

Purity from Sin, Personal and National

The Consequences of Merchandising ... Satan's Original Sin

We as Christians know well the necessity of casting out sin from our lives ... *sin*, that nasty three-letter word that means “missing the mark” (Greek *hamartano*). This process is the core of the meaning of the Days of Unleavened Bread ... leavening (yeast) likened to sin because it puffs up oneself in pride, and infects the self with all sorts of lawlessness and malevolence. It spreads evil maliciously throughout one's own life and the lives of those around you.

“Your glorying is not good. do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” I Corinthians 5:6-8.

Sin is the “... *transgression of the law*” (I John 3:4), a perfect law that has been codified since the beginning of creation to safeguard mankind so he might live life abundantly (John 10:10), having the very mind of the Creator, which is placed within the saints by the spirit they possess.

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.” Hebrews 8:10-11.

It is a spirit so obvious in its works within the experience of the elect that it cannot be hidden from those around them. *“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:35). Indeed, Christ did not come to do away with the law, but to make it *honorable* (*adar*, “to make glorious or powerful”; Matthew 5:17-20; Isaiah 42:21).

A World-Wide Level

Yet, the Days of Unleavened Bread picture the casting out of sin on more than just an individual level. They picture casting out sin on a world-wide level, for Jesus Christ came to pay for the sins not just of believers today, but for the sins of the entire world (I John 2:2). Satan, the god of this world (II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2), has infected every nook and cranny with his character; and true to the nature of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he has corrupted all things. *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world (kosmos, “the present order of things) lies under the sway of the wicked one”* (I John 5:19), who has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9). The adversary hates Jesus Christ and His brothers (us), and all that they represent, for they are poised to replace him from authority over the earth's governments. We, the saints, are his arch-enemies.

Let us examine this evil power who reigns over the earth, and see how he first sinned and brought chaos and destruction throughout this once-glorious orb hurtling through the sea of space. His story is a surprising one, showing how he fell off the righteous road into a pit of ignominy. The story begins in Ezekiel 28 with an inset following a discussion about the King of Tyre.

“Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God: You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering; the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created [selected]. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you. You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of

all who saw you.’” Ezekiel 28:11-18.

Lucifer (*heylel*, “shining one”), who became *Satan* (*satan*, “adversary, accuser”) upon his sinning, was first at the very throne of the Father, the “appointed cherub who covered the throne”, and was beautiful and sinless. Yet, at some point *impurity* (*awel*, “wrong, evil, sin, injustice”) was found in him because of an “abundance of trading” (*kullah*, trading of merchandise, peddling”), which led to his becoming filled with *violence* within (*homas*, “violence, destruction, malice, ruthlessness, fierceness”). Satan’s heart became lifted up (proud) because of his beauty, and his wisdom was corrupted by the shining splendor he possessed.



Lucifer was no stranger to precious things before he sinned, but when he began to amass wealth for himself his pride and vanity knew no bounds and affected all aspects of his life with evil.

Satan erred by merchandising, trading things of worth to enrich himself. We do not know what triggered this horrible affront to God’s perfect ways, only that it happened. The anointed

spirit at the very throne of the Father fell into error. For that, his fate was sealed, to eventually have fire brought forth from his middle that will turn him to *ashes* (*eper*, “ashes, dust”) upon the earth (verse 18). Apparently spirits can become material, and in that state be burned up and destroyed.

The flaw of Satan to amass wealth for himself by trading does not mean that merchandising out of a desire to profit and benefit another party is wrong. Indeed, notice this all-important key: if the seller is seeking benefit towards the buyer, and they both profit from a transaction, then love towards the other is being expressed ... al-

though Jesus indicated that the greatest love is shown by not desiring anything in return (Luke 6:35). All of nature operates on this wonderful principle of mutualism, where both parties profit from their interaction. Satan's merchandising was one-way: exploitation through force — perhaps even violence — to amass wealth for oneself.

Jesus stated that it is very difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of heaven, though it is not impossible (Matthew 10:23-24). Joseph of Arimathea, Christ's uncle, was a trader in tin and other metals to the British Isles and was wealthy, as were Job, Abraham, and others. The problem with much wealth in that things will grasp the owner's attention away from the things of God ... and that is a trap.

From the Original Sin to the Present

From the time that Satan (Lucifer) originally sinned to the present there has been a society filled with great agony over the evils of merchandising ... accumulating material wealth to oneself by one-sided trading. Perhaps one can call this unbalanced trading system "parasitism", for one party reaps benefits from the unfair relationship with another party.... It is the system which had even crept into the early Church.

"Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury;

you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you." James 5:1-6.

