



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.4.1

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF begins the book *The Mark of the Beast*.

The book of Revelation is popular among many Christians. Many books, and even some movies, have drawn large audiences. People are fascinated by depictions of "end times" events.

Sadly, much of the information that is put out on the subject is misinformation. I have shared with people that the best selling *Left Behind* series of books is fiction based upon falsehood.

Many Bible teachers, authors and ministers

seek to write on a subject when they have not received any revelation from the Father on the topic. This is not a new phenomena. Even in the first century of the church there were men presenting themselves as teachers to the Body of Christ who did not know anything about the subject they were teaching.

The apostle Paul wrote about some men who were teaching things concerning the Law that they did not understand.

I Timothy 1:6-7

For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not

understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

Much of what is written on end times subjects today is "fruitless discussion."

The writing presented here looks at the spiritual substance of the mark of the beast. Many teachers have only looked at this subject on a natural level, and while I do not discount that there will be a natural fulfillment of those things pertaining to a mark that will be needed to buy and sell, the spiritual understanding is far more important. It is also virtually unknown, and seldom written about.

Food for Thought

"The fear of God kills all other fears."

Hugh Black

"Those who plan on repenting at the 11th hour usually die at 10:30. One of the greatest tricks of Satan is procrastination."

Author Unknown

Scripture Memory

Job 28:28

"And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.'"

Parables Newsletter

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The Mark of the Beast

Preface

This book presents a focus on the spiritual understandings of the imagery found throughout Scripture that relates to the beast, the mark of the beast, his image and the number of his name. This writing gives attention to the truly important spiritual understanding of these things, understandings of which the church has almost no perception. So dull have the eyes of the church grown in this late hour that she does not realize the great peril that is everywhere around her.

Many carnal interpretations of the Scriptures which relate to the end times are being declared in this day, and it is these carnal interpretations that have consumed the attention of the church. Yet these teachings are of no real benefit in preserving the saints in this hour, and in leading them to victory over the beast, his image, and the number of his name (Revelation 15:2).

For the most part there is no discerning of these greater things.

Throughout this book I will speak of these “carnal interpretations,” but I do not use this phrase in an entirely negative way. Rather, I am employing it in the same sense that Paul meant when he wrote the following:

Hebrews 9:8-10

The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that **could not make him that did the service perfect**, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and diverse washings, and **carnal ordinances**, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

The apostle Paul referred to the ordinances found in the Law, particularly those relating to the tabernacle and its service, to offerings and sacrifices, as carnal ordinances. Paul was not declaring the Law to be an evil thing, but he stated that the things it used as types and symbols to signify spiritual truths were incapable of making anyone perfect. It would not benefit man at all to merely observe these fleshly ordinances if he did not perceive that to which they pointed. If the symbolism of the tabernacle and its sacrifices did not lead the worshiper to Christ, who was the fulfillment of all the types being presented, then the man would never arrive at God’s true desire.

In the same way, a great number of prophecy teachers are focusing upon carnal interpretations of those things written in the book of Daniel, in the book of Revelation, and elsewhere, but they are almost universally neglecting the spiritual truths to which they point. This is not wisdom, for it will lead no man to perfection. These carnal signs exist for the purpose of leading the saints to the spiritual realities that are signified in them, but for the most part there is no discerning of these greater things.

It is not my intent to deny that there will be a physical fulfillment to many of the things described in the apocalyptic Scriptures, though certainly much that is taught today is spurious and results in much injury to the church by leading the saints to focus upon false notions of man’s imagination rather than directing them to that which could be of real spiritual benefit to them. I am not desiring to deny that there may be a physical mark that will be given one day soon which will be required for men and women to buy and sell. What I do want to stress is that such a carnal fulfillment of the Scriptures is not nearly as important as the spiritual truth to which it points.

In the history of the church during the past 2,000 years there has not yet existed a physical mark of

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the beast which has been required to buy and sell, yet there have been innumerable saints who have received the imprint of the beast nature to which it points. In receiving this mark many men and women have been able to trade in all of the things of a fallen and corrupt world. Many more saints stand in danger of receiving this mark, and of bringing the wrath of God upon themselves, and they have no clue as to the true identity of this mark.

This book seeks to illumine the saints to the greater meaning of those things relating to the mark of the beast that they might arrive at the perfect will of God and escape the wrath that comes upon the children of disobedience.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days,

Joseph Herrin

Introduction

The church is fascinated with matters relating to the last days before the return of Christ. The teachers of end times prophecy are legion, and their message goes forth over the airwaves, while their books fill the shelves of bookstores and major shopping centers. Movies are made out of many of these books and teachings, and Internet chat rooms are dedicated to the discussion of various end times doctrines, prophecies and scenarios.

