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The Covert Course of the False Teacher

By

Terrance Brownlow-Dindy, Sr.

An Ancient Issue

Both Peter and Paul, working through divine inspiration, and our Lord, when tabernacled in the flesh, provided the proverbial “heads up” concerning the stealthy nature of the false teacher. Jesus admonished the Hebrew people to “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matt. 7:15). Peter reminds the church that in the old time, which time he referred to in the previous verse, “there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” (2 Pe. 2:1). Paul informs the reader of the Holy Text that “false brethren” from Jerusalem were “unawares brought in” and had come in “privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage” (Gal. 2:4).

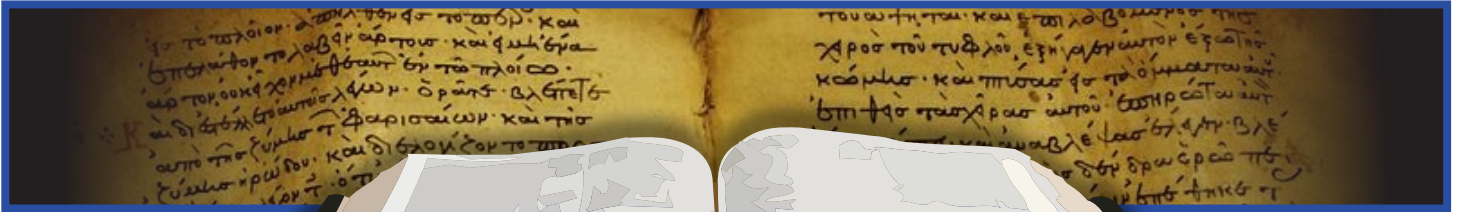
A Present Problem

Almost two thousand years have expired since the personal preaching of Jesus and the penning of the epistles of Peter and Paul, yet nothing has changed concerning the methods and manners of the false teacher. Of particular note before progressing in this study is the fact also, that nothing has changed in the word of God involving how false teachers among the church are to be regarded. Romans 16:17-18 *still* instructs the church to “mark” and “avoid” those who “by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple,” and cause divisions and offences contrary to sound doctrine. Titus 1:10-11 *still* teaches that the mouths of the unruly, vain talkers, and deceivers must be stopped as these fraudulent guides subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake” (sometimes the filthy lucre is the vast popularity that such outlandish teachings procure).

A Radical Christian (aka False Teacher)

With the false teacher and the covert nature by which he operates in mind, consider a recently published article by Wes McAdams, the preaching minister of the church on McDermont Road in Plano, Texas. McAdams has become notorious among members of the church concerning his denominational anti-biblical teachings regarding the eternal destiny of the saved. McAdams and many of his colleagues and protégé's contend that a renovated earth rather than heaven will be the final resting place of the redeemed. In advancing this fallacious position, the typical stealth of the false teacher described by Jesus, Peter, and Paul is employed. While multiple examples are extant, a recent one stands out. In an article published on his *Radically Christian* website entitled “What the Bible Says about Heaven (Part 1),” McAdams makes reference to Hebrews 13:14 in advocacy of his unscriptural notion that in the final day heaven will literally “come” to earth rather than those who belong to Christ “being caught up together in the clouds and meeting the Lord in the air” as Paul taught by divine inspiration in 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

McAdams introduces in his article his concept of (and I quote) a “garden city” that belongs to God in



heaven which is a “cross between an idyllic Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden” (2022, para. 12). In Revelation 21:2, claims McAdams, this “garden city” is in view. It is not within the scope and purpose of this article to debate the identity of the “holy city, new Jerusalem” viewed by the apostle John amidst the Apocalypse, but let it suffice to say that contextually, the church in its glorified state seems a more appropriate interpretation. At any rate, it is McAdams' next move that this study is more concerned with exposing.

Two paragraphs later, the radical Christian teaches that his garden city will “one day descend from heaven to be received by God's people.” “And this is why,” asserts McAdams, “the writer of Hebrews refers to it simply as, 'the city that is to come' (Hebrews 13:14).” McAdams seeks to fortify his “heaven comes to earth in the last day” argument by emphasizing that the Hebrews author affirmed that the city is to “come.” The suggestion is that the term “to come” denotes the city approaching the presence of the saints on earth, rather than vice versa (giving that the city and the church are separate entities).

A Divine Differentiation

As in English, in the Greek multiple connotations of the word “come” exist. In distinction in the Greek however, separate words are employed to differentiate the idea of “coming from one place into another,” (which concept is conveyed by the deponent verb *ἔρχομαι* – *erchomai*), and the idea of “the transpiring of a thing” (which concept is conveyed in the use of the verb *μέλλω* - *mello*). The term utilized by the Hebrews writer at 13:14 is the present active participle *μέλλουσας* (*mellousan*), which derives from the verb *μέλλω*. This term *μέλλω* Vine defines as “to be about (to do something), often implying the necessity and therefore the certainty of what is to take place” (1966, 205). Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich state that the term refers that which “will certainly take place; to be on the point of, be about to; to be destined, inevitable; denoting an intended action; intend, purpose, have in mind” (1979, 500-501). Thus, according to the particular employment of the word “*mellousan*,” the Holy Spirit conveys, not the notion of a city coming from heaven to earth, but the concept of a city which will certainly exist for the redeemed of God.

While Wes McAdams would love for the Spirit-inspired Hebrews penmen to support his erroneous hobby horse doctrine, he certainly does not! In fact, hear the Hebrews author clearly on the subject as he exhorts the downtrodden saints of the first century:

For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have **in heaven** a better and an enduring substance. (Heb. 10:34, *emph. TFBD*)

Concluding Thoughts

On the one hand, apologies may be made for submergence into the quiet subtleties of the fruits of the false teacher wherein he operates in stealth, supposing to “pull one over” on the less diligent in study. On the other hand, McAdams and friends' clandestine operations must be exposed in order to impede the “beguiling” (Col. 2:18), “perverting” (Gal. 1:7), “bewitching” (Gal. 3:1), and “damning” (2 Pe. 2:1-3) that inevitably accompany the efforts of the false teacher. This author subscribes wholeheartedly to “the other hand!” No apologies will be made in seeking to expose and stop the mouths of false teachers functioning in the shadows as long as souls are at stake.

