

Rev 26-04-26b

Let's resume our study now in the book of Revelation and we have come to the subject of Babylon. There has been a lot of speculation trying to figure out what exactly does Babylon represent in Revelation. As you see, chapter 17, one of the seven angels who had the seven bulls came and talked with me saying to me, come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, and the filthiness of her fornication. Just as a side note, if you remember, on two different occasions, the golden bowl containing the prayers of the saints is presented to God, and this seems to be set in contrast.

I didn't remember until I went back and confirmed it, that the bowl that represents the prayers of the saints is not just a bowl, it is a golden bowl. This is a golden cup. One bowl contains the expressions of praise and intercession and request and concern and praise that is brought before God by His children, His people, in our case, the body of Christ.

This golden cup is full of the exact opposite. It is the worst expressions of evil in every category. So it is full of abominations and filthiness of fornication, and on her forehead a name is written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.

I saw the woman, this is verse 6 of Revelation 17, I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her I marveled with great amazement. Verse 7, But the angel said to me, Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition.

So who would that be? Who is one who was, is not, but is going to ascend out of the bottomless pit and then go to perdition? There's only one individual that fits that description and that is Satan. This in the way that the Lord Jesus is depicted as a lamb as it had been slain or the lion of the tribe of Judah. Satan is depicted in some cases as the dragon.

We saw this earlier when he is pursuing the woman with child. Here he is more fully detailed. This is still the dragon, but he's a seven headed dragon.

He has ten horns. He's got more horns than he's got heads. So are some of these horns dual on three of the heads? There's two horns, so you get an extra three.

That's my suspicion. I don't think the horns could be anywhere else but on heads. So if you think

about it, if there are seven heads and ten horns, then four heads have one horn and three heads have two horns.

That gives you the total of ten. And there are things you can do by way of identification of each of these heads with that as a clue. But those who dwell on the earth, verse 8, will marvel whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world when they see the beast that was and is not and yet is.

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings.

Five have fallen. One is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

They like to say the seven heads are the seven mountains. Rome is the city founded on seven hills, and maybe there are seven Caesars. But as inviting and attractive as that is, and there is a sense in which you can make that work, and Rome certainly qualifies as one of these, but it doesn't qualify as all seven.

Because of these kings, five have fallen, one is, and one is yet to come. The kings that have fallen, you go back to the major empires of the world, and we'll enumerate these later. But just by way of example, if you think of Egypt, the first great world empire, followed by Babylon, secondly, followed by Medo-Persia, thirdly, followed by Greece, fourthly, and I'm leaving one out in there, I think Assyria, probably Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, that's three.

Medo-Persia is four, Greece is five, Rome is the sixth, the one that now is. And the one that is yet to come is what is sometimes called the revived Roman empire. This is going to be the beast who comes during the tribulation period.

And there are various ways of construing those, but that's a rough idea. And the one that is was the current Caesar, whatever his name may be, during the time of the Roman empire, most prominently Nero. But he was gone by the time John was writing.

Five have fallen. So that would be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. Those five have fallen.

One is, that's Rome, and one is yet to come, which is going to be sort of an amalgamation of all of the preceding ones. And when he comes, he continues a short time. The beast that was and is not is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

We'll talk about this later. I'll explain of the seven, he's an eighth. This gets into some technicalities, but we're in an overview here.

So don't, don't sweat the details too much. We're not ignoring them. We're not skipping them.

We're just getting a big picture and we'll go back and pick up these details. So all of this is basically focused on two entities. There is the and she's sitting on top of this beast.

The beast has a description, seven heads, 10 horns, and the heads are basically these kings. And even though you can see all of the heads, and they are similar in the sense that they are world powers, five have fallen, but their influence, their policy, their attitude persists. So the 10 horns, which you saw are 10 Kings who have received no kingdom as yet.

These 10 Kings are different than the five that have fallen. One is, and one is yet to come. These are 10 Kings that will exist during the 70th week, in particular, during the tribulation, different set of Kings.

They haven't received a kingdom, but they receive authority for one hour as Kings with the beast. Think of it this way. Remember the promise to overcomers and to those who are least, that we will rule with Christ.

We will reign with Christ. We are a kingdom of priests. And Paul says, if we endure, we shall reign with him.

We have no kingdom yet in this age. The kingdom is coming and we have the promise of the Lord Jesus and the promise of the father, that we will be a part of the rulership of that coming kingdom, the Lord Jesus kingdom, the millennial kingdom. In the same way that angels have a superintending role, a protecting role, many different functions that they perform invisibly for us in this age, we seem to be headed for a role of assisting for a thousand years in the rule of the millennial kingdom, whether or not that is visible, whether it's more like what the angels do now isn't revealed to us.

