

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 185

THE BATTLE AT ARMAGEDDON (continued)

“And I saw *three unclean spirits like frogs* come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 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” (Rev. 16:13-14).

From the greatness of the crisis and the solemnity of the warning, these emissaries must be creatures of awesome power. Yet they seem unaccountably crude, uncouth, and unseemly. They surprise us. “*Frogs!*” we exclaim, “heralds of battle? Ambassadors to kings? Impossible! Absurd! Ridiculous!” The crisis is the greatest in the annals of war. It is referred to in scripture, as well as in our text, as “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” It is portrayed as a World War, a Universal Conflict. And yet — to assemble the militant nations — three slimy batrachian monsters! What are these “questionable shapes,” these disgusting amphibia, from the swamps and mud of dried-up Euphrates? John describes them as “unclean spirits,” they are “demons,” or dead men. What we see in the vision is three ghostly emissaries, one out of the mouth of each of the confederates, the dragon, the wild beast, and the false prophet — gigantic shadowy frogs, croaking night prowlers, cold-blooded reptiles dwelling in marshes, quagmires, and stagnant waters, with their spotted skin, their sprawling limbs, their agile leap, their dismal croakings filling the night with noise. They are as politicians, these masqueraders, at home in the slimy pool, in the goeey mud, in the air or on solid ground; noisome, repulsive, abhorrent. Of what are these cheap orators, these uncanny imposters the emblem?

First, I would draw your attention to the fact that they are called “unclean spirits.” They are unclean just because they are designated as frogs, and under the Old Testament law of Moses, as defined in the dietary laws, frogs were unclean animals and therefore not to be eaten by the people of Israel. Our second clue is that they are described as coming out of the mouth. Now how can a frog be in the mouth? The metaphor signifies an unclean *spirit* or an unclean *word* that is coming out of a *false teaching*. This is the spirit of all false teachings that originate from the mouth of the dragon (the devil and Satan), from the mouth of the beast (the world system), and from the mouth of the false prophet (the carnal church system of man). These are the teachings that people partake of, eat or assimilate into their lives, thus swallowing the spirit of that teaching, becoming defiled by it. And all of these teachings gather our minds and hearts in resistance and rebellion against the truth

of God as it is in Jesus! Then when God shows up in our path and begins to deal with us by His Spirit *the battle is ready to begin!*

“SPIRIT AND WORD” — that is the issue in this battle at Armageddon. “Three *unclean spirits* coming out of the *mouth.*” There is a time when God does more than just forgive our sins and pour down blessings upon us. The hour comes when He contends with the very spirit or spirits that motivate us and we find ourselves drawn into conflict — into the greatest conflict of our lives! The battle is not just “*against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph. 6:12). We are to be CLEANSED “*from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*” (II Cor. 7:1). Thus, when God sets His hand to purify and perfect us it is no local skirmish, but erupts into a full-fledged WORLD WAR involving every vestige of the flesh and every stronghold of spirit as God in us goes about His work of “*the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*” (II Cor. 10:4-5). In John’s vision three unclean spirits emerge, touching upon the defilement and slavery of man in all areas of body, soul, and spirit. It reaches into all the expressions of society — religious, political, and economical. The frogs may croak all night but their influence will end with the Light of God’s New Day, when “*the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.*”

An “unclean” spirit is the opposite of the “clean” or “holy” Spirit. The “clean” or Holy Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, life, and righteousness. Unclean spirits produce the opposite: lies and deceptions, evil, and death. The characteristics of the Holy Spirit are found in the “fruit of the spirit” which is: “*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*” (Gal. 5:22-23). These are the nine virtues which constitute the *nature* of the Holy Spirit which is the nature of God. The scriptures show that our bodies are the “body of Christ” and the “temple of God.” When we walk in the spirit we are walking in the nature of God. Paul says, “*This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:16). The lusts of the flesh produce uncleanness. Acts 1:8 says, “*But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me.*” What kind of POWER does the Holy Spirit give us? Certainly not muscle power! No, you get muscle power by eating certain proteins and exercising regularly. Would it be atomic power? There is a lot of power in atomic power — enough already stockpiled by the nations to blow twenty planets like ours to smithereens! If God is willing to give us power, it must be power AFTER HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS. What is God like? First of all, we know that God is a Spirit, and when God gives us power, He would naturally give us *spirit power*. He gives us power after His likeness! This means that He gives us *love power, joy power, peace power, longsuffering power, patience power, goodness power, temperance power, meekness power, and faith power*. This is indeed — **SPIRIT POWER!**

