

Communication and Coming Out of Babylon (Part 1)

Combating the Prince of the Power of the Air

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Galatians 1: 4-6 Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.

Verse 4 opens the door of thought to all that follows in this epistle. Paul is inferring that there is something persistently evil about the age we live in, and whatever it is, *it* is influencing defections from the Church. That is the tie between those two verses. Even though a new paragraph begins in verse 6, it is actually the introduction in verse 4 that connects and gives Paul reason to talk about the defections that are taking place in the Church.

Paul states here as fact that the world is evil and that defections are being caused by this evil world because people are responding to the world. This is confirmed for us in Revelation 18. It is confirmed for us in a warning and an admonition from God our Father through Jesus Christ.

Revelation 18:1-5 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power: and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit: and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. [Certainly an indication of evil.] For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed [grown] rich through the abundance of her delicacies. [We see there worldwide aspects, thus reinforcing what Paul said: "this present evil world." It is not concentrated in one place. It is all over the place.] And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. [There is the admonition and command.] For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

I do not believe that there has ever been a time during the history of the outworking of God's purpose when this advice is more urgently required to be heeded. Among mankind the course of the world did not begin in the original Babylon. It began in the Garden of Eden through the disbelieving conduct of Adam and Eve. It is they who introduced the alien spirit and conduct

among mankind, because they *were* mankind at that time. It is they, who under the influence of Satan, disbelieved God and followed Satan's line of reasoning and conduct.

They spread it to their children, and their children continued to spread it to Adam and Eve's grandchildren, and on and on. In one small step Satan wedged his way into the picture of human conduct. In that manner Satan's influence became the way of life of virtually all mankind. But it was in Babylon, first under Nimrod and then under Nebuchadnezzar, that its concepts were perfected and forced on concentrated masses of people in a central location, and then those people were used to impose it forcibly on others through whatever methods were necessary.

These two Babylons were dealt with by God and destroyed. With the first one that appears in Genesis 10 and 11, God directly took action by destroying the Babylonians' ability to communicate, and thus scattering them over the face of the earth. The second time, less directly, God raised up the Medo-Persian Empire to destroy Babylon's powerful and evil influence militarily.

With both of those Babylons, as we would look at it today, their influence was pretty much localized. The first was concentrated in a very small area with relatively few people who lived between the Tigris and Euphrates valleys. The second Babylon's geographical influence was greatly expanded, but it was still pretty much contained within what is called The Fertile Crescent in the Middle East.

The second Babylon's armies, and its economic and educational policies, and its religions imposed anti-God ways upon many, many more people than the original one, and these people were then brought under its influence. Most important for us is that those upon whom this evil influence from the second Babylon was imposed were our ancestors who were the primary inhabitants of the western world. That part of the world today is known as the bastion of Christianity. Now we have reached that period of time called in the Bible "the Last Days," or "the end-time." Time-wise we stand on the cusp of the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.

The Bible's prophecies foretell that Babylon is once again going to be on the scene of events, only this time its powerful influence is being felt worldwide. This time Babylon will not only have dominant armies and economic and educational systems, as well as strongly-entrenched religions, but it will also have extremely effective mass communication networks. These mass communication networks will be the means of disseminating its way into the minds of men, always influencing them against their Creator and His people; thus Revelation 18 gives the urgent warning to take action while one can.

The influence of Babylon is affected by means of communication, and strong communication takes place by means of seeing overwhelming numbers of examples of misguided conduct by those already enslaved. Unknown to them, it is an evil influence. To them it is just a way of life. To them, they do not see it as something that is not really good. I am talking in generalities here. But there are other forms of communication that are important for us to understand.

II Corinthians 4:3-4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them

which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

There is a far more subtle influence that comes by hearing Babylon's words and failing to truly monitor the attitudes in which they are given. Above all, this subtle influence is the inaudible but nonetheless attractive and powerful spiritual communication of Babylon's invisible god and leader—the prince of the power of the air—and the hordes of equally evil demons that he commands.