It is not yet known what we will be like, but we will be like him and we will see him as he is. And we will function. If we qualify, if we pay attention to our training, if we learn our lessons, if we master the content of the course here and graduate, we will reign with him.

So these people, these Kings have a similar promise. And I think these 10 Kings, this is like the 10 fingers on your hands. These are the humans they represent in the same way.

The 24 elders seem to represent the church. These 10 Kings seem to represent the earth dwellers and they believe there is a coming kingdom, just like we do. This is where we want to really begin to pay attention to the parallels to the reality and the counterfeit.

There is a real God in heaven. There is a counterfeit God, which is the beast, the dragon, Satan. There is a savior, Lord Jesus.

There is a beast that is sometimes called the instead of Christ, the anti Christ, although he's never called that in this book, but he is the first beast. He is the visible one. He is the object of

worship for the people on the earth.

And then as with the Holy spirit on the positive side, you have the false prophet who encourages indeed demands and enforces worship because Satan has to do things by force. He isn't God. He doesn't have God's power, but he is endeavoring to establish an alternate kingdom.

So these Kings have no kingdom, but they are promised and they are already ruling in an anticipatory way with the beast, with Satan. So they are exercising a kind of hegemony during this seven year period. And they anticipate that this is going to turn into great power and, you know, grant to us, oh Satan, that we can sit on your right hand and on your left in your kingdom and so on.

It's a, it's a very close, but dark parallel. So they haven't received a kingdom yet, but they've received authority for one hour for a short time. They, they actually think it's going to happen briefly.

Verse 13, these are of one mind and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the lamb and the lamb will overcome them for he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. And those who are with him are called chosen and faithful.

Then he said to me, the waters, which you saw where the harlot sits are people's multitudes, nations, and tongues. And the 10 horns, which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill his purpose, to be of one mind and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled.

And the woman who you saw is that great city, which reigns over the Kings of the earth, big picture here. The woman is labeled as a mystery that, that comes to be revealed in this book of revelation. And she is Babylon, the great mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.

Mother, this is a human function. Nobody in the angelic world, nobody in the divine realm bears children, only humans. When somebody is the mother of something, the woman that is with child that we saw earlier, this is human Israel bringing forth the humanity of Jesus Christ.

So whatever she is, the first thing you can say about Babylon, the mother of harlots is this is some human entity. It has something to do with human beings. She doesn't represent an angelic or principality or power entity, mother of harlots.

And this is a direct contradiction of the divine structure, the divine order that so many people, especially in our present day, hate that there is patriarchy, that God has assigned husbands to be the head of the house and of the marriage, the guardians and protectors of their wives and their families, that they are to love their wives as Christ loves the church. The Lord Jesus came not as a woman, but as a man, his disciples were all men, the elders of Israel, the leaders of Israel,

almost all of the judges and prophets in Israel were men. When women were called, it was as a rebuke and a message to Israel that their men had so utterly and completely failed that God would use a woman to show them how far they had fallen.

It is not a matter of quality, as we've said many times, it is a matter of assigned function. Israelites were no less valuable, no less smart, important, handsome, strong, useful, if they were a member of the other 12 tribes, but the Levites were assigned management and function in the worship of God at the tabernacle and later the temple, not by any quality that they possessed, it's an assigned function. In the same way, men are assigned to function, women are assigned to function.

And quality is not the issue, except as we look at our assignment and endeavor to fulfill it as under the Lord. There's a complete reversal here because Satan's kingdom is represented by and ridden on by this woman, but the horns, which are kings, male kings, not queens, they hate it and they are going to turn and attack. But this brings up the subject of Babylon.

Interestingly, we don't have Babylon even mentioned in the book of Revelation until you get to Revelation 14 verse 8. Oddly enough, it's the first reference to Babylon, we're more than halfway through the book, about two-thirds of the way through the book before Babylon is even mentioned. And this is where the angel says, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Here's my question.

Again, we're doing an overview here, so let's just stop and think. You get to this last seven years of what you might call standard human history before the millennial kingdom, return of the Lord Jesus, divine government in the person of the throne of David in Jerusalem, the person of the Lord Jesus sitting there upon and ruling with his fellow Davidic heirs, and by extension, his body, the church. But the last seven years, these horrific bold judgments, these tremendous things that we have seen, particularly in the latter breaking of the seals, in the trumpets, and in the bowls, we can only imagine what they contain.