If ever there was a need for this kind of power in the world, it is now! This old sin-weary world needs peace power, love power, and joy power. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all the rulers in all the nations had the *peace power* of GOD! You will understand a great mystery when you understand that love is spirit, joy is spirit, peace is spirit, patience is spirit, temperance is spirit, goodness is spirit, longsuffering is spirit, meekness is spirit, and faith is spirit. All of these virtues are *spiritual attributes*, and they are all in the Holy Spirit and in us as the very essence of our beings as children of GOD! This is the nature God has raised up in us as He has poured out His Holy Spirit upon us, quickening *our spirit by His Spirit*. “*He that is joined to the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT.*” As

we allow these virtues to grow and increase and abound within us we are walking in the power, strength, and blessing of the kingdom of God right here upon this earth. We are the *sons of God!* As we allow the spirit of Christ to rule in us, reign in us, and work through us, there is a manifestation of God's kingdom through us to the world.

The so-called “gifts of the Spirit” are really manifestations of the **ability** of Christ within us, while the “fruit of the Spirit” is the manifestation of the **nature** of Christ within us. Every living thing possesses these two aspects of being: **ability** and **nature**. Ability is what you can DO. Nature is what you ARE. With Christ in us, both His nature and His ability are to be fully developed in, and expressed through, our lives. All that Christ can DO He must do through us! All that Christ IS He must BE IN AND THROUGH US! As these two aspects of God's Being are brought to complete fruition within, we become capable of truly reigning with and as Christ. Through the development of these we are enabled to be **overcomers**. Jesus says, “*And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*” (Rev. 2:26-27). The nature and power of God raised up in His sons shall be ministered to the nations that they finally might be ruled by the greatest and most irresistible power of all — divine SPIRIT POWER! Love power...peace power...joy power...faith power!

Now let us return to the three “unclean spirits” like frogs which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. These come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These three “unclean” spirits are the opposite of the “clean” or Holy Spirit. They are therefore the ministers of lies, unrighteousness, and death. These three spirits spew forth all the unclean doctrines, propaganda, ideologies, delusions, deceptions, hatred, war, perversion, uncleanness, immorality, unbelief, and every other corruption that is characteristic of this evil day. These are the attitudes and conduct that are leading the nations of the world on the downward spiral to destruction. And just as righteousness is **spirit**, peace is **spirit**, love is **spirit**, joy is **spirit** — so rebellion is **spirit**, wickedness is **spirit**, hatred is **spirit**, fear is **spirit** — THE SPIRITS OF DEVILS GOING FORTH IN OPPOSITION TO THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST! And this “going forth” ultimately leads them to confrontation with truth and righteousness — at the “*battle of the great day of God Almighty!*”

The truth is, my beloved, you can be filled with the Holy Spirit or you can be filled with the spirit of the devil. You can be filled with God's Spirit or you can be filled with the spirit of the world. You can be filled with the Spirit of Christ or you can be filled with religious spirits. You can be filled with the spirits of demons, devils, and evil spirits. I don't care how you conjure them up. Matters not to me whether you think they are entities walking about in the invisible spirit world about you or whether they are something that comes out of a state of mind — these powers are real and Jesus cast them out of people. I don't pretend to understand all about evil spirits — I don't even understand all about the Holy Spirit and how He works! And I am much more interested in the Holy Spirit than I am in a devil or a demon or an evil spirit. I'm not a devil preacher. I am not devil conscious in my own life. But it is a fact that there is an unclean and evil anointing just as there is an anointing of the Holy Spirit! And every man who follows on to know the Lord will eventually come face to face with every one of those unclean “anointings” or “devils” when he comes to his Armageddon; for Armageddon is the *final battle* where Babylon, with all its carnality, worldliness, fleshliness, deception, and devilry falls to rise no more. Therefore this battle must of necessity deal thoroughly and eternally with every one of the “spirits of devils”! Armageddon is where all the devilish spirits, all the worldly spirits, and all the religious spirits make their last stand against the

Lord of hosts! And, like General Custer, they go down into ignominious and everlasting defeat! IT IS THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!