A particular prophecy that has captivated many is that relating to the mark of the beast. The Scriptures reveal the following about this mark:

Revelation 13:16-18

And he causes all, the small and the great, and

the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

A myriad of teachings have gone forth to the body of Christ with the effect of causing the saints to focus upon the number 666 and to be wary of new and upcoming technologies that will allow mankind to be imprinted with some type of physical mark, or computer chip, that will be required in order to buy or sell. Speculation concerning what this mark will be has changed over the years as technology has advanced. I remember years back when bar codes were just becoming popular, and many theorized that men and women would be given some type of bar code as a mark. More recently, with the advent of technologies such as Digital Angel, and smart chips, and tags that can be scanned from a distance, opinion has shifted to these more advanced technologies.

Tragically, in leading the saints to focus upon the danger of receiving a physical mark, these end time prophecy teachers have lulled the church to sleep and have failed to warn them of the real danger. The book of Revelation is highly symbolic, and the physical and tangible things described in the book are most often employed to speak of spiritual realities, and it is these spiritual realities that are most important. The mark of the beast spoken of in the passage above is in fact a type and shadow of mankind receiving the imprint of the beast nature so that mankind can traffic in the things of a corrupt and fallen world.

This book seeks to illumine the saints to the greater meaning of those things relating to the mark of the beast...

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All the talk about physical technologies being the mark of the beast, are in effect a red herring that has been planted by Satan to lure the saints away

All of these things are symbols that stand for some truth.

from the truth and to cause them to focus upon things that will not help them at all. That the things in this passage are symbols of spiritual realities is evident if one looks at the context of the letter. Below are the first eight verses of Revelation chapter 13, followed by a list of the physical symbols described in these verses.

Revelation 13:1-8

And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Look at some of the symbols here:

- a beast
- a sea
- ten horns
- seven heads
- ten diadems
- blasphemous names
- body of a leopard
- feet of a bear
- mouth of a lion
- a dragon granting power and a throne and authority
- a wounded head that is healed
- a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies
- authority to act for 42 months
- blasphemies against Yahweh, His name, His tabernacle
- the Lamb
- the Lamb's book of Life

All of these things are symbols that stand for some truth. We would be wrong to think that these things are all to be understood literally. In fact, out of all the things listed, we would most certainly declare that the majority of them cannot be taken literally. The book of Revelation is highly symbolic, and everything is revealed in signs and types. Thus we see Christ as a Lamb that was slain, we see the overcomers referred to as virgins, and the churches are themselves represented by candlesticks. We read of a great harlot riding on the back of a beast and we see revealed all types of fantastic creatures with multiple heads and horns. We should not take these things literally, for they are merely prophetic types that represent truth.

In the opening words of Revelation we are told that what is written is conveyed in signs and parables, and these things are shadows of spiritual realities.

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Revelation 1:1-2

The Revelation of Yahshua Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants -- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and **signified** it by His angel to His servant John...

The word rendered as 'signified' is the Greek word 'semaino' and it occurs 23 times in the New Testament. Of these 23 occurrences, 16 times it has been rendered as the word 'signs' by the KJV translators. Following is one example:

Luke 21:25

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars...

Now a sign is something that points to something else. The sign is not the reality of a thing. A sign in the sun, moon, or stars is something that gives warning of some spiritual truth of the kingdom of God, some act of God, such as a coming judgment. Suppose some heavenly sign, such as a great solar flare, was given that indicated that a great judgment was coming, but all men wanted to talk about was the solar flare. If they were to focus upon the physical sign, while ignoring the spiritual truth it represented, they would have fallen far short of God's will and their actions would not represent godly wisdom. What folly it would be for the church to go around speaking endlessly about solar flares while never mentioning the judgment for which the sign was given to warn them.

Revelation is a book whose message is delivered in signs. Consider for a moment the purpose of a road sign. A road sign might tell you that there is a stop ahead, or that a winding section of road is upcoming. The sign is not the reality of the thing, but it speaks of something that is real. It would be calamitous for the driver and passengers of a car to speak incessantly of the signs they are seeing while they drive right through the intersec-

tion at which they were supposed to stop. A sign can be a tangible thing, even as road signs are real, and the sun and moon and stars are real, but they are not to be taken as the substance of that to which the sign points.

I would like to shout it out loud where every saint could hear it that there is a spiritual reality that this sign points to that is far more important than a physical mark. If the saints focus only on the sign (and they are doing so), and they fail to heed the message of the sign, they will be met with disaster. Multitudes of saints are in danger of being imprinted with the mark of the beast, and this mark has nothing to do with technologies now being developed. If they should receive the spiritual imprint of the beast they will fall under the judgment of God more surely than if they receive a physical mark in the forehead or on the hand. The consequences of receiving this mark are terrible.

There is a spiritual reality that this sign points to that is far more important than a physical mark.

Revelation 14:9-11

"If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up to the age of the ages; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

We should not believe that such a judgment is doled out simply because men and women utilize a new technology to be able to buy and sell. Something much more sinister is referred to in this mark. If a man or woman should receive the imprint of the beast nature to which this sign

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points they would be in grotesque opposition to the will of God who desires that His children should bear the image of the divine nature.

