody" in the Hebrew is translated almost always as "blood," other than fifteen verses which read "bloody." This word is "dawn" in Hebrew, meaning blood, or death by the shedding of blood. It is rooted from the Hebrew word "daw-man," which means to cease; to be cut off or cut down; to be silenced, etc. Could the word "bloody" be picturing the city (the corporate church) as it's true gospel is silenced and cut off (spiritually killed)? The book of Nahum carries many similar passages to Revelation chapter eighteen. For example, Nahum 3:4 speaks of Nineveh this way:

"Because of the multitude of the **whoredoms** of the **wellfavoured harlot**, the mistress of witchcrafts, that **selleth nations** through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcraft."

Please take note that in the above verse the word "wellfavoured" is used only once, while the remainder of its usages is read over and over again as grace or favour. Many of these references speak of finding grace or favour with God, and yet scripture indicates that Nineveh once found favour in God's eyes. Scripture is clear that once we find grace with God we cannot lose that salvation. However, as a corporate entity such as the church or a particular congregation, it can indeed lose God's favour. Thus it is with this great city Nineveh, this bloody city. Please compare the above verse, Nahum 3:2 with the following two verses:

"...by thy **sorceries** were **all nations deceived**." (Revelation 18:23)

"...Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that **great city**, because she made **all nations** drink of the wine of the wrath of her **fornication**," (Revelation 14:8)

Nahum 3:19 declares that there is no healing for Nineveh, because her wound is grievous. Revelation 18:1 declares that Mystery Babylon shall be thrown down and will never be found again.

In briefly looking at Ezekiel chapters twenty-two and twenty-four, we do not find the phrase "great city" used, but we do find Israel and Jerusalem answering to the name of "bloody city." As we have shown, the word "bloody" comes from its root meaning to cease, silence, cut off, etc. This is precisely what is in view in this chapter. As punishment for Israel's sins, God declares in Ezekiel 22:31 that He has consumed them with the fire of His wrath. Does this mean that God literally burned up Jerusalem and Israel? No, this is figurative language and must be understood that way. The second half of Ezekiel 22:31 clearly states what the punishment would be: "... their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God." This is their punishment. Is it so bad? To have one's own way apart from the gospel is a sure guarantee of eternal damnation. Yes, it is worse than having been burnt up and annihilated. God states in verse four that He will make these people (Israel and/or corporate church) a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries. Isn't this the way much of the world views the church today? This bloody city must be a spiritual "type" of the end-time corporate church, Babylon that great city, the mother of harlots.

The last book in which we find the term "great city" used is of course Revelation chapters 11:8; 14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10,16, 18,19,21; and 21:10. These are all given in reference to Babylon, except one. We read a perplexing statement in Revelation 11:8:

"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the **great city**, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

God is giving us a clue to the identity of this great city in this verse. He is revealing two important pieces of information that will further identify this great city. First, we note that after we read "great city," God says "**which spiritually is.**" Therefore, we know it must have a very non-literal meaning or identity to it. This same city is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, and God states that it is where our Lord was crucified. Christ was crucified at Jerusalem, outside of its walls, but nevertheless still at Jerusalem. Therefore, this great city is typifying Jerusalem. This verse is not typifying the literal Jerusalem in its ultimate view. The name Jerusalem in its literal form is used in typifying the spiritual Jerusalem, God's kingdom, represented by the earthly corporate church. But why does God depict this city also as Sodom and Egypt? It may be that Sodom represented all things that are spiritually repulsive to God. Egypt, in its spiritual essence, would typify all who are still enslaved to Satan, and in spiritual bondage to their sins. Egypt represents those who do not have the precious faith of Christ to redeem them. It is within the streets of this **great city**, this spiritual Sodom and Egypt, this spiritual Jerusalem (where also our Lord was crucified), wherein the dead bodies of two witnesses shall lie during the great tribulation. These witnesses are killed within this city, and not elsewhere. Peculiar? Not at all when we realize that the two witnesses can only be portraying the true Church during the great tribulation. Their witness is spiritually killed, that is to say their testimony for Christ is silenced within the corporate church. This is where Satan's attack is aimed. God is judging His corporate church by allowing Satan to set up the abomination of desolation within the Temple of God. This great city is again Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abomination of the earth. The abomination of desolation has turned this city into a spiritual Sodom and Egypt. Yet, at the same time this city still claims to belong to Christ. It still claims to be God's spiritual bride, the holy and heavenly Jerusalem "where also our Lord was crucified." This is the counterfeit church, Mystery Babylon, that great city!