With this very thought in mind George Hawtin wrote: “The next great thing of note was the discovery that *right in the synagogue* there was a man possessed with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, ‘*Let us alone*; what have we to do with Thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth. Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God’ (Mk. 1:24). Now I wonder who that man was who was possessed with an unclean spirit? I dare not be certain, but I will tell you who he *may* have been and who he probably was. He was probably the *leader* of the synagogue. Are you horrified at my suggestion? Well, you need not be, for I have on my desk at this moment a large picture of a preacher with a reverse collar and all the regalia of a minister, marching with a crowd of homosexuals, all replete with signs and banners, agitating for public acceptance and recognition. Do you know what Moses said of homosexuals? He said they should be cut off from among the people (Lev. 18:22-29). That is the Old Testament type, and under the New Covenant the apostle Paul warns that no homosexual shall inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10). Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord! Yet in our day these abominable demon-possessed people are being ordained as ministers of the gospel! If Jesus walked into their congregation today, He would have no choice but to cast the devil out of them, for all such are possessed of an ***unclean spirit***.

“There are other devils in the church system besides this one. There are false prophets, covetous, boasters, men who do not believe in the resurrection, the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, or regeneration. The Roman system from start to finish is a ‘do it yourself’ religion. I do not hesitate to say that all who are rubbing shoulders with it and glorying in ecumenism and the charisma of the whole evil business are coming under the control of Satan and the power of devils working miracles (Rev. 16:13-14). Have you never read this scripture, ‘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’ (Rev. 18:2)” — end quote.

The three unclean spirits like frogs are called “*the spirits of devils*.” The Greek word for “devils” is *daimon* — a better translation would be *demons*. We dare not go beyond what God reveals. The scriptures are plain that there are entities called unclean spirits, devils, demons, etc. But the Bible nowhere clearly and explicitly informs us as to where the origin of these was. Until the Lord makes it plain it really isn’t important who are what they are. Some things are certain: Evil spirits of various dispositions exist, they pertain to a negative realm, they are agents of the satanic kingdom, they actively seek to inhabit the souls and bodies of human beings, and Jesus has given us authority and power to cast them out. There is absolutely NO scriptural evidence or even a clear inference that they are ***fallen angels!*** That is another false teaching of Babylon. Some feel that they are unique, individualized manifestations of the serpent nature in man. Others believe they are disembodied souls or spirits of ungodly men who have died — spirits confined to a low spiritual dimension in earth’s atmosphere. I will confess that I lean toward this interpretation and it would certainly explain why they seek to possess, express, and manifest through *human* bodies and use *human* speech.

There is a further clue indicating this. There was a day when Jesus crossed the sea of Galilee in a boat and came to the country of the Gadarenes. When Jesus stepped out on land, there met Him a certain man out of the town who was possessed by demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he lived not in a house, but among the tombs of the cemetery. He was kept under guard

and bound with chains and fetters, but often he would break the bonds and be driven by the demons into the wilderness. And when he saw Jesus he raised a terrible cry from the depths of his throat and fell down before Him in terror and shouted loudly, “What have You to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you do not torment me.” Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he answered, “*Legion*,” for many demons had entered him. And they begged Jesus not to command them to depart into the deep. A great herd of swine was there feeding on the hillside; and the demons begged Him to give them leave to enter these. And He allowed them to do so. Then the demons came out of the man and entered into the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep cliff into the lake and were drowned (Lk. 8:26-39).

