

## For your Edification

### *Hearing A voice and THE voice*

#### PART III – Beware of Presumptuous Sins

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Pastor Andrew C. Phiri | Believers' Assembly | [www.andrewcphiri.com](http://www.andrewcphiri.com)

King David once prayed saying to God, “*Keep back thy servant also from **presumptuous sins**; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from **the great transgression***” (Psm.19:13).

To “presume”, says one simple academic dictionary, is “**to accept that something is almost certain to be correct even though there is no proof of it, on the grounds that it is extremely likely.**” The dictionary further explains that to presume is “**to behave so inconsiderately, disrespectfully, or overconfidently as to do something without being entitled or qualified to do it.**” We will not go on giving lengthy academic explanations of the words because there is an image I came across which seems to simplify the meaning of the word, albeit in a rather extreme and absurd manner. The image is found in a book supposed to be dedicated to exposing what the authors call “Damnable Heresies.” Damnable is quite a word of emphasis. Surely no one wants to associate himself or herself with anything that is heinous and leads to death. Now, let us see one “damnable heresy” that the authors were admonishing their readers around the world to



flee from: It was an image of brother Richard Gan of Singapore, a Bible teacher and missionary we have much respect for. In this image he was solemnising the wedding of his daughter and against all odds he was the one unveiling her! So odd, isn't it? The authors admonished: “**We need to ask this Heretic what is the meaning of unveiling his daughter? Is he sending a message to the world of another damnable heresy or indicating a corrupt practice?**” Dear brothers and sisters, these strong words, seemingly coming from people who knew what they were talking about, were published in a book whose many copies were sent around the world without seeking clarification or at least informing the person being disparaged. The writers of the book have never met the person and had no slightest idea of what was taking place in the picture you are seeing.

#### **The Second Picture**

Thankfully there was the second picture taken at the same time and at a different angle of the same incident. What you see in the second picture is the complete opposite of what the authors of Damnable Heresies asserted. What appears in the second picture is simply a man stretching his arms towards the newly wed to pronounce a blessing upon them!



That's how far in gross presumption a human mind can go. Ofcourse this is a case of extreme presumption, but it doesn't have to be extreme for it to be wrong. We have to watch our daily attitudes, perceptions of a person or situations, and most importantly what we speak about them. The Lord Jesus once said this: "*But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*" (Mat.12:36). A fearful admonition, is it not? There is much trouble we can avoid in life by simply keeping quite. Keeping quiet about things we don't have facts about or which are not necessary for us to comment about. "*Even a fool*", said King Solomon, "*when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise*" (Pro.17:28).

Now there are times when one can sincerely make a statement which is factually wrong and then tries to amend the error. However, there is something seriously amiss when a person is being so rude and arrogant at misplacing and misinterpreting facts. Nine times out of ten trying to correct such a person can be as futile as trying to hold water in your hands. In Kolhapur, I approached brother Solomon Jacob after he was done preaching and I asked him: "In your sermon you said William Branham called himself Elohim. Is that really so? Did you give the audience words of William Branham about what he said to people who were trying to advance such an idea? He took an entire sermon – *the Bruised Serpent* – to denounce the wrong doctrine calling it Satanic ..." Before I could finish speaking, the man interjected "*Do you know that William Branham lied about the Mystery Cloud? The man lied!*" he exclaimed as he walked away. At that point I realised that I had been talking to myself and it would be difficult to engage in a logical discourse with him. When I think about the ugly "picture" he had presented to the audience about William Branham's teaching of the Seven Seals being a plagiarised work, it was nauseating to know that the second and real picture was quite the opposite of what he had told the people. But who would dare to search out facts for themselves? Many human beings are gullible at receiving whatever comes from a figure they respect and adore. Very few take interest to search out facts for themselves.

