



For some time I have been troubled in my spirit concerning the use of the term 'dove' and the symbolism associated with it as it is used in the Christian churches. Recently the Lord prompted me to compile some of the recorded data for your perusal so that we might have a better understanding on the origin of its' use in religion. So we shall start with the definitions given in some of our recognized dictionaries. We will then move on to historical evidence which defines the use of the word 'dove' and its' symbolism in religion.

In the Advanced Edition of the Winston Dictionary, 1944; we read the following description of the word, 'dove.' Quote! '(duv), n. [<A.S. *dūfe*, dove, akin to *dūfan*, to dive], 1. Any of several birds of the same family (*Columbidæ*) as the pigeon; 2. One who is pure and lovely, or very dear; a term of endearment; 3. The emblem of the Holy Spirit in Christian art and symbolism; 4. An emblem of innocence and gentleness.' end of quote.

In the Strongs concordance the word 'dove' as used in scripture to define the descending of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus Christ is *peristera* {per-is-ter-ah'} and numbered 4058. The dictionary states; **'of uncertain derivation;'** TDNT - 6:63,830; n f AV - dove 9, pigeon 1; 10 1) a dove.

Concerning the use of or making of images of any living creature the commandments from the scripture states as follows; Exodus 20:4- *'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth.'* Moses then teaches the people what God had meant by a graven image. In Deuteronomy chapter 4 we read starting at verse 12; *'And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only [ye heard] a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, [even] ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day [that] the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest ye corrupt [yourselves], and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, The likeness of any beast that [is] on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that [is] in the waters beneath the earth.'*

Let us now go back in time to the Babylonian Assyrian empires to the days of Nimrod and Semiramis and Tammuz and look at how the 'dove' was assimilated and used in many forms of pagan worship. It is a direct blatant expression of defiance against the commands of God. It has been used to give pagan customs a face of acceptance even up to this very day. The scripture states that Nimrod and his kingdom (which was Babylon) was 'mighty before or against God.' Genesis 10:8-10

Semiramis, that is Astarte which is the same as Venus and Aphrodite is represented as a dove. Every quality of gentleness and mercy was regarded as centered in her; and when death had closed her career, ***while she was fabled to have been deified and changed into a dove***, to express the celestial benignity of her nature, she was called by the name of D'Iune, or "The Dove," or without the article "Juno." Just who is Pope John Paul II Worshipping?



The name of the Roman "queen of heaven," has the very same meaning; and under the form of a dove as well as her own, she was worshiped by the Babylonians. The dove, the chosen symbol of this deified queen, is commonly represented with an olive branch in her mouth. A branch was the symbol of the deified son Nimrod, and when the deified mother was represented as a Dove, what could the meaning of this representation be but just to identify her with the Spirit of all grace, that brooded, dove-like, over the deep at the creation; for in the sculptures of Nineveh,

a city in the Babylonian kingdom of Nimrod, as you may have seen, the wings and tail of the dove represented the third member of the idolatrous Assyrian trinity. See fig. 25.

Fig. 25.†



In confirmation of this view, it must be stated that the Assyrian "Juno," or "The Virgin Venus," as she was called, was identified with the *air*. In Chaldee the same word which signifies the *air* signifies also the Holy Ghost. The statement of Proclus, that "Juno imports the generation of soul."*

*Proclus, lib.vi.cap.22, vol.ii.p.76

Whence could the soul-the spirit of man - be supposed to have its origin, but from the Spirit of God. In accordance with this character of Juno as the incarnation of the Divine Spirit, the source of life, and also as the goddess of the air, thus is she invoked in the "Orphic Hymns":-

O royal Juno, the majestic mien, Aerial formed, divine, Jove's blessed queen, throned in the bosom of caerulean air, the race of mortals is thy constant care;

The cooling gales, thy power alone inspires, which nourish life, which every life desires;

Mother of showers and winds, from thee alone producing all things, mortal life is known;

All natures show thy temperament divine, and universal sway alone is thine, with sounding blasts of wind, the swelling sea and rolling rivers roar when shook by thee.

Thus, then, the deified Semiramis, (the wife of Nimrod) when in all respects regarded as a veritable woman, was at the same time adored as the incarnation of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of peace and love in the form of a dove. In the temple of Hierapolis in Syria, (the city of obelisks) there was a famous statue of the goddess Juno, to which crowds from all quarters flocked to worship.

The image of the goddess was richly habited, on her head was a golden dove, and she was called by the name peculiar to the country, Semeion. What is the meaning of Semeion? It is evidently "The Habitation;" and the "golden dove" on her head shows plainly who it was that was supposed to dwell in her. Even the Spirit of God!

To the eyes of men she was Venus Urania, "*The heavenly Venus*," the queen of beauty, who assured her worshipers of salvation, **while at the same time giving loose reins to every unholy passion, and every depraved and sensual appetite. No wonder that every where she was enthusiastically adored.** Under the name of the "Mother of gods," the goddess queen of Babylon became an object of almost universal worship. "The Mother of the gods," says Clericus, "was worshiped by the Persians, the Syrians, and all the kings of Europe and Asia, with the most profound religious veneration."

[Joannes Clericus, Philos. Orient., lib.ii., De Persis, cap.9, vol.ii.p.340.

Truly the nations might be said to be "made drunk" with the wine of her fornications.

Revelation 17:1-2 '*And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*'



*Semiramis, being deified as Astarte, came to be raised to the highest honors and more worshiped than any other god; and **her change into a dove was evidently intended**, when the distinction of sex had been blasphemously attributed to the Godhead, to identify her, under the name of the Mother of gods, with that Divine Spirit, without whose agency no one can be born a child of God, and whose emblem, in the symbolical language of Scripture, was the Dove, as that of the Messiah was the Lamb.*

Now **Semiramis, deified as the Dove**, was Astarte in the most gracious and benignant form. The first form of Astarte was as Eve who brought sin into the world; the second form before the Flood, was avenging as the goddess of justice. This form was "Benignant and Merciful." Thus, also, Semiramis, or Astarte, as Venus the goddess of love and beauty, became "The Hope of the whole world," and men gladly had recourse to the "mediation" of one so tolerant of sin.||

||See, The Two Babylons or The Papal Worship by the late Alexander Hislop. Page 77-82 & page 309-310.

Compiled by Meet International Ministries.
Dr. John M. Strome, Th.D.