I would draw your reverent attention to a few pertinent points. I have met brethren who are of the opinion that these demons were not actual persons or personalities but “negative thoughts” or “false beliefs.” But these devils, *not the man*, besought Jesus. They asked a favor of Him. They used *human* speech. They entreated Him not to command them to go into the “deep.” The word “deep” does not signify the lake. The Greek word is *abussos* meaning “abyss,” a word elsewhere applied to Hades, the unseen realm of disembodied *human* spirits. The devils besought Him that He would not send them to the disembodied state, but permit them to embody themselves in the swine. He permitted them to go. The devils went *out* of the man and went *into* the swine. Now some tell us that these were “negative thoughts” or “false beliefs.” What shall we say to these things? Shall we say that a legion of six thousand false beliefs went out of this man and entered into the swine? Is that a practical thought — that six thousand false beliefs can go out of one man and enter into two thousand hogs? Is it so, that six thousand false beliefs so worried and worked upon these hogs that they committed suicide in the waters of the lake? Was the suicide of the swine a protest against false beliefs? To ask the questions is to answer them! These demons bear all the marks of *human personalities*.

Having said that, however, we must not forget for one moment that in the book of Revelation we are dealing with *symbols* and *signs*. We cannot let down our guard and yield to the easy temptation to *literalize* the visions John beheld in spirit. Three “unclean spirits” which are “spirits of devils” come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. We already know that the dragon is not a *literal* dragon, the beast is not a *literal* beast, and the false prophet is not one solitary *literal* man who is himself *the* false prophet. Each of these stands for something else! They are each a metaphor and a parable! Since the dragon is not a literal dragon, is the dragon’s “mouth” a literal mouth? And if the mouth is not a literal mouth, are the “spirits of devils” issuing out of that mouth *literally* a great host of demons spreading out over the earth? Not by any means!

Now these unclean spirits go forth into the world to all peoples. They go to the “kings” of the earth and of the whole world to gather them together unto the battle of the great day of God. On the personal level this takes place right within ourselves, whereas on the corporate level it also is fulfilled externally in the church systems of man. Individually, the unclean spirits muster all their forces to try to deceive, delude, and defeat the work of God in His elect. This is the battle of Armageddon *WITHIN*. Corporately, however, these demons go primarily to those having some authority or influence over others — the **Leaders!** This includes ministers who are leaders of large groups of the Lord’s people as well as secular leaders. All these groups, or classes, these spirits subtly influence in various ways in their thinking and believing so as to stir them up to oppose and withstand the final work of God in these days of the manifestation of the sons of God. This is a battle for *men’s minds*, for the *control* and *domination* of God’s people, and these spirits gather

when the river of Babylon is dried up, when her defenses are weakened, to croak loudly in an effort to oppose the kings coming from the rising of the sun, to prevent their entrance into religious Babylon to seize and destroy it and to set God's people free!

The key here is the word *mouth*. How meaningful this is! The book of Revelation gives us two views of everything. One is the view from heaven, the other is the view from earth. When you're on earth and you see the Lord's people, how do you see them? You see them as seven churches with all their spirituality and their carnality. You see them as a woman in the wilderness, as a harlot riding a beast, as that great city, Babylon. Oh, yes, those are all views of God's people! "Come out of her, *my people!*" But when you see them in the heavens of the Spirit, what do you see? You see a woman clothed with the sun, as a manchild ascending the throne, as 144,000 standing upon the heavenly mount Zion, as the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. Everything is viewed from these two vantage points — heaven and earth.

We must always know whether we are seeing from the heavenly perspective or the earthly perspective, because from these two vistas we see two different things. This is interesting because from the earth the devil is beheld as a *dragon* along with two mammoth bestial systems he uses and has always used throughout the history of the church age. The first bestial system (out of the sea) is the world governmental, economic, educational, judicial, military, and cultural system — the world order. The second bestial system (out of the earth) is the false religious system of man. And the dragon is the spirit of the devil that inspires, motivates, and controls them all. But when John beholds these from the *throne zone*, he sees them as nothing but three ugly, slimy, *croaking frogs!* In the spirit they appear as three unclean, demonic spirits manipulating human governments and religious systems of man — and, of course, individually these same propensities lie within each one of us! From the viewpoint of heaven we see them as frogs, but from the viewpoint of earth they appear as a great fire-belching dragon and two fearful beasts that reign in the lives of men and dominate the whole world. Ah, yes, we would fear what we see in the earthlies, but the fear loses all its power when we see the truth as it appears from the heavenlies! We perceive the dragon, the beast out of the sea, and the beast out of the earth as mighty, dreadful, intimidating, terrifying powers. Yet God sees them as pesky, annoying, obnoxious, croaking frogs to be squashed by one stomp of His almighty foot! In the earth realm we hear the voice of the beast that speaks as a dragon, but in the heaven realm we only hear the croaking of a frog! Oh, the wonder of it!