And you think, this is concentrated divine wrath only on this one group of people right at the end of history. What about all of the other equally rebellious, equally hateful, equally evil people that have persisted throughout history? Babylon explains this. Let's talk a little bit about Babylon.

Babylon, as you may remember, was founded by Nimrod back in Genesis. We're at the last book of the Bible. Turn back to the first book of the Bible and go to Genesis chapter 10.

Genesis chapter 10. We're going to be looking specifically at verses 8 through 10, but you begin with the genealogy of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And when you get to verse 6, the sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

The sons of Cush, Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Rahama, and Sabtecha. And the sons of Rahama were Sheba and Dedan. Cush begot Nimrod.

He began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. This word translated before the Lord in old, old Hebrew has an adversarial connotation.

And a lot of good translations change before to against, in opposition to, a mighty hunter in opposition to the Lord. And this is confirmed down through a lot of history that I won't go into. But in my Bible, it is changed.

He was a mighty hunter against the Lord. Therefore it is said like Nimrod, the mighty hunter against the Lord. When people would be egregiously anti-God, anti-righteousness, pursuing evil, and hunting and pursuing and coercing others to join the cause, well, this is like Nimrod.

He isn't just opposing God himself. He is hunting others to join him. The hunting idea here seems to be in the sense of I'm going to find co-rebels, co-conspirators, those who share my distaste for God and anything that reminds me of him.

You think about Satan who roams the earth seeking whom he may devour. Satan is hunting those that he can bring to his dark side. So in verse 10, the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, Erekat and Kalna in the land of Shinar.

Babel is Babylon. Nimrod founded the city of Babylon. He is a direct descendant of Ham, not the fourth son Canaan, but Ham's son Cush.

So this is the firstborn. He's the one that was to inherit the estate, the blessing, and the portion of Ham. And the curse is on Canaan.

Cush is not cursed, but Cush begets Nimrod. Marad, M-A-R-A-D in Hebrew, is the verb that means to rebel, to oppose, to be against. Marad.

If you put an N in front of that, you get N-M-R-D, Nimrod. And this seems to be the etymology of his name. But notice, he founds Babylon, then he goes to Assyria in verse 11 and builds Nineveh.

Remember the heads? You have Egypt, Egypt, which is Mizraim. Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt. And if you look at the sons of Ham, you will find in his grandsons and further down, verse 13, Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Nefutim, and so on.

Path, Rishim, Castlehim, from whom came the Philistines, and the Kaphtarim. The Kaphtarim are the people from Cyprus, and so on, as I recall. And so Mizraim is Egypt.

So from the sons of Ham, but in particular Nimrod, you have Babylon and Nineveh. Mizraim is Egypt. So of those kings that have fallen, Egypt is Mizraim.

Babel is Babylon. Then you have Nineveh, which is Assyria. So in no particular order there, in order it would be Mizraim, Nineveh, and then Babylon.

Egypt, Assyria, and Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon. That begins this set of kings. And this begins in the plain of Shinar.

This is the location. And when you go to Zechariah, you will remember that Zechariah has a vision of, in chapter 5, verses 5 through 11, wickedness personified as a woman that is put in a basket, and a lid lined with lead is put on top of it. And two women with wings like storks, storks are an unclean bird, fly this basket and set it back down in the plain of Shinar.

Zechariah 5, 5 through 11. You can write it in the margin there in your Genesis chapter 10. But Babylon is the archetype of worldly power, the Tower of Babel.

We will build out of material. We will fix the problems. We can get on top of this tower if it's, comes to another flood.

We can observe the stars. We can take control of the environment. We can deduce.

And the beginning of science is at the Tower of Babel. So that's where it begins. Here's my point.

In the scheme of things, when you step back and look at it, alternate power to God, initiated by Satan at his fall from heaven and his casting to the earth, he is going to build his kingdom and his capital city, his Jerusalem, is Babylon. When you see Babylon in scripture, there can be actual material cities. There was a real King Nebuchadnezzar.

There was a real Belshazzar. Daniel was really there in Babylon. Ezekiel was really a captive by the rivers of Babylon, which is by the way, the Euphrates.

But Babylon in its spiritual metaphorical sense, its spiritual value to us, this is Satan's Jerusalem. This is where his throne and where his chosen King, the beast, is to rule from. This is in spiritual terms.