If Bible prophecy teachers would compare the words relating to receiving the mark of the beast to similar words that lie in close proximity in the text of Revelation they would understand that it

*The overcomers will have
the names of God
“written” on their
foreheads.*

is spiritual reality that is being signified in these things. In Revelation 13, verses 16-18, we read about the mark of the beast being given on the forehead, or the right

hand. IMMEDIATELY after these words we read of another mark that is given to a different group of people which also goes on the forehead.

Revelation 14:1

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, **having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.**

Isn't it amazing that the church doesn't spend as much time trying to decipher what form this mark will take that goes on the foreheads of the overcomers? They have not theorized that God will use permanent ink, or that God will implant a chip in the forehead of the saints that bears the names of the Father and the Son. No one is speaking about smart chip technology, or bar codes, or discussing what language these names will be written in, or how big the letters will be, or what color they will be. Why? Because most of the church realizes that what is being spoken of is actually a spiritual truth that is conveyed through symbolic means.

When we say that the overcomers will have the name of the Father and the Son written on their foreheads, we understand that they are being

sealed with the mind of Christ. Their minds have been renewed, and even as the High Priest of the Old Covenant wore a band of blue with letters of gold across his head with the words “Holy to Yahweh” written on it, so these saints have separated themselves unto Yahweh to live for His purposes and to be conformed to the image of Christ.

In this text of Revelation we read that the overcomers will have the names of God “written” on their foreheads. The actual Greek word is “grapho” which means “to grave” and it is the same word that would be used of a sculptor who carves an image out of wood or stone. Similarly, the word that is rendered as “mark” when referring to the mark of the beast is the Greek word “charagma”, and Strong's Dictionary defines it in this way:

NT:5480 charagma (khar'-ag-mah); a scratch or etching, i.e. stamp (as a badge of servitude), or sculptured figure (statue).

The choice of words that the apostle John employed reveal that what is spoken of is not something superficial, such as taking a marker and writing something on a person's forehead, but it is permanent, indelible and deeply formed. John is describing two types of people. One group has been altered until they bear the image of the beast nature, and the other group has been transformed until they bear the image of the divine nature. These images are so deeply formed that it is as if a sculptor has chiseled an image out of stone and the image is permanently set.

The scriptures actually employ similar imagery in other places, for Paul writes:

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His **workmanship**, created in Christ Yahshua for good works...

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The word rendered as “workmanship” is the Greek “poiema” and this word speaks of something that has been fashioned into a masterpiece. What is it that God seeks to fashion? As the first chapter of this book reveals, God determined that man should be formed in His image, after His likeness, and when John writes that there are a group of overcomers who have the names of the Father and Son engraved in their foreheads he is indicating that there will be a firstfruits company of believers who come to a fulness of expression of the image of God. There will be those who are full stature saints who have attained to the image of Christ (Ephesians 4).

We read earlier about the terrible judgments of God to be poured out upon those who receive the mark of the beast. God’s wrath comes upon the children of disobedience (Colossians 3:6), and this mark of the beast is merely a sign that points to men and women who have given themselves wholly over to disobedience. They have sold themselves to serve the natural appetites. Their god is their belly and their end is destruction.

In this book we will explore God’s desire for men to bear His image and His likeness, and we will also examine the enemy’s plan to form within man his own corrupted beast nature. As the end of the age approaches we will see both of these plans coming to a fulness as the light seen in the overcomers grows brighter, and the darkness of a fallen world grows darker. Both the divine nature and the beast nature will come to fuller expressions until one group is sealed in their foreheads as being a mature expression of the divine image of God, while a much larger group are sealed in their foreheads as being a mature expression of the beast nature.

The church at large does not realize the peril of the moment. The church of this hour is depicted as a great whore riding upon a beast, and this is but another sign given by our Lord to give the wise understanding of the days we live in. Rather

than subduing and ruling over the beast nature, the church has made an unholy alliance with the beast. The sinful flesh is protected by the church, and the preaching of the disciple’s cross has been so diluted, and in many cases removed, that even the grossest of sins are tolerated and embraced by the harlot.

It is my hope that in reading this book that you will begin to understand the peril of the hour, and the deep deception that has fallen upon the church. We live in an age of apostasy where sound doctrine is rarely tolerated, and men and women prefer to focus upon teachings which are unsound. Many are at risk of coming to a full expression of the beast nature, for the One who restrains is shortly to be removed and then the beast nature will rise up uncontested in those who have failed to crucify the flesh. Many will be given over by God to an unrestrained slavery to the sinful flesh, and only those who have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts will be spared.

In this book we will explore God’s desire for men to bear His image and His likeness...

