

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#05-1104

Unclean and Hated Birds

January 4, 2011

The last issue reported on birds falling out of the sky in various places. The point was made that we need to discern the times. Jesus was critical of the religious leaders of Judah for not discerning what was spiritually taking place in their midst, even as the King of Judah stood in their midst and spoke words that **"are spirit and life"** (John 6:63). They knew how to discern the weather, that is, things occurring in the natural, but not the things of God. Jesus called them an evil and adulterous generation.

Is our generation any better? Hardly! In a sense, not much has changed; the evil and adulterous generation has continued for the last 2,000 years. Paul called it **our present evil age** (Galatians 1:4).

God has promised that He will shake the earth and the heaven, which **denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain** (Hebrews 12:27).

It is one thing to recognize certain events occurring on earth and in heaven as part of God's shaking, but it is another thing entirely to discern their spiritual meaning or significance.

So, at this point, the question is: Could birds falling from the sky have any spiritual and prophetic significance? If, so, what?

Given that we are in the last hour of the last days, the best place to start is John's Patmos vision, for it is here that we read of a cage or prison of unclean and hated birds.

And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!" (Revelation 18:2 NKJV)

Some translations use the word *hold* or *prison* in place of *cage*. Regardless, the implication is that the unclean and hated birds are held captive by Babylon. But what do the birds signify?

The first mention in scripture of birds of the heavens is found in 1 Kings 14:11 in reference to those who die in the field being eaten by birds or, more specifically, birds that prey on and scavenge meat rather than eating seeds and insects. In other words, they literally eat the flesh of men. However, the flesh spiritually speaks of the carnal or sinful nature of fallen man. Thus, on a spiritual level, we could say that the birds dine on the carnal flesh of man.

Turning to Jesus, we discover that He made reference to birds in His parable of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens.

**(3) And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow;
(4) and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.**
(Matthew 13:3-4 NASB)

As we read on in the parable, the birds are identified with the evil one who snatches away **the word of the kingdom** that was sown in the heart of some people. At one time, I thought the birds simply referred to **spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials**, but this is only partly correct, for **the world forces of this darkness** influence and work through men in implementing **the schemes of the devil** (Ephesians 6:11-12). In other words, men must be plugged into the schemes of the devil, so to speak. But who are they?

It seems to me that Jesus identified them as **the tares, the sons of the evil one** (Matthew 13:25; 38). Consequently, the tares are planted among the wheat for the purpose of deceiving the wheat and snatching away the word of the kingdom from their hearts. This is not about the promise of immortal life for all who believe, but rather, it is about who will reign on earth with Christ in His kingdom as the first fruits of the sons of the kingdom, that is, the conquerors or overcomers who will rise up in the first resurrection and transfiguration.

The task of the tares is to appeal to the carnal flesh of the wheat in an attempt to deceive them. They are like the birds of the air that eat the flesh of men in the field, which, according to Jesus, refers to the world that He bought and in which He hid His treasure (Matthew 13:38, 44).

Before the kingdom of the heavens comes to earth, the tares must be removed, just as Mystery Babylon must fall before the kingdom of our Lord is established on earth to rule over the nations.

To add to this thought, Jeremiah gives us another reference to wicked men and a cage of birds.

(26) 'For among My people are found wicked men; they lie in wait as one who sets snares; they set a trap; they catch men. (27) As a cage is full of birds, so their houses are full of deceit. Therefore they have become great and grown rich. (Jeremiah 5:26-27 NKJV)

Notice that the wicked men are among the Lord's people and that they set snares to catch them. We could say they make them their disciples. Jeremiah likens it to a cage full of birds and a house of deceit. These wicked men become great among the Lord's people and grow rich, presumably through their deception of the people. Jeremiah identifies these wicked men as false prophets and teachers or pastors who refuse the Headship of Christ; and sadly, the people love it.

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it? (Jeremiah 5:31 NASB)

Returning to Revelation 18 and the harlot city, we discover that these false prophets and teachers themselves become enslaved to Mystery Babylon as a cage of unclean and hated birds. They are enslaved by the seductive harlot just as they attempted to enslave the Lord's people. They fed off the flesh of men as scavengers and became great and rich. It reminds me of the prosperity preachers who love the golden calf and who tell the Lord's people to sow a seed of money to their bank accounts. Also, I imagine that those who preach the false gospel of Christian Zionism and refuse to cast out the bondwoman (Judaism and the present Jerusalem) might be included in this group as well, if they do not repent of such teaching.

Jesus warned His disciples to **beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves** (Matthew 7:15), even warning that **many false prophets will arise and mislead many** (Matthew 24:11). Both Peter and John heeded the warning of their Master and likewise warned the people to beware of **the many false prophets that have gone out into the world** as well as **the false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves** (1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1).

These are the tares that must be removed before the kingdom of our Lord comes. But here is the interesting part: God will remove them from His people by enslaving the tares to Mystery Babylon as a cage of unclean and hated or detestable birds. The Lord's people will be called out of Babylon (Revelation 18:4) before it falls and the tares will remain to be judged as part of the harlot city. These lawless ones will be taken to face the fiery law of God.

So, it is possible that the birds falling from the sky are an indication of the coming downfall of the false prophets and teachers that have deceived the Lord's people with their false messages. The day for gathering out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness is coming!