

The Antichrist "Bride"

by Stella Paterson

"For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is in Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2-3

The Bride of Christ is comprised of the faithful believers who have responded to the Love of the Father and come to put their trust in His Son. At the same time there are the unfaithful ones who may have at one time known Him but have become apostate. Then there are those who believe they are His because they "prayed the sinner's prayer" and subsequently were told they were "born again" and began living a "religious" life in their own strength, according to "rules" of apostate man.

In these days, the true Bride of Christ is being prepared for that Day when Jesus comes to receive His Bride to Himself. But what of the apostate ones who honestly believe they are His, yet go their own way in a deluded state believing they are ready to meet Him? In reality they are opposing His every effort to draw them to Himself. They prefer to carry on in their fleshly existence, which is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16) James wrote, "*Ye adulteresses [Greek: 'a (male) paramour; figuratively apostate'], know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God.*" (James 4:4) As 1 John 2:22 shows, they are "antichrist" because they have rejected both Father and Son.

In this article we are going to look at "relationship" as God intended. We will also see what becomes of the "antichrist bride." My prayer is that all who read this will be gripped, as I have been, by the reality of the truths presented here.

In "*Who Is Antichrist?*" we showed what the Bible tells us "antichrist" is. Some Bible translations place "the" before antichrist, which makes it appear that there is a particular person who will be known as "The Antichrist." Other translations actually capitalize the word, suggesting that it is a proper name. This is of man's doing and has been accepted and passed on through tradition. In this age of apostasy, millions have come to believe that "Antichrist" is one single individual who rises up to rule the world. I know from experience that the "voices" out there are so loud that it is easy to become caught up in such a prominent concept. But it is another one of those insidious things that has crept into the Body of Christ to keep us from seeing who the true "antichrist" is. For those of you who find that the widely published ideas "make sense," I ask you to set it all aside and hear the heart of the Father. It is of utmost importance that we keep as our focus the central message in the Bible.

What is the central message of the Bible? The answer is, "Relationship with God and His Son Jesus Christ." Let us begin with the foundational understanding of relationship - the reason we were created in the first place. This is the standard by which we must always "measure" everything we read in the Bible. If we are faithful in this, we are less likely to be led astray into strange doctrines.

As soon as the last article was posted, the Lord began pouring into my spirit the things He desired to reveal in this one. I was in awe, as He brought scripture after scripture to my mind and showed how each related to the other. We may read scriptures in a particular context, and too often out of context, seeing only in part what God has given us through His Spirit and penned by the scribes of old. The Bible is His whole counsel and we must consider that with Jesus being the Alpha and the Omega, everything from Genesis to Revelation IS the context of God's word to us.

Throughout the Bible we can find countless passages where symbolism is used to convey a powerful message. And so very often, word meanings are an integral part of the "key" to the message. It begins in Genesis and flows all the way to the end of Revelation. If we take something literally that is intended to be symbolic we will miss the vast majority of what God is saying. This, I believe, is where so much error has infiltrated the Body of Christ and moved the masses from the simplicity that is found only in Him. We just don't hear His heart!

Man was created for relationship with his Creator, and nothing has changed. The Bible is full of "patterns" but the pattern of marriage between man and woman is the most important of all. It was put in place to keep us mindful of our relationship with God and of our coming Bridegroom Jesus. But it began long ago, in the Old Testament. Even at creation God declared that man and woman would come together and be "*one flesh*." (Genesis 2:24)

The Old Testament "husband"

Although it is not the only one translated "husband" there is one particular Hebrew word which is quite significant. That word is "baal", and means "*a master; hence a **husband**, or (figuratively) owner (often used with another noun in modifications of this latter sense)*." Its meaning is derived from another Hebrew word, also spelled "baal" and defined as: "*to be master; hence (as denominative from H1167) to marry*." It is now easy to see the relationship between it and the capitalized "Baal" which is "*Baal, a Phoenician deity*," as the Hebrew dictionary shows. It was translated "*Baal, [plural] Baalim*" and is "*the same as H1167*" - the word for "husband."

Israel was regarded as the spouse of Jehovah, as we see in Jeremiah 3:14a: "*Return, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for **I am a husband [Hebrew: baal] unto you***." With Israel being His "wife", and from the many accounts of her unfaithfulness come the strong words of rebuke He used when He spoke through

His prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. He used words like "**whoredom, harlot, whoring after, playing the harlot, committing adultery and bill of divorcement.**" Here is one example: "...**thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols.**" (Ezekiel 23:30) Also, in the New Testament, the words "**adultery and fornication**" appear; often referring to man's unfaithfulness to God through turning to idolatry. When we see the constant use of such strong, descriptive words we can know assuredly that relationship and faithfulness to Him is uppermost in God's mind.