II Thessalonians 2:7-12

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

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Many are the saints who have been walking in sin. Many have been careless in their walk in this world, toying with temptation, and at times even fully embracing it. Few have labored to buffet their bodies and crucify the flesh, and as a judgment God will suddenly remove the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and give them over wholly to their depravity, their sinful fantasies, and their selfish nature. The still, small voice that has been urging the children of God to repentance will suddenly be removed, while at the same time the beast nature will rise up in all its power, and multitudes of those who once professed Christ will fall away and no longer make any pretense of seeking to please God. They will live only to satisfy the carnal desires of a depraved world.

I urge you to read this book prayerfully...

The hour is close at hand, and the Spirit is making a final appeal. It is time to take a decisive stand:

Revelation 18:4

“Come out of (the great harlot), my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues...”

Joshua 24:15

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve Yahweh, choose you this day whom ye will serve...”

I Peter 4:1-3

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ***so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.*** For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of

sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

One group of people live for the lusts of men, while another live for the will of God. One group are marked by the beast nature, the other with the divine nature. There is a vast group of people today who have sought out a middle ground. They pay lip service to God, calling Christ ‘Lord’ and ‘Master’ while at the same time seeking to fulfill their own lusts, to satisfy the many desires of the flesh and the soul. Immense numbers of saints picture God as a divine assistant who will help them find earthly prosperity, ease and satisfaction. Their minds are not set upon the will of God, but upon their own will and desires. Many who are called to be pure virgins, devoted to Christ alone, have become harlots riding upon the beast.

We live in an hour when all things are coming to a fulness and a maturity. At this hour you are either increasing in your reflection of the image of God, or the image of the beast. All things must come to maturity, to a fulness of stature, either of Christ, or of the beast.

I urge you to read this book prayerfully while allowing the Spirit to search your inward parts and reveal if there be any wicked way in you. May many overcomers come forth who have been victorious over the beast, his image, and the number of his name.

Let us make man in Our image...

The Bible opens with the account of God’s work of re-creating a world that has become subject to judgment, a world covered with darkness and made formless and void. A fall has already occurred as a third of the angels followed Satan in rebellion and they have been cast out of heaven down to the earth. Those who once stood in the

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presence of the One who is Light have been sealed up in darkness. Since they have rejected the Light, they have reaped the consequences of their choice. Even as Egypt once suffered the judgment of darkness, a darkness so deep that it could be felt, and no one dared move for the three days that it lasted, so too did the angels who abandoned their first estate know a time when darkness was their portion.

The day came, however, when God began to work to re-create the shattered earth which had fallen under the curse of darkness. In the span of six days God completely refashioned the Earth from a chaotic and formless void into something that He declared was “good.” What occurred on each day holds great spiritual truth that relates to the same process that man must go through in order to become a complete spiritual man fashioned after the image of God. On the sixth day we are told that God created man.

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him...

It is the false understanding of many that Adam bore the image of God, and that prior to the fall in the Garden he was perfect. Many assume that Christ came to restore man to the condition Adam knew before his fall. The truth, however, is that Adam was not a perfected man. He had the potential to bear the image of God and to be fully fashioned according to God's likeness, but Adam never attained to this. The apostle Paul gives us further insight into this.

I Corinthians 15:45-49

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first,

but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Adam was merely a living soul, but of God we are told that He is Spirit, and those who worship Him must do so in Spirit and in truth. The first man to ever bear the perfected image of God was not Adam, but Christ Yahshua. He declared this truth with the words:

John 14:9

"Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

The first Adam could not say "He who has seen me has seen the Father." The patriarchs could not say "He who has seen me has seen the father." None have been able to make this declaration other than Yahshua. Yahshua was the first man to fulfill the prophetic words of Genesis chapter 1, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." He was the first man of whom it could be truly stated that to see Him was to see the Father.

Many assume that Christ came to restore man to the condition Adam knew before his fall.

In Genesis then we see the beginning of God's plan, the seed that is planted in the ground, but it is much longer before we see the seed come forth to produce that which God declared to be His intent. Yahshua refers to Himself as "the Son of Man." More than any other title, this is what He declares of Himself. F.M. Fearnley in his book "The Chronicles of Man" shares that the word

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'son' signifies 'to build.' Yahshua was the first Man to be built, or fashioned, or constructed, after the image of God. He referred to His body as a building, saying "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." Yet a temple is incomplete without the Spirit to indwell it. Yahshua was the first Man to be so indwelt. To His disciples He declared:

John 14:16-17

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth..., you know Him because ***He abides with you, and will be in you.***"

Many men had known the abiding of the Spirit WITH them, and the disciples had even been able to heal the sick and cast out demons by the power

Ephesians 5:8

For you were formerly
darkness...

of the Spirit who dwelt WITH them. But a much fuller relationship would be experienced on Pentecost when the Spirit would be IN them. In this passage in

John's gospel we see that there was to be a change in the way that man and the Spirit dwelt together.

Having established then that Yahshua the Messiah was the first Man to fulfill the words of Genesis chapter one regarding man, being the first to truly bear the image and likeness of God, we can understand that God planned from the beginning the ages and stages that man must go through to reach the place of entering into His desire for man. The six days of creation reveal much of the plan of God to bring us to the last day when Man (True Man - the second Adam) would be revealed.