Deflecting the influence of these communications can be a daunting task that calls for one to be aware of its reality, and to be on guard, because identifying and resisting the communication is the key to blunting Babylon's siren call. God admonishes us to come out of her, but there is physically no place to go because the influence of Satan through Babylon's powers of communication is everywhere.

Revelation 12:7-9 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven, and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

I want to address right in this portion of the sermon the statement "his angels were cast out." I want to do this a bit more thoroughly so that we can understand it properly within its time setting.

First of all, remember that the book of Revelation was given as a vision, sort of like a motion picture, maybe a motion picture in 3-D. John wrote what he saw and what he heard. The question is, at this point in time, how would God depict a major turning point in His relationship with these angels that were cast out, and those cast-out angels' relationship with mankind? The vision that John was given seeing these angels cast out was God's means of showing this major turn.

For a little bit further background, I want you to go to the book of Jude.

Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness under the judgment of the great day.

Planet Earth has always been home base for those angels. In other words, angels inhabited Earth long before men, and used it as the base of their operations. But we need to understand that they were not confined there. In one sense, even mankind is not confined as long as he takes some part of his environment with him. I am talking about space travel. We have to take a bit of Earth with us in the form of a capsule, or whatever, so that we can continue our life.

The angels were not hindered in that way. Apparently they do not need air to breathe, and so they could have access to other portions of the universe that we do not have access to, at least with the same facility that they do. That is the story behind them being "cast down." By comparing Isaiah 14 with Ezekiel 28, we know that a major conflict broke out between God and those angels who were inhabiting the earth, and that these angels were led by Satan.

II Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment....

Again, putting together Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28: 2-6, and now II Peter 2: 4, we can see very clearly that Satan and his angels—the ones who left the earth—were decisively defeated, and this resulted with their first estate—Planet Earth—becoming their prison.

The word that is translated "hell" in II Peter 2: 4 is transliterated into "Tartaros." In the Greek it means "a place of restraint." The earth was formerly home base for these angels, and they were free to go to God's throne in heaven, or to wherever else in the universe to carry out the things they were doing. The result of that war was that they were put back on earth, and their former first estate became their prison. They are now effectively imprisoned here.

We know Genesis 1:1 begins with Planet Earth being in a state of chaotic destruction, greatly in need of repair. We can also learn from Job 38 that when the earth was created it was not that way. It was beautiful, so that all the angels sang for joy at what was going to be their place of habitation. This first intergalactic war that took place between these spirit beings left the earth in a state of chaos and in need of repair. Those angels lost that war. That repair God accomplished as preparation for the creation of Adam and Eve in the first six days, which we see in the first chapter of Genesis. When we leave Genesis 1, the earth is prepared to receive mankind.

But Satan and his demons are still here! It may not look like a prison to us, because now it is beautiful once again, but it is a prison for those demons who made war against God. Adam and Eve are introduced into the picture. Guess who is there?—Johnny-on-the spot. It is the king of the demons, and he takes on Adam and Eve right from the get-go. Of course he wins decisively that first battle with mankind, and deceives Eve into taking the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and Adam did it right with her.

However, we have got to understand that though those demons and Satan are on earth with us, they are *greatly* restrained. Their powers are awesome compared to ours. Of course they would want to kill us in a moment given half a chance by God, but they are greatly restrained by God, and apparently are afraid to go so far as to make their use of us to their ends; but God nonetheless has given them a certain amount of liberty.

Let us go to Job 1, and we will see these restraints, and something else beside. Satan, in an argument with God, is presenting his case.

Job 1:10-12 Have not you made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he has on every side? You have blessed the

work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon himself put not forth your hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

Do you see the restraint that is there? God told the king of the demons, "You can go so far, and no further. That is it. If you do that, you are history." Satan respected that because he is afraid of God to some degree. We see the same basic thing in chapter 2. But I want you to see that when the hedge was taken away and the restraints were lifted (even though there were limits to it), Satan's power, given the permission, was pretty great, and he just wiped out Job's family. So under certain circumstances, brethren, be aware God may give Satan the power to do something of that nature.