Symbolism can be seen in word definitions, as shown here with "apostasy" and "divorce" having the same Greek root. In the New Testament, the word "**divorcement**" comes from the Greek "apostasion" (Greek #647) which means "**properly something separative, that is, (specifically) divorce.**" From this, comes the derivation of the word "apostasy." The Greek dictionary gives the definition as, "**Feminine of the same as G647; defection from truth (properly the state), ('apostasy').**" This, as we all know, is the "falling away" that brings to the fore the corporate antichrist body, the "son of perdition". As we said in the last article, "**son of perdition**" could also be translated "offspring of ruin or loss." The antichrist "bride" becomes even more powerful in her opposition, with increasing power from Satan the adversary. She has no idea that God has brought "strong delusion" so that she would believe the lies of the enemy. (2 Thessalonians 2:11)

If we go back to 2 Thessalonians 2:3, we see how Paul makes it clear that the apostate ones embody the "man of sin." This is another one of those symbolic passages. If we read verses 3-12, keeping in mind this symbolism, we will see the horror of what Paul was communicating. Remember too that the "man of sin" is a "man of flesh."

The mystery of love

God is Love, and when we are born anew by His Spirit, Love comes to dwell in our spirit, replacing "self" which is our spiritual condition of sinful flesh. 1 John 4:19 tells us that "**We love because He first loved us.**" Christ in us evokes love in response to His Love, for "**the love of God is shed abroad [Greek: 'bestowed'] in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.**" The fruit of the Spirit is Love...!

There was a "natural" response placed in woman when she was taken from man's side, next to his heart and protected under his arm. In the same way that we love because God first loved us, the woman loves in response to the love shown by the husband. To look at the "pattern" in our lives, the husband, as the "head of the wife," has the responsibility to love her as much as he loves himself. Women were created as tender, responsive beings; we respond to the loving "headship" of our husband when he, as a true godly man, lays down his life for his wife. Does this sound idealistic? It is Bible! Hear the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:22-24: "**Wives, be in subjection unto [be disposed or**

inclined toward'] *your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church: being **himself the saviour of the body**. But as the church is subject to [is disposed or inclined toward'] Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.* A man who is fully surrendered to the "headship" of Christ, walking in the in-dwelling Love, will have a wife who is easily "*disposed or inclined toward*" him. A man whose wife cannot respond to him, is not truly surrendered to Christ. And a Christian woman who does not respond to her godly husband is in rebellion and disobedience to God. A man has no biblical right to demand that his wife be in subjection to him when he is not in subjection to Christ. Paul's admonition gives us a pattern for our good and it will "work" every time.

Then Paul elaborates further, detailing the responsibilities of the husband. ***Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church: because **we are members of his body**.*** (Ephesians 5:25-30) How often do we hear more emphasis on the wife's submission to her husband than on the husband's submission to God? When done in the right order, all will be as it should. The wife will have no problem following the lead of her godly husband: she will know without question that she is loved and cherished. How comforting it is for a woman whose husband is a lover of God and in whom the fruit of the Spirit is evident!

Next, we have Paul repeating the message from Genesis 2:24. *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh."* The spiritual aspect of this pattern in Paul's teaching is seen in the next verse: ***This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.*** And he ends with, *"Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear [Greek: 'be in awe of'] her husband."* (Ephesians 5:31-33) Is there any woman who could not be in awe of her man who is sold out to Jesus and leading his home in a life of faith in Him? This would not be the awe of a fleshly husband, but a quiet, peaceful sense of reverence for her loving "head" who cherishes her above himself.

What glorious "oneness" the Creator ordained for us! What a loving God to reveal His Love in such a practical way. First of all, to be lived out in this life and then for eternity with Jesus whose heart-cry was that we would be one in Him. But what dreadful devastation man has brought upon himself, in refusing to submit to this One who gave His life for His body of believers. Apostate man has resorted to "self", having fallen away from Truth.

Paul spoke to Timothy about such a thing when he said, *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be **lovers of their own selves**, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection [Greek: 'hard hearted towards kindred'], trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, **lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God**; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."* (2 Timothy 3:1-5) We see that the "perilous times" are comprised of man's entrenchment in flesh as "lovers of self." The other "attributes" are also flesh-based and very much opposite the fruit of the Spirit. The lovers of self have a "form of godliness" and fully believe they are "Christians" but the evidence in their lives is anything but godliness: they have no power because the Spirit does not in-dwell them. Their "god" is not the God of the Bible, the One who created them for Himself. They believe they are the Bride of Christ but what "master" [baal] have they given themselves over to?