In scripture frogs speak of evil spirits. These spirits aren't frogs, of course, but they are *like* frogs. If I understand the properties and effects of water, I can understand water as a figure for the Holy Spirit who comes to us refreshing, cleansing, empowering, and giving life. If I understand something about the properties and characteristics of a tree, I can then understand something about what the scripture means when it says that we are "the planting of the Lord," and "trees of righteousness." I grasp the idea of the strength, stability, and fruitfulness of one rooted and grounded in Christ. In like manner, if I understand the characteristics of the frog, then I can understand how these unclean spirits operate. It's not just important to know that they are unclean spirits like frogs, but it's important to discern how they operate. What do we normally associate with coming out of someone's mouth? WORDS! Words which express thoughts and ideas, or intent of action. So out of the mouths of these three "ungodly" forces poured forth torrents of *words!* Unclean, evil, deceptive, deluding, degrading, false, lying concepts and teachings. Babylonish doctrines! The way they operate is through WORD POWER! We understand this great truth by the fact that this three-

fold unclean spirit comes out of the **mouth** of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet! You see, my beloved, whatever is hidden in our nature will eventually spill over into our **speech!**

The words of Jesus are just as true today as when He spoke them to the Pharisees twenty centuries ago: “*O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, **speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.** A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. **For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned**” (Mat. 12:34-37).*

The nature of the dragon, the nature of the beast, and the nature of the false prophet are three dimensions of the nature of the natural Adamic life within each of us. These three natures or minds speak out of the mouth of the flesh man. These are powers within us that must experience the dealing of God! We all know how it is that when difficulty, adversity, tragedy, pressure, trial, or trouble comes into our life, what is hidden in our nature becomes manifest in our words. Fear, dismay, anxiety, doubt, unbelief, anger, bitterness, frustration, resentment, exasperation, disappointment, disillusionment, depression, displeasure, wrath, deceit, and a world of other attitudes, dispositions, opinions, feelings, emotions, and attributes of our inner state of being express themselves through the words of our mouth. Are we so blind that we cannot see that trials and testings are *gifts from God* sent to us? They are sent to reveal US TO US! That’s really all they are sent to do! They are not sent to show us that we failed to *do* something, or that we *need to do* something; they are not sent to expose us to others, to embarrass or discredit us. Oh, no! They are sent to reveal to us areas of our lives where there is still a lack and where the Spirit of God is raising up His mighty hand of dealing within us!

When all is well and there are no pressures pressing in upon us, these dimensions of the natural life remain hidden deep within us. But when trouble comes, out of our mouth proceeds the **evidence** of those things that still lie buried in the heart of man, in the nature of the dragon, the nature of the beast, and the nature of the false prophet. These are devilish spirits (attitudes, words) that must be slain by the sword of the Lord! These are devilish spirits, working wonders, and they are sent forth to the kings (those strong things which rule) of the earth (soulical religious realm) and of the whole world (the all-inclusive nature of man) to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty! What does it mean to you, my brother, my sister, to have the words of your mouth reveal and call forth the strong things in your life that rule where the spirit of life and righteousness and the mind of Christ ought to be enthroned? What does it mean to you when you face the *last battle, the final conflict*, where ALL that remains unconquered and unchanged within you is exposed and led forth to the battlefield where Christ will conquer once and for all? Ah, *that* is truly the battle of the great day of God Almighty! *That* is truly Armageddon! It is indeed the **battle of battles!** And it certainly has a thousand times more to do with “*the revelation of Jesus Christ*” than some bloody war between carnal nations over on the plains of Megiddo! This is the final battlefield for the Christ of God where Christ becomes the Victor within. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it!

