

**HEALING STREAM MINISTRIES** presents the full strength  
**THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES AS GOD'S MEDICINE**  
with enough power to...

- **cleanse from all sin**
  - **set us free from all bondage**
  - **break all the power of the enemy over us**
  - **restore us to total spiritual health**
  - **develop immunity to all last-day deceptions**
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## **74 – Babylon, the Beast and Abuse**

When studying the Scriptures it is so easy to see how certain Bible texts may apply to others. It is more difficult to discern how certain texts may apply to our own lives. This is especially true in our proclamation of the three angels' messages. While believing with certainty in the historical-prophetic applications of the symbols of Babylon and the beast to last-day events, is it at all possible that we may overlook how these symbols may have experiential applications to our own lives?

Jesus warned us about this tendency when he urged us to beware of the beam in our own eyes while being preoccupied with the splinter in the eyes of our neighbors (Matthew 7:3-5).

One of the main traits of Babylon, the harlot, is her persecution of others. Persecution is a form of abuse. Many sincere believers anticipate and fear the upcoming last-day persecution – the abuse by others for the faith they hold. But there are other forms of abuse than religious persecution. When we, through pressure and control of others, attempt to obtain love, acceptance, and self-worth from others for ourselves, without regard for the rights of others, are we not also thereby engaging in abusive conduct? What about spiritual abuse, religious abuse, sexual abuse, mental abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse – to mention a few. All these abuses are rooted in our attempts to play god without God.

While 'abuse' is not directly mentioned in the Ten Commandments, the first four of these commandments provide an inspired sequence on the rise of abuse.

1. *You shall have no other gods before me.* The lie that our God is not sufficient and powerful enough to provide for all our needs, leads us to invent our own designer deities. We believe the lie of the enemy that because our God is not doing His job we are,

therefore, justified in trying to do a better job than He is doing in making our lives work through replacement gods of our own choice. The Babylon 'virus' is spiritual harlotry. Such spiritual harlotry in Bible times led certain parents to sacrifice their own children to their idol, Molech. Question: What is your own pursuit of personal significance that may have caused you to ignore the needs of your own family, or even sacrifice them on the altar of your idolatrous need for personal success?

2. *You shall not make unto thee a graven image....* This is far more than a prohibition about certain kinds of religious art. It is rather a warning about custom-designing our own designer deities in the image of our own unmet needs. The problems with idols is three-fold: (1) idols do not work, but we have to work for them to maintain them, (2) we have to work for our idols to maintain them, and (3) behind every idol 'image' hides demonic spirits waiting to take possession of the idol-worshiper. "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*" (Revelation 18:2). The idol you created to control and improve your life now controls you, and you become just like your idol (beast). (See Psalm 115). Is it possible that more hidden demonic activity occurs among professed believers through the violation of this commandment than takes place through séances and communication with the spirit-world?
3. *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.* We engage in abuse when we use God's name to justify our idolatrous pursuits. It is quite possible that we may use our need for success in the performance of religious activities, even evangelism and soul winning, as justification for abusive and controlling behaviors. After all, we are just trying to do God's work! We are doing it for the 'greater good.'
4. *Remember the Sabbath...the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God.* Sabbath-keeping based on our trust in the sufficiency of our Creator God to meet all our needs leads to personal rest and peace – the perfect number ['7'] of our God. Sabbath-keeping (even the keeping of the right day) for the purpose of impressing others with our own spiritual righteousness and superiority in comparison to others, can lead to abuse. Just ask yourself this question, Why did the Sabbath-keepers in Jesus' hometown synagogue in Nazareth try to kill Him? (See Luke chapter 4).

Let us apply the above-mentioned principles to religious abuse. A religious standard or activity [even a good one] may become to us a false god, an idol, by which we attempt to create a god in our own image to impress others with our own goodness and righteousness. *“We are conservative, we are fundamental, we are orthodox,”* we are *“true blue”*, and we literally have no rest day or night because we have protect our idol lest anyone topple our it by their non-conformity. What is at stake is no longer the ‘standards’ but rather our fear that such ‘standards’ will fail to portray our own ‘righteousness’ and phony goodness.

Just look at Daniel chapter 4 to see the outworking of this principle in the life of Nebuchadnezzar. The mighty monarch, who attempted to coerce worship in order to make a name for himself, received God’s judgment on his abusive conduct and became a beast for a period of seven years.

Abuse of any kind occurs when we pressure, force, coerce, manipulate, threaten, and control others in order to fill our own leaky cups of significance or self-worth.

Note the following perspectives from the writings of E. G. White:

*“Any man, be he minister or layman, who seeks to compel or control the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan, to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe he bears the mark of Cain”* (MS 29, 1911).

*“In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed”* (Desire of Ages, p. 466).

*“The heart can be very cruel when God’s fear and love are removed”* (The Great Controversy, p. 607 1888 edition).

*“There can be no more conclusive evidence that we possess the spirit of Satan than the disposition to hurt and destroy those who do not appreciate our work, or who act contrary to our ideas”* (Desire of Ages, p. 487).

In our attempts to proclaim with integrity the undiluted three angels’ messages in declaring the sins and abuses of Babylon and the beast, let us first look inside our own lives before we expose the abuses of others. Let no one seek to do the work of the Lamb by using by utilizing the methods of the beast.

Ultimately, abuse of any kind is rooted in false worship, which is the use of what should be worshiped, and the worship of what should be used.

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