Exploitation of the poor and defenseless by the rich and powerful is an age-old reality, that has existed ever since Adam. It is seen in the lordship of Nimrod over the populace of ancient Babylon (Genesis 10:8-10), and the overbearing hierarchical rulership of governmental and industry leaders that Jesus condemned as being the antithesis of His ways of love and serving (Luke 22:25-27). This authoritarian "get for the self" system is the converse of "... true religion and undefiled before God and the Father ... to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

The pre-Flood world was replete with merchandising, for "... the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5) ... much like Satan's character when he first sinned and "... by the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within..." (Ezekiel 28:16). All through history is revealed the quests of mankind to accumulate for the self, usually at the expense of one's neighbor: "For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (I Timothy 6:10). Wars are fought to enrich the suppliers of munitions and equipment of one side or the other, and sometimes both sides, as for Krupp Industries of Germany during World War II. Banks supply funds to expedite the merchandising process at all levels, and they themselves traffic in currencies, bonds, stocks, and virtually every possible representation of wealth. Modern day financing has become so absurdly fanatical that today "derivatives" are commonly used; they are a financial contract that derives its value from the performance of another entity such as an asset, index, or interest rate

(called the “underlying”). Financial transactions have become so sophisticated and esoteric today that few ordinary people really understand the system. Merchandising — the buying and selling of things — has evolved into transacting of more and more intangible things: paper contacts, computer entries, or other items that are not real at all.

Fast Forward to the Present

We have now been brought to the present age of society separated from God. The thread of Satan’s first sin of merchandising has been traced through the millenia since Adam to the present time. What do we find?

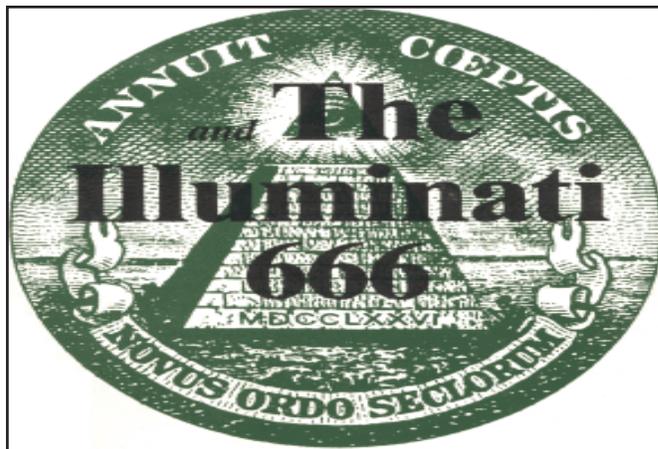
At the end of this age (at the present time?) a great world-wide government is going to emerge ruled by a “beast”, or antichrist, along with his corresponding religious czar the “false prophet” (Revelation 13). Then, in Revelation 17:3-6 we read,

“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. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.”

A world government comprised of “seven heads and ten horns”, controlled by a Satanic religious system called the “har-



Mystery Babylon the Great rides upon and directs the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and is responsible for the chaos we see around the world.



The Illuminati and other secret societies undergird the effort of Satan, working through world leaders, to unite all nations under his power and lawless living.

lot”, surnamed “Mystery, Babylon the Great”, will emerge in the near future — indeed, may already be well in place across the earth. What is the life-blood of this world-ruling system? Amazingly (or should we say, not surprisingly) it is a *merchandising* system, the same type of arrangement that Satan first constructed when he was in Eden.

”For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich

through the abundance of her luxury..... The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious



Jesus Christ, whom Satan resists at every turn, cast out the money changers in the temple in Jerusalem, showing that the greedy desires of illegal transactions in this world will be expunged from the coming age ... even as they must be from our own lives today.

stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning saying, 'What is like this great city?'" Revelation 18:3, 9-18.

The merchants of this great Babylonian system were the great men of the earth — the rich and powerful in government, industry, banking, and other areas — "... for by your sorcery all the nations of the earth were deceived" (Revelation 18:23). Satan's tactics have not changed through the centuries. Once sin erupted in him, and repentance was not forthcoming, his evil proclivity to amass wealth for himself through merchandising could not be quenched. Trading by ships, rail, and trucks brought the profits from labor

of the ill-paid people of Asia, South America, and Mexico into the hands of multi-national corporations and their partner banks: Monsanto, Cargill, Chrysler, General Motors, Citibank, and hosts of others.

These corporations and banks, having no heart or conscience, elevate profit as an end in itself rather than the love and kindness human beings are meant to express to one another. Taxation by governments add to the burden on individuals, reducing incentives and ability of people to give of themselves to enrich others.

