

WHAT IMAGE ARE YOU BEHOLDING?

1. God created man in HIS OWN IMAGE and LIKENESS. These Hebrew words mean: “resemblance, model, fashion, manner, similitude, pattern”; Genesis 1:26-27; 5:3; 9:6.

In Isaiah 40:9-14, He says “BEHOLD” YOUR GOD. By revelation we can see:

1. His Heart, the love of God, as a shepherd cares for His flock; Is. 40:11; John 10:14
2. His Hand, the power of God, as seen in His authority to create; Is. 40:12; Luke 22:69
3. His Head, the wisdom of God, mighty in knowledge and counsel; Isaiah 40:13-14; 1 Corinthians 1:24.

2. Jehovah God instructed His people NOT TO CREATE ANY IMAGE or likeness of a god; Exodus 20:4; Leviticus 26:1; Deut. 5:8. However, man has taken up the “iron tool” of his own will, and has created for himself OTHER IMAGES, which is idolatry:

1. STANDING images – a column, a memorial, something stationed or fixed
2. CARVED images – a “quarry”; a place where stones are squared, excavated and cut
3. MOLTEN images – “to pour” that which is cast, or formed into a mold
4. GRAVEN images – that which is “marked, inscribed” in man’s thinking; wrong imaginations and mindsets; 2 Cor.10:5

3. Jehovah God is exposing the influence of OTHER IMAGES:

1. He is provoked to anger when he sees idolatry in His temple; He calls it an “image of jealousy”; Ezekiel 8:3; Jeremiah 8:19
2. Idolatrous images will be broken into pieces; 2 Kings 11:18; 23:14; Jeremiah 50:2
3. Man-made images will be beaten into powder; 2 Chronicles 34:7
4. God will spoil the false images; Hosea 10:2
5. Other images will be cut off; Micah 5:13
6. Other images include representations of deities, man-made devices, concepts, philosophies, organizations and objects in which man places his trust and his hope.
7. Scripture tells us that God has a people who will gain the victory over the beast, over “his image”; over his mark, and over the number of his name; Revelation 15:2

4. BAAL’S IMAGE and influence existed in ancient days, and is present in modern days:

1. Baal is interpreted “lord, master”. This Canaanite deity is associated with the sun god, Zeus and Jupiter. His image is that of a bull, or a man-bull image seated on a throne. Ashtoreth was his female counterpart. Revelry and licentiousness characterize this worship; Exodus 32:1-8; Judges 2:13; 10:6.
2. The worship of Baal involves ritual ceremonies, through which the people appealed to him for economic prosperity and fertility. These rituals included:
 - a. The practice of prostitution, homosexuality, sodomy, promiscuity; 2 Kings 23:7
 - b. Lewd dancing, sensual music, perverse sex acts in full view of the public: high places, (adult entertainment); Jeremiah 3:2; Psalm 78:58
 - c. The practice of child sacrifice (abortion); Planned Parenthood clinics are his altars; Jeremiah 19:5; Ezekiel 16:20-21
 - d. Mutilation, the use of lances and knives to cut, pierce, disfigure the body. He utilizes “tattoo and body piercing parlors” to defile God’s temple; Lev. 19:28; 1 Kings 18:28

e. Baal is a nature god; his worship includes love of the “creature/creation” rather than the Creator, “mother Earth”. It promotes radical environmentalism; Romans 1:25
3. It’s influence is spread through theatres, stadiums, the media, nightclubs, to promote pornography, indulgence, rock music, performers, and false prophets; Jeremiah 11:13
4. His priests and false prophets utilize “flesh hooks”. They are adulterers, taking what belongs to God; they can prophesy through a spirit of divination; 1 Samuel 2:12-14, 22-24; Jeremiah 23:13-14; Matthew 21:12-13
5. The image of Baal is associated with the apostasy of Babylon; The “Wall Street Bull” is a bronze sculpture, strategically placed in the international financial district in Manhattan, New York City.

5. In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself visibly through THE IMAGE of a PILLAR of CLOUD and FIRE; see Exodus 13:21-22; 33:9; Deut. 31:15; Numbers 14:14.
1. This “pillar” moved, descended and stood at the door of the Tabernacle, and was manifested as:

- a. A CLOUD (a refuge and shade by day); Psalm 78:14; Luke 21:27, and
 - b. A FIRE (light and warmth by night); Hebrews 12:29:
2. This “pillar” is a symbol of strength, and also refers to God’s house; 1 Timothy 3:15.
 3. It reveals God’s presence and glory; Matthew 17:1-13; Acts 1:9.
 4. It reveals God’s ability to cover and guide His people; Isaiah 4:5-6.
 5. It reveals God’s protection for His people; the Pillar came between 2 camps; Ex. 14:20.
 6. God’s “cloud” is full of water, it gives life. The nature of a cloud is to empty itself. He pours out His Spirit, and rains upon us; Hosea 6:3.
 7. This cloud brings the revelation of a personal God, Who meets His servants at THE DOOR of the Tabernacle, and speaks to them; Numbers 12:5; John 10:9.
 8. Man cannot control the movement of a cloud or a fire, only the “Wind” can move it!

6. In the New Testament, the IMAGE of Jehovah God is visibly revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus is the very IMAGE OF GOD; 2 Corinthians 4:4.
2. We “behold” Him, THE IMAGE of the invisible God; Colossians 1:15.
3. “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed INTO THE SAME IMAGE from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”; 2 Corinthians 3:18.
4. God predestined a people who would be conformed to THE IMAGE OF JESUS, His Son; Romans 8:29.
5. Jesus Christ is the express IMAGE OF HIS PERSON; Hebrews 1:1-3.
6. We are told to put off the old image and put on the new man after THE IMAGE OF HIM that created him; Colossians 3:8-10.
7. Following Jesus is to follow after THE IMAGE of a “FIERY, BRIGHT CLOUD”, to pursue a “MOVING LIGHT”; Luke 3:16; John 8:12.
8. As we have borne the IMAGE of the earthy (the man of dust), we will also bear the IMAGE of the heavenly (the man of heaven); 1 Corinthians 15:49.