Finally God reveals in His Word the one true "great city" without its defilement by Satan's final assault at the end of time. God shows us His true undefiled church, without spot and without blemish, being both **great** and **holy**:

"AND HE CARRIED ME AWAY IN THE SPIRIT TO A GREAT AND HIGH MOUNTAIN, AND SHEWED ME THAT **GREAT CITY, THE HOLY JERUSALEM**, DESCENDING OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD." (Revelation 21:10)

FOOTNOTES:

54* "dam" (dawm) #1818 Strong's Hebrew. From #1826; blood (as that which when shed causes death) of man or an animal; by anal. the juice of the grape; fig. (espec. in the plur.) bloodshed (i.e. drops of blood): - blood (-y, guiltiness, innocent.

"damam" (daw-mam'); a prim. root; to be dumb; by impl. to be astonished, to stop; also to perish: - cease, be cut down (off), forbear, hold peace, quiet self, rest, be silent, keep (put to) silence, be (stand) still, tarry, wait.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Those Who Stand Afar Off

"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning."

"Standing **afar off** for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come." (Revelation 18:9,10)

"The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand **afar off** for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Revelation 18:15)

"For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood **afar off**."

In the Hebrew, the phrase **55***"afar off" means remote, of place or time, precious, long ago, of old, space, great while to come, etc. In the New Testament Greek, this phrase means a long distance off. It can be shown from scripture that the kingdom of God is woven into the phrase "afar off." There is much scriptural evidence to indicate that this phrase carries a hidden and spiritual meaning pertaining to God's elect and to the kingdom of God itself. While the higher spiritual meaning is not always readily seen among every encounter, there is enough scripture to sufficiently justify grounds for teaching this.

The first place we encounter this phrase is when God sends Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Abraham's intention of sacrificing his son Isaac is a picture of God, as He sacrificed His only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The name Abraham means "father of a multitude." When we turn to Genesis chapter 22 we read in verse one that God decided to test Abraham.

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am"

"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." (Genesis 22:1-3)

Verse four is very interesting since it mentions the "third day." Abraham was to sacrifice his only son (a picture of the atonement of Christ on the cross) on the "third day." The elect of God are symbolized in scripture as the "**third part**" (Zechariah 13:9). Abraham's intended sacrifice on the third day may have been accomplished in portraying God's sacrifice of Christ for His elect, the third part.

"Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place **AFAR OFF**."

Abraham lifted up his eyes on the third day and saw the place in which he was to sacrifice his only son. He saw this place from a distance, because it was still a ways off, therefore God says that it was "afar off." This is the immediate and literal meaning to this verse in the historical setting.

In the spiritual setting, God may well be typifying this "place" where Isaac is to be sacrificed to a heavenly "place **afar off**." The land or geographic "place" is likely to represent the atonement of Christ. This "place" is symbolic for the very foundation of salvation; the Cross of Christ. When Genesis 22:4 speaks of the place of Isaac's slaughter (or the place of Abraham's sacrifice), note the Hebrew word for **56***"place" comes from a word meaning "to rise" or "Arose." Its root word is translated as established, confirm, and perform. In many verses it deals with God establishing His eternal covenant, or performing His covenant, or even confirming His covenant. It also speaks of God "arising" to save His people. It is the root word of "place," which means "to stand;" "a standing; i.e. a spot." It is used in the literal sense as a locality and in a figurative sense as a "condition."

When God appeared to Moses in the form of a burning bush, He ordered Moses to remove his shoes: "... for the **place** whereon thou standest is holy ground," (Exodus 3:5). The word "place" is the **same** Hebrew word for "place" in which Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac. It is true that we find the word "place" used many times in the Old Testament that may or may not have anything to do directly with the atonement of Christ. But in these instances the word "place" may well be picturing the atonement of Christ.

When Abraham looked "afar off" on that "third day" and saw this "place," it may be that God was pointing this "place" out as the "ascension" of Christ, as Christ "arose" from the Grave; and as He "confirmed" the covenant; as He "established" our salvation; as He "performed" the oath which He swore unto Abraham in Genesis 26:3. Remember confirm, establish, perform, arose, and standing all come from the word "place" of which Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.