The End Result of This Game

Just as we must put away sin from our personal lives, so will our heavenly Father put away sin from the entire world. Once again, the solution to this plague of error set forth in Eden by the adversary is elucidated in Scripture.

“Repent therefore and be converted, that you sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:19-21.



Babylon will ultimately fall and this present culture will be utterly destroyed. Satan will be chained in the bottomless pit, unable to deceive mankind for a thousand years.

Jesus Christ came to earth not only to guide His elect to repentance, but to announce His kingship over the earth at His second coming. Before Pilate Jesus said, *“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world...”* (John 18:37). We see His prophesied return in Revelation 19:11-16, where He comes from heaven riding a

white horse along with the saints who ride on white horses. Their mission? To destroy the beast and the false prophet, along with the armies that they command (Revelation 19:17-21). The earth is wiped clean of their power, and then a most critical event takes place. Satan himself is chained in the bottomless pit, unable to influence mankind for the entire millenium.

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.” Revelation 20:1-3.

To deceive the nations no more means to not lead them astray or cause them to wander (*planao*). The source of sin — merchandising — will be utterly separated from mankind. In Satan’s place will rule Jesus Christ with the saints, now resurrected and been made perfect, fulfilling the promise of Revelation 5:10 and 20:5-6 that the elect will reign with Christ on earth as kings and priests for 1,000 years. Self-centered accumulation of wealth will be gone, and in its place will reign the character of God, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and moderation (Galatians 5:22-23).

These humble sons of Elohim will be like Jesus Christ, considering others as better than themselves (Philippians 2:1-5), living in the world but not being a part of it (John 17:14-16).

Physical Wealth Need Not Be Evil

Satan's original sin was merchandising, and accumulating immense wealth to himself, but as we have already learned the righteous can possess great wealth.

Abraham. He was very wealthy in cattle, gold, and silver (Genesis 13:2), and through him the people of God received their inheritance because of his faith ... which was credited to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6; 26:2-5).

Job. This man had immense herds and flocks of sheep, camels, oxen, and donkeys, and had a very large household, the greatest of all people of the East (Job 1:3). After his trials God granted him double the wealth he originally had (Job 42:12).

Solomon. Perhaps no man on earth had as much wealth as he did (II Chronicles 1:11-12).

David. This king of Israel was very wealthy, and a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22).

Joseph of Arimathea. The uncle of Jesus, Joseph was a very rich man trading tin and other metals mined in the British Isles. He was also a follower of his nephew, and in his own newly-hewn tomb the Savior was laid (Matthew 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-40).

Jesus said that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God (Matthew 19:23-24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25), but it is not impossible through God's calling and choosing (Matthew 19:25-26), repentance, baptism, the laying on of hands, and the spirit of God working through the person (Hebrews 6:1-2; Acts 2:38). If the person's intent is to serve God above all else, and not make an idol of his physical wealth, then riches will not lead him astray (Proverbs 11:28).

One is not to strive after material things, but rather to serve the living God: "*Seek first the Kingdom of God and His*

righteousness, and all of these things will be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). We are to ask God for neither poverty nor riches, but to be fed the food that He allots to us (Proverbs 30:8).

God can indeed grant wealth to a righteous individual, and if through honest, diligent, hard work he achieves it then he will be blessed (Psalms 112:3; Proverbs 3:16; 10:4; 10:22; 13:4; 22:4). The theme God sets on this issue is not to set one's heart on becoming rich, for God will grant a person the wealth he deserves through blessings granted in various, even hidden ways. Rather to be desired than physical wealth are Godly wisdom (Proverbs 16:16), a good name (Proverbs 22:1), humility and fear of God (Proverbs 22:4), and an abundant, long life (John 10:10; Proverbs 3:16).

Material wealth should always come as a consequence of spiritual wealth and the blessings of God, not as something sought after, for we have many warnings of the dangers implicit in trusting in anything material. What profit is there in gaining the whole world yet losing one's own soul (Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:36; Luke 9:25)?

The message of the Days of Unleavened Bread is to put away leavening, which is symbolic of casting away sin. Let us cast out sin from our lives by praying diligently each day, studying His word every day, meditating on His ways, fasting as needed, and fellowshiping with the saints. Let us perform these sacrifices to God throughout the year — not just for seven days — and put away the "old man" that wants to rear up its ugly head. Above all, recall what Satan's original error was, and resolve not to be caught up in self-centered merchandising. Rather, let us serve the brethren and others as opportunity permits, and at the end of days hear our Creator declare,

"Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"
Matthew 25:34.