Remember, this is all invisible to us. We cannot see it going on. This is why faith and trust is so necessary, that God has our best interests in His heart at all times. Sometimes these times can be awfully trying, but then there is God's promise. Part of the hedge is still there, and He says He will never tempt us above what we are able, but will always with the temptation give a way of escape. Job escaped with himself and his wife. They were still intact, but there was much to be learned. We can see that Job acknowledged this in chapter 3.

Job 3:23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God has hedged in?

We cannot see a great deal of the way God has purposed for us. Job is acknowledging that his own life is hedged in. Even though he lost his family, and lost all of his money and his health, yet he still acknowledged that God had him hedged in and that his life was still in God's hands. So there is a principle of protection.

We are going to look in one more place. This is a pronouncement by God against Israel and Judah.

Isaiah 5:3-5 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between Me and My vineyard. [His vineyard was Israel.] What could have been done more to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes [the right kind of fruit], brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to: I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down.

That is one that should make us say, "Uh oh!" Our faith is really going to be tested because He is warning us that there comes a time when it is necessary to take down the hedge, individually or a group. This is one of the reasons why the book of Job is so important. The hedge will be

taken down for God's purpose and our good. It will not be taken down carelessly. It will be taken down with thought and consideration of what it is going to open up to those who have much of the hedge removed, because God is moving to work out something.

Again, remember we cannot see this. It is going on invisibly just as it was invisible to Job's eyes. He did not know. I will tell you, there was a man of faith. Job did not know everything that was going on. He did not do everything perfectly, but his reasoning power was still there, and he had not lost his faith in God. He questioned it a bit, but he kept coming around to the right answers, and then whenever God Himself intervened and spoke, Job put things together beautifully.

If Job had lost his faith during that time of severe trial he could have easily cashed in his chips, but he did not. Instead, he repented of anything that was wrong that he knew of. In Job 42 he says, "I repent in dust and ashes." That is kind of interesting, because in the first chapter God Himself calls him an upright man. What would an upright man have to repent of? But he did. The way God saw him, he was not as pure as the word "upright" gives the impression. There were things in Job's heart that needed to be changed, and his understanding and wisdom increased.

Now back to Revelation 12. We find here that another intergalactic war is going to occur. God is going to allow the restraint of the demons who have been imprisoned on earth to be taken out of the way. The doors of the prison will be open, and they can mount up another attack on God's throne in heaven. We find that they lose again. They are hard to convince. But they lose again, and this time they are cast back down to the earth. And then what happens? Well, we find trouble all over, but God specifically mentions trouble for the church. In verse 10 it says, "The accuser of the brethren is cast down."

Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

What I want to bring to our attention is that Revelation 12 is signaling that there is going to be a time when a great deal more of the restraint God has Satan and his demons under is to be removed. I personally do not believe that this has occurred yet, but at this present time, looking at what is happening in the church of God, and much more specifically into the Church of the Great God, I have never seen a year like this past year where people have had such serious problems. Most of them were *relationship* problems, such as getting offended and offending others. Brethren, many of these things have been right in the family—in the physical family and in the spiritual family.

I will tell you what this is signaling to me. Even though Revelation 12: 9—the casting down of the demons—has not yet occurred, I think that God has already opened up the door so that they can mount an attack against Him, and some of the restraints have already come down. I think that He has done this gradually in order to give us time to meet and overcome our relationship problems where we have allowed ourselves to become so easily offended, and of

having offended others, without thinking about the repercussions of what we are about to say or do.

We are fighting a battle that has, I think, intensified, and not only intensified, but has become a great deal more personal than it has ever been. Persecution from the world may cost us our life, but persecution from Satan right within the church is far more deadly, and therefore serious.