In Genesis 37:18 we read of the hatred that Joseph's brothers had toward him. "And when they saw him **afar off**, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him." Again, in the historical setting Joseph was seen by his brethren from a long distance away. In the spiritual setting, Joseph was seen by his brethren "afar off." Joseph was standing upon the promises of God. He was spiritually "afar off." He was standing upon that same spiritual "place" that Abraham sought for in which to sacrifice Isaac. Joseph was leaning on the promises of God. Joseph was trusting on and spiritually standing upon the covenant of God, therefore his brethren hated him. Unseen by mortal man, Joseph's brethren hated him because he was spiritually "afar off" in the kingdom of God.

As we examine Exodus chapter twenty, we first find God (chapter 19:10-11) commanding Moses to prepare his people (sanctify them and let them wash their clothes) because the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai on the third day. Verses sixteen through twenty of chapter nineteen tells us what happened on the third day. God descended upon mount Sinai with thunders, lightnings, thick clouds, the voice of the trumpet, smoke and fire, and the mount quaked greatly, verse eighteen declares. And then God called Moses to the top of the mount and gave him the Ten Commandments to deliver to his people. God commanded Moses to tell the people of Israel not to break through the perimeter that He (God) had established at the base of the mountain. Only Moses was allowed to ascend Mount Sinai. The rest, including Aaron and the priests, and all of Israel were to remain within the "bounds" or perimeters which God had established. If any - man or beast - crossed over to gaze at God on Mount Sinai; they would surely die. So Moses received the Ten Commandments that same day. The first day was for sanctification, the second day was set aside for the people to wash their clothes, and the "third day" was appointed for God to descend upon Mount Sinai and deliver the commandments.

This again may be picturing the atonement of Christ on the cross when the earth was darkened for three hours and there was a great earthquake. We see hints of the second coming of Christ in these verses as well. God descended upon Mount Sinai on the third day with the Ten Commandments signifying His covenant with His elect (the third part).

"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood **AFAR OFF**." (Exodus 20:18)

Again, in the historical setting, God kept the people back, and they did not attempt to go up on the mountain. Instead, they stayed in back of the bounds or perimeters. Literally, they stood "afar off." But in the spiritual setting, the people again obeyed God, thereby standing "afar off." Just as we say "all Israel shall be saved," meaning "all" that God draws unto Himself will be saved. In the same way all of Israel stood "afar off" in the literal sense, and again all of the saved in that camp spiritually stood "afar off." This teaching will become clearer once we go to the New Testament.

Let us examine some Old Testament verses that use the phrase "afar off":

"And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye **afar off**." (Exodus 24:1)

"I will fetch my knowledge from **afar** [same word as "afar off"] and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker." (Job 36:3)

"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are **afar off** upon the sea." (Psalm 65:5)

"Salvation is **far** [same as afar] from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes." (Psalm 119:155)

"That which is **far off** [same as "afar off"], and exceeding deep, who can find it out? I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness." (Ecclesiastes 7:24-25)

"Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it **long** [same as "afar off"] **ago** [same as afar off]. (Isaiah 22:11)

"O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of **old** [same as "afar"] are faithfulness and truth. (Isaiah 25:1)

"I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from **far** [same as "afar"], and my daughters from the ends of the earth;" (Isaiah 43:6)

"And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth **afar off**: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." (Isaiah 59:14)

"Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from **afar**, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid." (Jeremiah 30:10)

"But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from **afar off**, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid." (Jeremiah 46:27)

"And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations **afar off**; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:3)

"And they that are **far** ["afar"] **off** shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God." (Zechariah 6:15)

We have much insight from the above Old Testament references (of which are only a partial list) to the wonderful heavenly interpretation God has introduced into the phrase "afar off." We can choose to ignore or neglect this as simply unmerited "spiritualizing" or even wild speculation. However, if we find a pattern forming throughout the entire Word of God, we should have an earnest desire to search out the matter. Let us not forget the Holy inspired words of Proverbs 25:2, "[IT is] the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of **kings** [IS] to search out a matter." The above verse in Zechariah 6:15 has much insight for the New Testament Church of today. Who are those who come to build in the Temple of Lord? We first must realize that God is speaking of the spiritual building of His Temple. No physical temple is in view here. Christ is the Temple that every true believer is a part of. Christ is also the head of this Temple (His body), and all believers are lively stones (spiritual stones) belonging to Christ. Christ is building His Church and we are partakers of this spiritual construction as we proclaim His Word to a dying and lost world. We have been sent from God (by God's great mercy) to be participants in this grand venture and unmerited favor shown to us by God, that we can feast with Christ as we participate in Christ's work of constructing His Holy Temple. We have come from **afar off** to build in the Temple of the Lord, as Zechariah 6:15 is declaring.