So as you trace Babylon down through the Bible, it begins in Genesis and it extends through Joshua. You can see where Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, Mesopotamia, which is the Babylonian region, and he is to go to a land. The fall of Satan precedes human history.

Satan's hegemony and taking over the kingdoms of the world precedes the coming of the Lord Jesus. Babylon precedes Jerusalem. David is going to take the physical city.

The Lord Jesus is going to have a kingdom that is not of this world, and its capital is the heavenly Jerusalem. It is going to be reflected in his rule from the earthly Jerusalem during the millennial kingdom. But in the same way that you have the holy trinity of the Father, Son, and Spirit, the unholy trinity of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, you have similarly Jerusalem, both earthly and heavenly, and you have Babylon, both earthly and spiritual.

What we are seeing as we find the mystery of the mother of all harlots, Babylon, in Revelation,

how is it that this Babylon is going to be held responsible for the death of so many saints and so many children of God, so many prophets? Because all down through history, those who join the fallen kingdom, those who worship in the spiritual Babylon, who adopt the attitude of Satan, who prefer his values and his goals and his ideas of justice and self-aggrandizement, of absorption in what is material, in getting ahead, in beating the other guy, in ascending and rising and overcoming and dominating, those who share that are making a pilgrimage to Babylon instead of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Once you get this idea in your mind, when you go back and look at references to Zion, the holy hill in Jerusalem, where I was glad when they said unto me, let us go and worship in the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem, versus those who worship at the shrines and the altars of Babylon, the materialism, the satanic ethos that defines it and with which it is immune, separate people into those who are in the book of life and those who are not. The judgment on the mother of all harlots, the mystery of Babylon here, who is responsible for death and for opposition, is in view.

It is the entire history for which it is held responsible. It isn't just an earthly city of Babylon that is judged. It isn't that it's Jerusalem or it's Rome or it's some other location.

Notice it's riding a beast that's got these heads that go back through history, all the way back to Egypt and by extension, all the way back to the plain of Shinar, to Nimrod and the original Babylon. The woman has been riding that beast ever since the first head came into existence. As each new one arrived and appeared and these horns appeared, the woman has been riding that beast and the cup has been filled time and again with the blood of God's people, with the blood of martyrs, which is why they cry out and ask for justice and why God is going to grant it as these bowls are being poured out and now we're going to see the judgment on Babylon.

But if somebody says, well, what does Babylon stand for in the book of Revelation? Is it Rome? Is it Jerusalem? Divided into three parts. Remember that the notions that caused the Tower of Babel to be built, it's a verbal case. It's what issues from the mouth.

Nimrod hunts people and convinces them to join his cause. He doesn't conquer them with a bow and a spear. He talks them into it.

He presents a case and they agree. Satan roams the earth seeking who may devour and he does it with ideas. He does it with doctrines of demons, doctrines of his own devising.

These frog demons that emerge and gather everyone to Armageddon. This is the great conflict between Babylon and Jerusalem, between those who are on Satan's side and those who are on God's side. More about this as we continue our study on Wednesday.

But the application for us is we want to be careful not to buy into Babylon. People today want to talk about empire and the American empire or the Western empire or conservative Christian empire or whatever. Our battle is not against flesh and blood.

We wrestle against principalities and powers. We wrestle against spiritual Babylon that has existed since the earliest days of human history and is going to be judged and destroyed in the last days of human history prior to the millennial kingdom. It is driven by Satan.

We have to watch out. We can't fumble away our inheritance. We can't be distracted by materialism, by the ideas of the world.

Don't let a frog demon idea come out and twist your mind and distract you, distract us from the beauty of the Lord Jesus, the magnificence of the plan of God, His power, His grace, His presence, and His provision with us and for us. Remember who we are. Remember why we're here.

I am heading for the new Jerusalem. I am fleeing Babylon. My page out of the 1611 King James that hangs on my wall, the title at the top says, GO, G-O-E, GO FROM BABYLON.

For your homework by Wednesday, please read Jeremiah chapter 51. A lot will be explained with this as background. Read Jeremiah 51 and I'll see you on Wednesday.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for how powerfully it informs us, it enables us, it gives us perspective so that we can rise above the deceptions, the distractions, the temptations of this world and focus on that city that is founded and built by you yourself with the Lord Jesus as its ruler and we walking in robes of white worthy to enter, to dwell, and to enjoy its light and its beauty. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will help us to remember that this is our goal, this is our hope, and enable us to use the full armor with which we have been provided to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, to keep our eye on the prize, to walk through that straight gate that leads to life.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.