As the book of Genesis opens we find that the earth has already fallen into ruin. It has experi-

enced a judgment that has resulted in chaos and formlessness and darkness. So quickly does the transition come that many miss it.

Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. But the earth became formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep...

[For a fuller treatment of the correct rendering of the words of these two verses, and a deeper exposition of the judgment of the earth that is spoken of here, see the book "God's Plan of the Ages"].

The words had only just been penned that God created the heavens and the earth, when we read that the earth became formless and void. This description of the earth corresponds to the first Adam, for we already have read Paul's words where he declared "The first Adam was of the earth, earthy," showing that the first Adam is closely related to the earth. We also read in Genesis chapter one where God formed man of the dust of the earth. So the earth and its stages are a picture of man and his stages as God brings him to the place where he will fully bear the image of God.

Even as the words of Genesis 1:1-2 so quickly progress from the earth being created, to the earth becoming formless and void and covered in darkness, so too do we read of the creation of man, and almost immediately afterwards we read of the fall of man and the judgment that accrued to him. Even as the earth became formless and void, so man failed to attain the form of God and his life was made an empty wasteland. Even as the earth was sealed in darkness, so darkness descended upon man.

Ephesians 5:8

For you were formerly darkness...

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Matthew 4:16

"The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned."

The gospel of Matthew repeats the words of the prophet Isaiah. These words were not declaring that the land of Israel was any darker than any of the other nations. In the natural it has just as much light as any other land, and more than most since it lies close to the equator. What Isaiah and Matthew were referring to was the darkened condition of man that is the portion of all who are born of Adam. The darkness is a darkness of death as Matthew reveals. God spoke to Adam and told him that the day he ate of the forbidden tree he would surely die. It is a spiritual darkness that has been the lot of all men, for man was created to be a temple filled with the light of God's Spirit, but until Messiah no such man had been seen.

What then must happen in order for God to bring the earth, and man, back into the fashion and form which He can declare is good? The first event is to remove the darkness, and this we see occurring to the earth in Genesis chapter one.

Genesis 1:3-5

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

If man is also to take on a form that God can declare is good, then he must also follow the same pattern. He must receive light, and the curse of darkness must be removed. A parallel is here seen between the Old and New Testaments, for the Old Testament speaks of light coming into the

earth, while the New Testament speaks of light coming to man.

John 1:4-5

In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 8:12

Then Yahshua again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

John 9:5

"While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

John 12:36

"While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light."

Observe now a great tragedy of modern Christendom. Many are those who have become witnesses of the light. They were walking in darkness and they saw the light of Christ. Many are content to remain in this place and merely give testimony to the light they have witnessed in the person of the Son of God. Yet witnessing the light is not the whole purpose of God. God did not stop after day one of creation and then rest on the second day. He did declare that the light was good, and so it is good to recognize that the light of God was manifested in the life of Yahshua. However, if the saints are to progress onto the sixth day when man is formed in the image of God, they cannot camp out on day one. They cannot be content to merely see the

Man was created to be a temple filled with the light of God's Spirit.

The Mark of the Beast

light of day one and then wait until God takes them to heaven. They must have Christ formed in them.

This is perhaps the greatest manifestation of the apostasy of the hour we live in. The saints are preached a gospel that makes them professors of the light while failing to bring them to a place of transformation. They have light, but they are still formless and void, lacking a conformity to the image of Christ. Light is shining upon them, but it is merely exposing the ruin of their lives, and the saints call this ruin good. God did not call the state of the earth good on day one of creation. He merely called the light good. If you do not allow God to bring you past the place of seeing the light to a place where you too bear the image of the Heavenly, then you have fallen short of God's desire and have failed to attain to the plan of God that you should bear His image and His likeness.

God did not call the state of the earth good on day one of creation.

Of day two of the re-creation of the earth we read:

Genesis 1:6-8

Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

What is observed on day two is that water is covering everything. There is not yet any mention of dry land. Waters in Scripture are symbolic of death, and, after giving testimony of the light of Christ, man is to be baptized, which is to be fully immersed in water.

Acts 8:36-37

As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Yahshua Christ is the Son of God."

Acts 22:16

"Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name."

On day two, not only do we see water being prevalent, but we also see separation being a key work of the day. In the same way man, after confessing faith in Christ Who is the light of the world, is to be baptized in water, and in doing so he is symbolically demonstrating that his sins have been separated from him, being washed away. Baptism speaks of joining with Christ in His death whereby our sins are atoned for, that we might also be joined with Him in His resurrection life. This resurrection life is the subject of day three of the creation.

Genesis 1:9-13

Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

Even as Christ was raised from the dead on the third day, so we see the dry land arising from the waters of death on the third day. This then also

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symbolizes that man is not to remain in sin and death after confessing Christ, but he is to be resurrected as a new creation.