Let us now continue this search by examining this matter against the inspired words of the New Testament. In Luke chapter sixteen we read a parable of Lazarus and a certain rich man. The rich man lived sumptuously every day, while Lazarus ate the crumbs from this rich man's table, and while the dogs licked his sores. Then God lifts the veil and shows us these two in eternity. Lazarus is in heaven (Abraham's bosom), while the rich man is in hell. In verse twenty-three we read:

"And in hell he [the rich man] lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham "**afar off**", and Lazarus in his bosom."

The kingdom of heaven (represented by Abraham's bosom) is clearly pictured and depicted spiritually as being "**afar off**."

Again, when we turn to Luke chapter eighteen we recall the story of the self-righteous Pharisee who proudly prayed and thanked God that he was not like other men. He fasted twice a week. His tithes and offerings were great. He was a self-righteous religious hypocrite trying to enter into heaven on his own good merits instead of trusting in Christ. And then he prays "... God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men [ARE], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican," (Luke 18:11). But who was this publican that the Pharisee condemned? He was a saved man because he confessed his sins before God, and he did not trust in his own good works. We read of him in Luke 18:13:

"And the publican, standing "**afar off**," would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

God's sovereign grace is on display here! God is showing us the nature of saved man, as this publican was. God had broken his pride, and given him a contrite heart. He no longer desired to boast in his flesh, as the Pharisees clearly did. The publican knew he was unworthy to even look up toward heaven as he prayed, because God had humbled him to the point of confessing his sins before God, unlike the self-righteous Pharisee.

God assures us that this publican was saved because God tells us that he was standing "**afar off**." The spiritual reality is that this sinner was eternally saved, and he was spiritually standing in that same spiritual place that Abraham saw as he lifted up his eyes on that third day of his journey, and beheld the place to sacrifice his son. The publican spiritually stood afar off - that is he stood upon the eternal promises of God (whether he had much knowledge makes no difference), that Christ our Redeemer would be sent as a sacrifice for sins. Therefore God accepted this publican while rejecting the Pharisee.

In Acts 2:39 we read:

"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are "**afar off**," even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

In other words, salvation is for all whom God has predestinated; who are called from eternity past (afar off).

Revelation chapter eighteen deals exclusively with the abomination of desolation; Satan taking his seat in the Temple of God. Christ tells us to flee to the spiritual mountains of the kingdom of God when we see this occurring in the churches. In other words, we are to come out of this false global church during the great tribulation. A true believer will flee the apostate and harlot church for fear of God's judgment upon her. How do we flee? We flee literally and spiritually. First we must leave a congregation that is proven to be a false church. We must flee. Secondly, we must spiritually leave or flee from false doctrines held by these false churches. Why? Because we **FEAR** God's divine judgment upon these false churches. We know God is spiritually judging the unsaved corporate church during the days of the great tribulation. That is the purpose of the tribulation period; to bring spiritual judgment upon the corporate church worldwide. Consider carefully the following verses from Revelation chapter eighteen.

"The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand "**AFAR OFF**" for the **fear** of her torment, weeping and wailing." (Revelation 18:15"

Who are these merchants? These are the true merchants of the Gospel of Christ. When Scripture uses the word "torment," it is usually in reference to being in hell. We saw one example when Lazarus went to heaven, while the rich man went to a place of torment. He was in eternal hell. These merchants are said to be standing "afar off" for the fear of her torment. God is ultimately teaching that these merchants are true believers (true spiritual merchants of the Good News) who are standing "afar off" for the fear of her torment. They are spiritually standing upon the true foundation of Christ and His atonement, (therefore they are afar off). They are standing afar off for fear of God's eternal wrath of hell. This is no new or exotic teaching. It is simply a highly spiritual way of saying that every true child of God stands "afar off" upon the sure foundation of Christ, because of the God given **fear** of His divine eternal torment.

Revelation 18:17 is saying the same thing:

"For in one hour so great riches is come to nought [desolation in Greek]. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade [spiritually] by sea, stood "AFAR OFF".