It is important to know that whilst God can use a man to awaken a people to the reality of a truth they may have never seen before, it is quite another thing for a man to tell a flock of people that he has discovered the truth, emotionally expressing his new faith but, after a long while, coming to tell them, "*Guess what, all this while I have led you in a wrong way, but I have now found the real truth!*" What would make you trust the man's excited emotion this time? If such a man was my car driver driving me to some destination he claimed to have known and he had shown all the confidence of his knowledge about the destination but after driving 300 kilometres (i.e. 186 miles) exclaims that it was all a mistake and we have to go back in the opposite direction, common sense would let me doubt the credibility of the knowledge the man professes to have. To hold to a fundamental belief for some time, repent from it and come into another set of beliefs, hold on to it for thirty-some years, and u-turn again and begin to follow something completely different is simply being unstable and not knowing what you are doing. Such a person may have zeal but its zeal without a true revelation (knowledge) of God – "*For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*" (Rom.10:2).

In the last message we saw how some people have zealously taken it upon themselves to denounce William Branham's teaching of the Seven Seals, believing that it was a plagiarised work of Clarence Larkin's book. The preacher in Kolhapur produced a document with two columns. In one column were Larkin's words and the next column Branham's

words. He highlighted words that were similar and concluded that Branham copied from Larkin. Here is an excerpt of the document showing what was displayed about the Second Seal.

1920 Clarence Larkin	1963 William Branham
<p>The symbolism is very clear. Red, the colour of the Horse, is a symbol of <b>BLOOD</b>, and the <b>Sword is a symbol of WAR.</b></p>	<p>Now, here's my revelation of it: This is Satan again... But you find out here that this man has a <b>sword so he pertains to church political war.</b></p>

This man happened to see the word “war” appearing in the words of both men’s teaching and therefore concluded that Branham copied his teaching from Larkin. Talk of deceptive presumption! Here is the entire explanation of what Larkin wrote about the Second Seal:

*“There is no need to tarry long with this **SEAL**. When it was broken John heard the second, or ‘Calf-like Living Creature’ say, ‘**Come,**’ and a ‘**RED HORSE**’ appeared and went forth, whose Rider was given a ‘**GREAT SWORD,**’ and who had power to take peace from the earth, and cause men to kill one another. The symbolism is very clear. **Red**, the color of the Horse, is a symbol of **BLOOD**, and the **Sword** is a symbol of **WAR**. The time is clearly that prophesied by Christ—‘And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars . . . for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.’ Matt. 24:6-7. This seems to imply that the Antichrist will not have everything his own way, and that his Autocratic methods will lead to insubordination and civil wars among the nations under some great leader represented by the Rider of the Red Horse, whose ‘Great Sword’ is symbolical of the awful destruction of human life that will follow. This is a fulfillment of 1. Thess. 5:3. ‘When they shall say **PEACE** and **SAFETY**; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.’ We learn from this ‘Seal’ that wars are likely to break out at any time and that there will be no peace on the earth until the return of the ‘Prince of Peace.’”*

As many who have read Branham’s teaching on the Second Seal are aware, what Branham taught is way different from what you read in Larkin’s words. First, here are the words of the Scripture about the Second Seal:

*“And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword” – Rev.6:3-4.*

Both men interpreted red and the sword to symbolise bloodshed and war respectively. It is ridiculous to conclude and raise a case of plagiarism at this point as we all know that those are simple symbols to interpret as evident by what Jehovah Witnesses, Adventists, and many others have explained about the matter. In prophetic-Bible study what separates one interpretation from another is not merely the interpretation of symbols, otherwise we will have to say Adventists, Catholics, and Pentecostals believe the same thing. But that is not so.

The difference of interpretation mainly lies in the “**when-question.**” So, to get a complete picture of what Larkin and Branham said about the Second Seal and how similar or different their teachings are, we should compare the following two things:

- What kind of war is the Second Seal about?
- In what time-span will it be (or was) fulfilled?