Romans 6:4-7

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.

What a great deceit is being spread by the enemy today to keep men and women in bondage to sin. Millions of professing believers are told that they are merely sinners saved by grace, and that nothing has fundamentally changed in their lives. They have no conception of their union with Christ, of their victory over sin and death. They continue in sin believing that this is both normal and expected, while counting on the blood of Christ to cover them and make them clean. They have failed to understand the words of the apostle John:

I John 5:18

We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

Multitudes of saints make no attempt to buffet their bodies and keep them in subjection. They have received the lie that they have no power over sin. Some who were homosexuals continue in their homosexuality. Some who were liars continue to lie. Some who were fornicators continue to fornicate. Some who were thieves continue to steal. The apostle Paul wrote:

I Corinthians 6:9-11

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Yahshua Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

On the second day of creation we see in type the baptism in water for the washing away of sins. We see separation occurring even as the saints are to leave off their sinning and present themselves as slaves to righteousness and obedience to God. On the third day we see the saints coming out of the waters of death and entering into resurrection life with Christ, a life that exists to do the will of the Father. We also see vegetation springing forth, and this speaks of the fruit that is to be produced in the lives of those who have come this far. This brings us to the fourth day.

Multitudes of saints make no attempt to buffet their bodies and keep them in subjection.

Genesis 1:14-19

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

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Having seen the light, having been cleansed from sin, being partakers of the resurrection life of Christ, the saints now shine forth as lights in the earth. Even as the stars in the heavens were given for signs, so too the children of God are given for signs and for wonders as the Scriptures do testify:

Isaiah 8:18

Behold, I and the children whom Yahweh has given me are for signs and wonders...

The saints shine forth as stars, having the light of Christ within them to be revealed to others.

Daniel 12:3

"Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."

*The stars of the sky are
the saints of God...*

Even as the glory of the Moon and the Sun and the stars vary from one another in their glory, so shall the glory which rests upon the saints vary in the day in which they receive their resurrected bodies.

I Corinthians 15:41-42

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.

This fourth day then speaks of the saints as they reveal the life of Christ within them. As a city set upon a hill they are to give off light. As virgins with oil in their lanterns they are to give light. Even as the stars are used to navigate by, so the saints are to be signs by which the world can

know the path of righteousness, and the way of truth.

There will be much grief on the day of judgment when many saints come before God having no oil in their lamps. The hour is already late for the saints to allow the light of Christ to be seen in their lives. The hour to earn reward is almost over, and many have given only the slightest concern to the matter. Like the wicked servant of Christ's parable, they have taken that which they have received and buried it in the earth of their flesh to give it back to Christ when He should call for it. They have earned no interest on what was entrusted to them. They have not brought forth increase for the Kingdom of God. They have no fruit that will abide, and great will be their shame when they stand in God's presence on that day.

The lights in the expanse of the heaven then speaks of the saints of God who are set as lights in the midst of darkness. The saints are to shine brightly out of the darkness. Yet it is a great indictment on the church today that few can tell the Christians apart from those who have not seen the light. Christians have allowed themselves to be conformed to a darkened world, and thus we see that the following words of Revelation are speaking of those who have been called of God, but who have failed to attain to the image of Christ.

Revelation 6:13

And the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

The stars of the sky are the saints of God, and tragically there are many who are like unripe figs. They have failed to come to maturity, which Paul describes as "the fulness of the stature of Christ" (Ephesians 4). Since these failed to attain to the image of the heavenly, they will be cast back down to the earth, for they stubbornly retain the

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image of the earthy.

Of the fifth day of creation we read:

Genesis 1:20-23

Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

The activity of the fifth day is continued on the sixth when God creates the beasts of the field. On the fifth day that which is created is both below man, in the sea, and above man, in the air. These creatures are spoken of again on the sixth day, and this makes it suitable to look at these days together.

Genesis 1:24-28

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so. God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and

over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Twice on this sixth day we read the words that man was created to rule, or exercise dominion, over the fish, the birds and the cattle. God spoke directly to the man and woman and said "Fill the earth and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." God's admonition to man is to both subdue and rule over these things. This gives us a clue as to what these creatures represent.

All of these creatures of the fifth and sixth day are animals and they typify the beast nature that must be conquered and ruled over. All of these creatures were declared good by God, and they were to be subject to the divine order of God. The governmental order of ruling and subjection is given in Scripture, and is as follows:

God's admonition to man is to both subdue and rule over these things.

God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, man is the head of woman, and man and woman rule over the creatures (I Corinthians 11, Genesis 1).

This brings us to perhaps the most critical part of what is revealed in this opening account from Genesis. In order for man to attain to the image and likeness of God, man must both accept and enforce God's governmental order. Man must take his place in the creation and rule as he was created to do. To fail in this is to fail in attaining to the image and likeness of God.

Why is this so? The entire creation bears the image of God as long as God's governmental order is maintained. God is the originator of all things.