When we read "...For in one hour so great riches is come to nought," we know, by carefully examining this chapter and harmonizing it with scripture that we can discern the spiritual truth that God has laid down for us. Isn't this verse actually teaching that in one hour (which is symbolic for the length of the tribulation period) so great SPIRITUAL riches is come to desolation? It should be extremely doubtful that God is speaking of material wealth being destroyed at Judgment Day. This does not harmonize with the rest of the Book of Revelation. There are too many verses that are contrary to this teaching.

Finally we have a more difficult verse in this chapter to deal with.

"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning." (Revelation 18:9)

"Standing "AFAR OFF" for the FEAR of her torment, saying Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come," (Revelation 18:10).

These verses are again (for the third time in this chapter) teaching the same truth. The true believers are standing afar off on the foundation of Christ because of the God given fear of eternal damnation. In verse nine we see that it is the "kings of the earth" who are lamenting for her (for the corporate church). The Bible refers to believers as "kings" and "priests" of God. But these kings of the earth are said to have committed fornication. Does that rule out their being representative of believers? No, all believers have spiritually committed fornication before becoming saved. That is part of the miracle of being brought into the kingdom of God. That is evidence of God's indescribable love for a remnant of the fallen race. Re-examining verse nine, we read, "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing **afar off** for the fear of her torment..." Doesn't every true believer lament for what has become of the corporate church? Most believers are constantly talking about the horrible and apostate condition of the corporate church of Christ worldwide. Some may have once lived deliciously with her, but now they must flee because she is being judged as Christ is about to appear. We must all stand "AFAR OFF" on the sure foundation of Christ for the fear of God's divine judgment upon - first the corporate church, and then His literal judgment upon the unbelieving world, including those of the corporate church of Jesus Christ.

FOOTNOTES:

55* "rachowq" (raw-khoke') or (raw-khoke') # 7350 Strong's Hebrew. From #7368; remote, lit. or fig. of place or time; specifically precious; often used adverbially (with preposition): KJV -- (a-) far (abroad, off), long ago, of old, space, great while to come.

56* "maqom" (maw-kome'); # 4725 Strong's Hebrew. A standing, i.e. a spot; but used widely of a locality (gen. or spec.); also (fig.) of a condition (of body or mind): - country, home, open, place, room, space, whither [soever].

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Conclusion

This study has been printed with a twofold motive. The first objective was in exposing and sharing the immense amount of convincing evidence that guides us to the probable conclusion in regard to the identity of Mystery Babylon of the Book of Revelation. The second objective was intended to motivate and generate a God fearing desire to search, examine, and explore the scriptures, that within the whole of it's content we would find the many hidden treasures that testify of Christ. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which **testify of me**," (John 5:39).

In Hebrews chapter six God declares something that many may instinctively disregard.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us **go on** unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,"

"Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

"And this will we do, if God permit." (Hebrews 6:1-3)

These are the basic doctrines of God's salvation plan. A true child of God will never leave these precious doctrines of our Heavenly Father. The "Interlinear Bible Hebrew Greek English" (Hendrickson) translates Hebrew 6:1 this way:

"Therefore, leaving the of the beginning of Christ discourse, on to **full growth** let us be borne..."

The "Interlinear Greek-English New Testament" (Berry) translates this verse the following way:

Wherefore, having left the of the beginning of the Christ discourse, to the **full growth** we should go on..."

The "Zondervan Parallel New Testament In Greek and English" (Zondervan) translates the verse the following way:

"Wherefore leaving the of the beginning of Christ word on to **maturity** let us be born..."

Finally, the New King James Bible quotes Hebrews 6:1 the following way:

"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection.."

The old King James is the only translation used in this study, and it is the most reliable source of today. The Greek quotes mentioned above were used to compare the similarities of these translations to the King James, in regard to Hebrews 6:1. All are in agreement.

When Hebrews states "...leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ ..." we realize that "leaving" means only to "go with" or "to send forth." We are of course never to simply leave the basic doctrines of Christ. We are to carry the

doctrines of Christ's beginning discourse as we go on to perfection. This perfection will include (along with the searching of heavenly meanings) our own sanctification and a continual repentance with regard to our life style. All of these basic principles are ours to bring forth with us as we "leave" (meaning simply to lay aside; not to forget or neglect) the principles and go on to perfection.

The only time one should ever "go on" unto "perfection" is after having absolute assurance of one's salvation. Until that time (and during our entire lifetime) our intent should always focus upon our own wickedness and our great need to have all of our sins forgiven by the only One who can forgive sins; He who is the Word of Life, I John 1:1.

END OF STUDY