### **WHAT LARKIN TAUGHT ABOUT THE SECOND SEAL**

We are looking at what Larkin taught not based on the deceit of hiding certain words he said and try to make them correlate with what Branham said. We have produced all his words about the Second Seal to give you a chance to see the full-context of what he meant when he said the sword represents “war.”

#### **1. What kind of war is the Second Seal?**

As was seen in the words of Larkin, his interpretation speaks of “*insubordination and civil wars among the nations under some great leader represented by the Rider of the Red Horse.*” He speaks about “*nation shall rise against nation.*”

#### **2. In what time-span will it be fulfilled?**

Larkin’s interpretation is ‘future-oriented’. He points the fulfilment of the prophecy to the time of the Day of the Lord spoken of in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 saying:

*“This is a fulfillment of 1. Thess. 5:3. ‘When they shall say **PEACE** and **SAFETY**; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.’”*

*“the Antichrist **will** not have everything his own way, and that his Autocratic methods **will** lead to insubordination and civil wars among the nations under some great leader represented by the Rider of the Red Horse.”*

About how long these wars will go on, he left it open ended until the coming of Christ, the Prince of Peace:

*“We learn from this ‘Seal’ that wars **are likely to break out at any time** and that there will be **no peace on the earth until the return of the ‘Prince of Peace.’**”*

Let us now look at how William Branham interpreted the Second Seal.

### **WHAT BRANHAM TAUGHT ABOUT THE SECOND SEAL**

Like the First Seal, Branham went back in time to a period when the church system killed a lot of people who opposed its doctrines. These are his words:

*“Let us now consider what John saw, then, of these things what he saw. ‘A red horse; and his rider goes forth, power given to him to slay with a great sword.’ Now here is my revelation of it. This is Satan, again. It’s the devil, again, in another form.... Notice the change of color of these horses...The same system riding on another color, power, from the innocent white to a bloody red... Now listen. I’m*

*quoting from the martyrology, 'From the time of\_ of Saint Augustine of Hippo, until 1586,' on the Roman martyrology, 'the Roman Catholic church put sixty-eight million Protestants to death.' Was his sword red? Was he riding a red horse? What was it? The same power; the same rider. There is the Seal. They admit, 'sixty-eight million,' on the martyrology, besides all those put to death outside of that. Oh, mercy! During the dark ages, there were millions fed to lions, and slaughtered in every way, because they wouldn't bow down to that Catholic dogma".*

In these words of brother Branham we notice three things:

1. The war he mentions is a religious-political war by the Catholic system against what they perceived to be heretics.
2. This seal was already fulfilled during the Dark Ages when many people were killed by the Catholic system.

Notice that brother Branham's interpretation has a specific time-context of the Dark Ages and also tells a related story of events – *"His bow had no arrows, at first, but his 'great sword' did. He done his killing, later, and changed from white horse to red horse; the same, exactly, devil, with his sword"* he explained.

**"Let them not have dominion over me"**

The sin of presumption if not guarded against can become a habit and hence take dominion over a person's mind. Presuming is not all about a man speaking false words about another person as in the cases we have looked at in this message. It can also come in form of wanting to do a service for God when it is not His will for you to do so. The feeling of wanting to start a ministry may many times seem so innocent as a person testifies of his burden to do the work of the Lord. However, God who weighs our spirits and intentions knows better. It's only a matter of time when you see that the seemingly innocent desire turns out to be a source of contention and confusion among people. With time what manifests is not something edifying people to perfection but a show of human flesh and all its egoistic inclinations. However, we are thankful to God that there have been men in the Message who heard what William Branham said and have been sober and have given us something solid to stand on.

***CONTINUED IN PART IV***

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available from:

**Believers' Assembly Church  
PO Box 37919 – Lusaka – Zambia**

E-mail: [voiceoftheword@live.com](mailto:voiceoftheword@live.com)

Website: [www.andrewcphiri.com](http://www.andrewcphiri.com)