The Mark of the Beast

He is the source of all life and the wellspring of all thought. He alone is to be the initiator of all activity among the creation, and all things must bow to His initiative. Thus we see Christ, the true Man after the image of God, declaring repeatedly, "I never do anything of my own initiative. I only do the will of the Father."

Christ took God the Father as His head. He submitted perfectly to the will of the Father and only did the things the Father commanded Him to do. He was so perfect in this that He even declared

When Eve obeyed the beast she became a slave to the beast nature.

that the words He spoke all originated in the Father, and He only spoke those things the Father commanded Him to speak. Because Christ was so fully submitted

to the governance of the Father, He became the perfect expression of the Father. To see Yahshua was to see God.

When the creation is also perfectly submitted to the governance of God then the creation will be a perfect expression of God. We can yet see God in creation, but the image is marred and distorted due to the fall. Man was to take his place in the creation and to submit to his Head, which is Christ. Man was to receive his direction from Christ, and in turn he was to subdue and rule over the beasts of earth and sky and sea. Woman was given to man to be a helpmate in this ruling.

We know the story of the fall in the Garden of Eden, and how man and woman both failed to accept and maintain the government of God. God commanded both the man and woman to rule over the beasts, yet Eve allowed the beasts to rule over her. We are told that the serpent was the most subtle (cunning and wise) of all beasts of the field. The serpent deceived Eve and she submitted herself to the beast. God commanded Eve to subdue the beasts and rule over them, making them submit to her as she in turn was subject to

God. Eve failed to do this, and rather than submitting to God and expressing His image, she submitted to the beast and began to express the beast nature.

Eve in turn urged her husband to eat of the fruit which God had forbidden them to eat. At this point Eve was manifesting the beast nature, for she had submitted to the beast rather than God. Paul tells us that we become slaves to the one whom we obey.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey...?

Thus, when Eve obeyed the beast she became a slave to the beast nature. Adam likewise had to choose whether he would subdue and rule over this beast nature, choosing obedience to God and honoring the divine government, or whether he would also bow down to the beast and come under its governance. Adam chose to bow down to the beast nature, and as he did so the potential to express the image of God within him was lost, and this is shown in his being barred from the pathway to the Tree of Life. Adam's soul became darkened and overshadowed by the image of the beast. Adam, who was created to bear the image of God, became formless and void, lacking the image of God within him. He also came under the curse of darkness.

Had God made a miscalculation in His creation? Was His plan to "create man in Our image, after Our likeness" thwarted? No! God knew that the first Adam would fail, even as the first earth had been subjected to judgment. He had already planned that mankind should not be perfected apart from sending His only begotten Son into the earth to subdue and rule over the beast nature. This Christ did perfectly. He always maintained the government of God, always being per-

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fect in obedience to the Father, never giving in to the suggestions of Satan, the temptations of the flesh, or the enticements of the world. In Christ man was seen as a perfect expression of God, and all the saints are called to bear this image of the Heavenly.

What is missing from the gospel today? There is an absence of this message of ruling over the beast nature. Mankind cannot attain to the desire of God to bear His image and likeness unless he first rules over all the beasts of earth and sky and sea, that is to say, man must subdue and rule over the spiritual antitypes which are depicted in the types of nature. In the following chapters we will examine what the beast nature is more fully. Sadly, many saints have not discerned the need to rule over this lower nature. They have tried to make peace with the beast, to live harmoniously with it, when it must be subdued and ruled over.

There is an entire church portrayed as a harlot and as Babylon in Scripture, who has failed to rule over the beast, and it will be this beast that in the end will be her demise. The apostle John speaks of this in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 17:3-5, 16-17

So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

And the ten horns which you saw on the beast,

these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

The harlot church system today rides on the beast, but it has not tamed it. Rather it has made an unholy alliance with the lower nature and fails to exercise dominion over it. Because of this failure, God will cause the beast to make the harlot desolate and naked, to eat her flesh and burn her with fire. This is not a bad thing, for it is the flesh of a fallen church system that must be consumed, and her nakedness must be exposed in order for God to clothe her with robes of righteousness.

What is missing from the gospel today?

God will accomplish through Christ and His overcomers, that which Adam and Eve failed to do in the Garden. He will cast down the beast and He will raise up a body of overcomers who will exercise dominion over the beast.

Revelation 15:2

And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and **those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name**, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

The first chapter of the first book of the Bible reveals God's design for man to rule over the beasts, and the last book of the Bible reveals that there will be a company of overcomers who do so. God's plan has not been thwarted. All goes according to Yahweh's plan of the ages. Even as Adam and Eve took upon themselves the image of the beast by submitting to the serpent, so there

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will be those who are victorious over the beast and his image. These will bear the image of the heavenly. These will have the seal of God in their foreheads, while a multitude of others receive the mark of the beast.