Our text tells us that the unclean spirits proceed from the **mouths** of the infernal trinity — the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The *dragon*, you recognize, is the devil, that ancient serpent, who slithers about in the dust of man’s flesh nature and carnal mind, and who is, after all, the real power over all the kingdoms of the flesh, within and without. Corporately, the *beast* is the monster out of the sea of humanity with its ten horns and seven heads — the whole bestial world

system of man — human governments and institutions of all kinds. It is the dragon in man who gives the beast out of the sea his seat and great authority! And the *false prophet* is the same as the second beast in chapter thirteen of the Revelation, who comes up out of the earth of our soulical powers, who has two horns as a lamb, but speaks like the dragon — the innate soulical religious nature of man expressed through the carnal church systems of man. And we may also remember that the relation between these three is such that the beast, or the whole world system, is the representative of the dragon upon earth, exists for him and works for him; and that the false prophet, the false church, in turn labors and deceives the nations on behalf of the beast and his image. Now, these three unclean spirits signify a **three-fold word**, (the *thoughts* of men's hearts, *political and educational propaganda* of all kinds, and *religious teaching and preaching*) for they come out of the **mouth** of the dragon, and out of the **mouth** of the beast, and out of the **mouth** of the false prophet!

Now, let us look a little further. In the nineteenth chapter of the book of Revelation we find this same beast is referred to. And there we read, “*And the **beast** was taken, and with him the **false prophet** that wrought miracles before him, with which he had deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire that burneth with brimstone*” (Rev. 19:20). And in Revelation 20:10 we find mention of him once more: “*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the **beast** and the **false prophet** are.*” There is no difficulty in identifying these two, the beast and the false prophet. The beast is obviously the first beast, the one out of the sea; and the false prophet is none other than the second beast, the one out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, and a voice speaking as a dragon, who deceives them that dwell in the earth-realm. Therefore we understand that the second beast is also called — ***the false prophet!***

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

So this second beast is also a prophet! He speaks for someone else. His purpose is to influence the minds of men, to persuade them, to rally them to the cause on behalf of which he speaks. But he is a *false prophet!* That does not mean that everything he says is a lie — not all that the serpent told mother Eve in the garden was a lie — but it was truth laced with just enough error to deceive. That is the purpose of the words of a false prophet — deception! And if we consider this in relation to the beast now under consideration, we shall find that this is in reality his character. In the first place, his very appearance is deceiving. He looks like a lamb; and one would receive the impression, therefore, that every word he speaks is the word of the Lamb of God! But he speaks like the dragon, that is, the message he bears is not in the final analysis the *gospel*, the *good news* of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, but is liberally laced with *bad news* of threats, intimidation, fear, condemnation, coercion, judgment, hell, and eternal damnation.

What beast is this? Ah, this refers to the false church, one that outwardly looks like the church of Christ, but he speaks as a dragon. Today in the church systems of man the dragon's voice can be heard out of the mouths of multitudes of pastors, evangelists, and church leaders of all kinds! They sing songs of worship, they speak of Jesus and the gospel, they have "church" written on their signs and their buildings, they perform religious ceremonies, they do good works — it looks just like the Lamb! Yet as one listens there is discernible another sound, it is "another voice," the dragon's voice, and it leads millions into man-made rules and regulations, false ideas about God, paganized holidays and doctrines, distorted understanding of God's will, His ways, and His word, and into fear, condemnation, and horrible religious bondage and slavery.

On another level we can say that the dragon indicates the *carnal mind*, the beast bespeaks *worldliness*, and the false prophet signifies *false doctrine*. That which comes out of their mouths is their *word*. And how full the world is today of these CROAKING VOICES! What mighty words these are! What powerful traditions, laws, customs, ideas, philosophies, societal pressures, value systems, and demands they represent! It is fitting that the activities of these three unclean spirits is compared to frogs, working under cover and in the darkness and stagnant places of man's carnal life. The croaking voices sound forth loudly day and night from the halls of government, from the class rooms of schools and universities, from all branches of the media, from books and movies, from commerce and business, and from the pulpits of the churches and all religious systems. And that *word* brings great conflict in the lives of all who try to harmonize worldly, fleshly principles and standards with the nature, spirit, and ways of the Lord! These three unclean spirits work miracles, that is, they do mighty, convincing works, and the one that comes out of the mouth of the false prophet even speaks in tongues, prophesies, heals the sick, and tries to prove their authority, dominion, and power and that they are the successors of Christ and the apostles, and are the repository of the orthodox truth of God; but for the kings of the east, the perfected sons of God, they have to battle these things out in their spiritual experience, when they see and understand what these unclean spirits represent, and why they are their enemies, their opponents in this great battle at Armageddon, and yield themselves up to Christ for His victory to be fully consummated within them. Hallelujah!