The antichrist spirit lures his "bride" through the lust of the flesh. This spirit has so permeated the apostate church that they fall for every fleshly "sign and wonder" that comes along. Many "ministers" have been taken in by the antichrist lies to the degree that they stoop to unbelievable depths of degradation; often being exposed publicly and bringing shame on the Name of Christ. Peter had this to say about the false ministers who have turned away from the Truth: *"For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the **lusts of the flesh**, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."* (2 Peter 2:18-19) This speaks not only of moral "wantonness" but allegiance to the antichrist spirit of error in the promotion of "prosperity" and other "gospels". They may think they are following God, deceiving those to whom they "minister," but the end result is far worse than if they merely had "slipped up." In their own deceived state they are fully convinced they are on God's side.

The character traits found in the above passage from 2 Timothy are thoroughly "antichrist." He is leaving his mark on all those who have been deceived by Satan's lies. The great tragedy is that the antichrist bride sees herself as the Bride of Christ and feels she is leading others to Him. But she has committed adultery against Jesus and is unwittingly now a "whore", enticing many AWAY from Him.

The great whore

The Bride of Christ is also known as the "Holy City Jerusalem" but what "city" is the antichrist bride? Revelation 17:4-5 holds the answer: *"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication [Greek: 'harlotry'/figuratively 'idolatry']: and upon her*

forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Very often peoples in the Bible have been referred to as "cities" and the 17th verse verifies that the great whore Babylon is made up of throngs of people from many nations and tongues. According to Strong's Greek dictionary, "Babylon" is a "*type of tyranny*." A synonym of "tyranny" is "*oppression*." The oppressive rule of the great whore who assumes she is the prepared "Bride of Christ," has spread around the world. Her attitude is described in Revelation 18:7: "*How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton...for she said in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning.*" This fleshly antichrist "bride" sees herself "saved and ready for the rapture" and does not expect to see the "mourning" of tribulation. But as verse 24 says, she is guilty of the blood of all those faithful ones who have died for the sake of the truth (that she did not love). "*And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.*"

Immediately preceding that last verse, these words were heard: "*And the voice of harpers, and minstrels, and fluteplayers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in thee; and the voice of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants [Greek: '(wholesale) tradesmen'] were the princes [Greek: 'grandees/important persons'] of the earth; for with thy sorcery [Greek: 'poison/spell-giving potion'] were all the nations deceived [Greek: 'caused to roam from safety, truth, or virtue'].*" (Revelation 18:22-23)

No longer will their music of "worship to God" be heard, nor will there be anything left of this life as they have known it - everything will be a thing of the past. These ones who have promoted the apostate gospel and fleshly lifestyle have been received around the world, enticing others to want the same. Their poisonous, spell-binding and stupefying "sorcery" has caused many nations of people to roam from truth, and thus, salvation.

John then indicates what follows, using the words "*After these things...*," as found in the very next verse which is the beginning of the nineteenth chapter. He speaks of God's judgment of the great whore and of the sounds of true worship around the throne. Then he hears these words: "*Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory to [God]: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*" (Revelation 19:7)

Later on, in that same (19th) chapter, can be found a graphic description of the destruction of flesh in God's mocking sacrifice to the scavengers of the air.

Some final thoughts

We have all been a part of the apostate system. We inherited it! But God is calling us to come out of her so as not to be partakers of her calamity. "*For her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities* [Greek: 'wrong done']." (Revelation 18:4-5) May God give us a heart of compassion and be ready to snatch some "*out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*" (Jude 23) Let us never stoop to judging anyone. Judgment will come soon enough - for all of us. We have plenty to keep us busy, working out our "*own salvation with fear and trembling.*" (Philippians 2:12)

This has been a very difficult article to write. It is not a pleasant task to describe the apostate "church" as God sees her. After the last article, some folks emailed to point out that there is an "Antichrist" who will be an individual. And with all the grand perceptions being put forth over the past decades, it is easy to be swayed in that direction. But when it came right down to it, I needed to follow the Lord's leading and write as He said I should.

There are some who say that America is Babylon the great. When I read the book of Revelation, I too had that thought but the thing that is "American" (including Canada too) is that this continent is the seat of error when it comes to the gospel. From here, our "great tradesmen" have sold a stupefying anemic "gospel" around the world - some making a lot of money in the process. It is the apostate PEOPLE who have twisted the Word - not the country. It is PEOPLE who were created for God. It is PEOPLE for whom Christ died. It is PEOPLE who fell away from Truth. It is PEOPLE who make up Jesus' Bride. It is PEOPLE who make up the false, antichrist bride. And it is PEOPLE whom God will judge. If I am wrong in the interpretation presented here, may I be found guilty only of pointing PEOPLE to Jesus Christ our Savior. I stand answerable to Him.