It is a great folly that the church has so misunderstood that which is spoken of the beast, his image, and his number. Multitudes are focused upon avoiding some physical mark of the beast that will be stamped upon the hand or forehead, not realizing that the mark is already there. Man-

The number of the beast is the number of the flesh man...

kind bears the image of the beast in their mind and in their actions. The number of the beast is the number of the flesh man, and all who bear the image of the first

Adam, and who have not been conformed to the image of the last Adam, bear this mark.

It is a great deceit that the church should be focused on conspiracies of men and physical marks on the hand and forehead, but that she has neglected to preach the truth that the mark has already been given, and only by being united with Christ in His death in order to be joined with Him in the power of His resurrection, can man rise above the beast nature and bear the image of the heavenly. Many teachers of prophecy are telling the saints that they must refuse to receive some physical mark that will one day be given, while failing to admonish the saints to rule over the beast nature that assails them daily.

In closing this chapter, let me recap what has been shared. The opening chapter of Genesis which details the creation of the earth, its judgment and its re-creation, is a type and foreshadowing of man. Man too fell and was judged. He became formless and covered in darkness, and he too needs the moving of the Spirit of God upon Him to refashion him after God's image in order that God might declare man good. The six days of

creation are a picture of the process man must go through in this restoration, and the goal is the seventh day, the Sabbath rest of God where all is in harmony with the Father.

The vast majority of the church has failed to progress through all six days to arrive at the seventh. Many have gotten no further than day one, and in this failure they have fallen short of the grace of God. It is not enough to see the light of day one which speaks of Christ. Christ is but the door, and there is a straight and narrow path to be followed all the way to day seven. Many saints have experienced the baptism of the second day, but have failed to discern the significance of this washing away of sin and separation from wickedness and death. They have been washed, but then many return to the mire of sin. Those who arrive at the third day will experience the resurrection life of Christ, and it is through this union with Christ that the child of God is able to walk as an overcomer in this world and to produce fruit in their lives that will abide to the glory of the Father.

This leads to the fourth day when the saints are to be as lights set in the firmament of heaven. Many of these stars have been cast back to the earth as unripe figs, but there is a remnant who will shine with the glory of Christ. On the fifth and sixth days the beasts are created which mankind must rule over. If a man should exercise dominion over the beast nature he will then attain to God's Sabbath rest. There will be rest in the land, which is man's body, and the will of God will be completely fulfilled. Man will have attained to the image and likeness of God.

There is great grace available in this hour for man to attain to the will of God. Much of the church is unaware of the desire of God in this matter, and are not availing themselves of this grace. Many are content to dwell with beasts that are neither subject to them, nor ruled over. There is a vast multitude who have joined themselves to a harlot

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church which rides upon the beast, and the call of God's Spirit in this hour is to "come out of her, My people." Those in this church have no adherence to the governmental order of God. Men choose to obey the voice of their wives rather than God, and men and women together have chosen to listen to the voice of the beast, rather than heeding the Word of God.

Let those who have ears to hear, hear what the Spirit is speaking.

*It is not enough to see the
light of day one which
speaks of Christ.*

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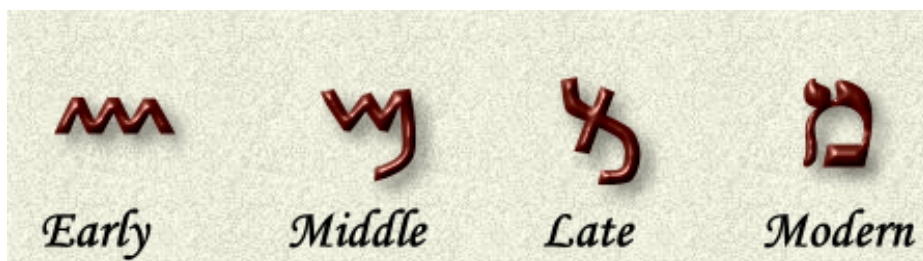
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PARABLES PRECEPT—The Hebrew Alphabet



(Image source: Ancient Hebrew Resource Center's Website)

The Hebrew letter pictured above is Mem. Looking at the early representation, the Paleo-Hebrew, you can see that it was an image of water, having the appearance of waves.

Jeff Benner in his book *Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible* writes that the name of this letter most likely is derived from the Hebrew word “mayim,”

meaning *water*. The sound of this letter is the same as the English letter M, and this is one of the clearest parallels in the appearance of the Paleo-Hebrew letter and the English letter, as they both look much alike.

Did you know the letter M was initially a pictograph of water?

According to Jeff Benner, many of the Hebrew words that contain this letter have within them the “meaning of liquid, water,

sea, mighty, and massive from the size of the sea, and chaos from the storms of the sea.”

The Hebrew word for *dissolve* was written as:

𐤇𐤍

This is a picture of water, and a foot, which symbolizes to carry. When water carries the earth away it is dissolved in the water.

The Hebrew word for *hundred* is written as:

𐤇𐤍

Mr. Benner writes that this word first indicated an unknowable amount, even as the sea's extent was unknown, but later came to be associated with a hundred.