I see evidence of this release of restraint in what is going on in the world, primarily. Those are the most visible. There is war everywhere you look on earth. Conflicts are going on that involve people being killed and lands destroyed. There is more to it than that, but I do not want to go into it at this time. I think the sum of what I have said so far is I feel that some of the demons' ability to communicate with mankind has been opened up to them. What are they going to communicate?

Galatians 5:18-21 But if you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife [fightings], seditions [jealousies], heresies [selfish ambition], envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Do you not think these works of the flesh are what Satan and his demons are going to be trying to encourage us to do? He knows very well these are the things that will keep us out of the Kingdom of God.

Let us consider this in the light of the fact that the book of Revelation shows Babylon as a worldwide system that may be focused in one nation or in a group of nations. It is a *worldwide* system. The major difference between what we now face in the end-time rising of Babylon as compared to previous Babylons, lies in the intensification availability and receptivity of its communication. As far as we know, never before has mankind been confronted with these twisted demonic persuasive powers which are using the visible and audible influence of radio, music, movies, television, and the Internet, in addition to the already-in-transition of thought and standards of conduct in religion, education, politics, and the military—all of these at one time available to them to communicate to mankind worldwide.

Physically, there is nowhere to run! The battle to resist is almost entirely internal, and it is fought right where we live and conduct the business of our life. What we have got to believe and trust in with steely determination and discipline is that God never gives one a responsibility impossible to perform; therefore, we can come out of Babylon. What God commands we can do. If He commands us to come out, we come outright where we are.

The coming out will not be a physical leaving of a geographical area, but it will be a leaving of Babylon's spiritual and psychological influence. This is not to say that changing one's physical location will not be of help in fighting a spiritual battle. It may very well be so, but at the same

time acknowledge the reality that we can take Babylon's influence anywhere we go on earth. We can take it with us. If that is not corrected in the mind, what good is it to just leave one area and go to another?

I think the Bible gives us enough indication to know that cities are places of concentrated evil. They are far worse than living out in the country. The country is not perfectly safe, but generally, it is a better place to live. You can see right in these two chapters of Revelation 17 and 18 that Babylon—the very epitome of evil—is a city. So sometimes getting out of the city is helpful, but do not do it ignoring the fact that we can take Babylon with us. We are already stained by it, and we can take it with us anywhere we go. At least, out in a more rural area you are better off because you are not confronted by it in such concentrated doses. But then again, we can invite it right into the house through the Internet and television. You figure it out for yourself.

Revelation 18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

In God's description of Babylon's evil qualities He links demons with birds; not just any birds, but with unclean and hateful birds—birds that depict in their natural characteristics activities that humans find disgusting and revolting.

America's national symbol, the bald eagle, is beautiful to behold and majestic in flight, but it is also a carrion eater feeding on the dead, and a vicious killer relentlessly and ruthlessly seeking to devour. (It sounds like some of our business practices.) Then there is the vulture, which is ugly to behold, and one that strips the flesh from anything, including humans who have fallen in death.

There are other birds mentioned here, like the owl, which has somewhat similar characteristics, but they are nocturnal in their habits, seeking to attack and kill under the cover of the darkness of night. They have an additional negative trait in that they seem to seek out abandoned ruins of buildings as their habitat—places that are perceived as cursed to men.

What God is doing here is painting Babylon as a dangerous place inhabited by predators, and the focal point almost as if it is the very generator and distributor of all evil on earth. Babylon has spread its influence all over the whole earth, but in another sense its heart and core is in one place: that city.

I want you to turn to another well-known familiar scripture in Ephesians 2. This is a wealth of information of what we face here in the end-time.

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you has he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conduct in times past in the lusts of our flesh,

fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

In the first ten verses of Ephesians 2 Paul begins by showing that the children of God—us—who were at one time objects of His wrath, are now, by God's grace, legally and spiritually free from the clutches of Satan's dominion. However, the influences of the world Satan has created remain to be faced, dealt with, and overcome by us. They are there, and what they have created is still here, and we are in it.