Before there can be any battle there must be a confrontation of two forces. And to bring this confrontation into a state of action, there must be a provocation. The provocation that brings about that battle of the great day of God Almighty is the *word* of the three unclean spirits like frogs! It is *they* that go forth to gather all the kings, or mighty ruling powers within, unto the battle of God. It is when the word of man and the word of God meet by the enlightenment of the spirit of the Lord within us that the battle is set. When God dries up the river of Babylon in our life, it is then that every religious spirit that would challenge the mind of Christ and the Lordship of Jesus within us rises up to do battle. Did you ever sit in the dark in a quiet rowboat in the middle of a lily-pad-covered lake? Suddenly there is a noise close by from a frog on one side. Then one croaks from far away on the other side. From here, there, over here, over there the noises come! In just that way the religious spirits croak away in our minds and emotions, shouting their propaganda, calling out their objections to the way of the spirit, raising up their carnal demands out of the soulical nature within, stirring up flesh and spirit to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Everywhere, within and without, there is the croaking of the frogs in which one imitates the other. They try to exceed each other in offensive boasting and blasphemous talk. According to their own estimation they accomplish great things before the eyes of the blinded people, they perform signs and wonders, everyone is amazed; yea, they blaspheme sublimely. On and on they croak out their false,

contemptible word. They creep and croak and defile, and fill the eyes of mankind and even our own hearts with their noisy demonstrations. It is when we discern the frog-like nature of these unclean spirits that we are brought to the front lines of the battle. It is these three spirits that the kings of the east must battle within their minds and hearts, in the place called Armageddon.

It was not until after the river Euphrates was dried up, that John saw the three unclean spirits like frogs. Before the river was dried up, John did not see the unclean spirits, for they were hidden in the mud and swamps of the river. But when the Lord begins to divert the river of man He also brings forth a revelation of just what that river really is and what spirit it is of! The river Euphrates pictures that religious flow which does not produce the way of life and truth from the Lord Jesus Christ, but produces the way that *seems* right unto man. The river bespeaks the merchandizing spirit of religious Babylon which nourishes the spirit of confusion. But when God pours out His bowl upon the river it dries up the flow that is there! God has already dried up that river in the lives of many who now read these lines, and soon He shall dry it up in the lives of millions more of His precious people! As soon as the river is dried up there is seen and heard the three unclean spirits as they make their appearance. This is very interesting! Frogs feed on flies, which signify the spirit of Beelzebub. They feed on the flood that comes out of the mouth of the dragon, which is also the great river Euphrates, and they are the spirits of devils which go forth unto the kings of carnality and flesh within us. Here the battle is set!

This is the battle of that great *day* of God Almighty. It *is* GOD'S DAY! The adversary has reached his last ditch. It is now a free fight between truth and error, between religion and reality, between flesh and spirit, and between life and death. It is now time for ALL of God's people to be liberated from the bondage of the great city of spiritual Babylon. The adversary has nothing with which to make war upon Jesus and His many brethren, the sons of God, and against all the Lord's redeemed ones — nothing, that is, except *falsehood* — the very same weapon he used when he began his opposition to God in that long ago Eden! In the garden he came speaking through the mouth of a reptile in the form of a bewitching serpent. But now, at his final stand, in desperation he comes with the same falsehood in the form of vile, croaking frogs, slimy reptiles, called "spirits of devils."

It is indeed the battle of the "*great day of God Almighty*" when unfettered truth meets naked falsehood in the final combat. Truth certainly will prevail! As truth and reality have prevailed within us, God's called and chosen elect, in our personal Armageddon, so will truth and reality prevail in all the Lord's people and Babylon shall fall to rise no more! It is indeed wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY

<https://www.godfire.net/eby/>

If you would like to receive these studies write to:

J. Preston Eby
P.O. Box 371240
El Paso TX 79937-1240

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