Satan is described as a spirit meaning, in this case, a spirit being who is the prince of the power of the air. These phrases have a familiar ring to them, but there are alternative translations that I think are better suited to understanding. One translation called him "the commander of the spiritual powers of the air now at work among God's rebel subjects." I like that one, but this next one I like better in terms of its power to impress. That translation calls him "the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness."

Webster's gives us one of the usages for jurisdiction. Jurisdiction means the limits or territory within which authority may be exercised. This is very important. That authority, according to this verse, has something to do with air, and agrees perfectly with Ephesians 6:12. In some Bibles it says, "principalities and powers in high places" (as in the King James). Other Bibles say "principalities and powers in heavenly places." When they translate it "heavenly," they are not referring to the place of God's throne, but to the first heaven—the air surrounding the earth where the birds fly; thus we can see another tie-in with Revelation 18:2.

And so we have Ephesians 2 and Revelation 18:2 both focused in on something about the air and unclean birds symbolizing demon powers. Birds operate in this same heaven over which Satan has jurisdiction. God gave Satan and his demons a substantial measure of authority over everything from the air surrounding the earth down to the earth itself, including the earth's inhabitants—*us!*

We want to add another little picture to this. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul mentions the word "wrestling." Pay attention to that word. Paul is using a *war* metaphor, but in this war metaphor he uses the word, "wrestling." Now what does wrestling tell you about a particular aspect of war where people have knives and swords? Paul is telling us that what we are going to go through with these demons is hand-to-hand combat. We are not going to fight a war from long distance by radar. We are not going to be sending airplanes out there to drop bombs on somebody who is ten thousand miles away. Our warfare is going to be under the canopy of air that surrounds the earth, and it is inhabited by foul demons. Our warfare with them is going to be hand-to-hand combat. We might also add to this, if we could think of it in terms of *men face to face!* That is pretty close.

Things are coming down to that point in God's purpose where we have to meet the enemy right up front in order to prove our faith and loyalty to God, our love for Him, and our love for His way. For us to be prepared for the Kingdom of God, He is going to allow the enemy to come in close in order to give us that training, discipline, and testing to see whether or not we are going to lose our cool under the heat of battle.

Does Satan use people? Of course he does. We should take instruction and never forget that we must look at these people Satan uses as God does, and always understand that they may be of sincere intention, of strong belief. People are going to think that they are doing God a service when they put the Christians to death.

The scribes and the Pharisees and all the high muckety-mucks in Jerusalem thought they were doing God a service by putting Jesus to death. It was their own Savior they were putting to death, so we can expect that these people will come at us, not necessarily with full intention of killing us, but with that capability being there, and also with minds that are deceived and maybe angry, not understanding at all.

Let us pay attention again to the word "air," because it has not been milked of all that might be there. Air is that substance, that realm through which most communication travels. For example, sound is possible because of the vibration of air. The communication involving electronic media travels through air. Not only that, but things like television media, satellites, radio, and the Internet all travel through air. In fact, when I was younger, it was very common when speaking of radio to refer to it as airwaves.

Here is another amazing discovery involving air that I think is worth thinking about in terms of the transmission of attitudes and thoughts. There are forms of communication that require no sound, but they nonetheless involve the ability of air to be the media for communication.

While Evelyn was recovering from her appendectomy this summer, Marjorie Japngie sent her a small book written by a Japanese man concerning the structure of water. In the course of his subject he wrote of vibration, saying that every cell in our body is vibrating at the rate of 570 trillion vibrations per second. The importance of this fact to this sermon is that perhaps the major reason we are able to see, in addition to hearing, is also because of the vibration of the media in which we live, and move, and breathe right in. In other words, air makes possible the communication of visible influence in addition to audible communication.

John 7:37-39 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Much of the bulk of that book Evelyn and I read, (and I read most of it—at least the parts that she pointed out to me), is concerned with the structure of water, and how that structure is affected by its environment.

I think we all knows that e