

## **Rev 26-04-29a**

Good evening, welcome to Wednesday Night Bible Study at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is the 29th of April, 2026. We continue our study in the Gospel of Revelation, the Book of Revelation.

We took a look in the interim between Sunday and now at reading Jeremiah 51. We will refer to that briefly as we continue our study of the two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon. Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and we'll get started.

Father, how grateful we are for our fellowship, for the mutual encouragement, the intercessory prayer, the lifting up and blessing that comes through the spiritual gifts that You have given to each one of us. We pray tonight as we gather around Your Word that the Holy Spirit will minister to our hearts in an effective and meaningful way, give us clarity of vision, help us to see where we are in history, where we are in our culture and society, and how best we can serve as witnesses to the Lord Jesus and representatives as His body in the time that remains to us in this life, guided by the principles that we see in this portion of Your Word. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Beginning in Revelation at our passage, you will see that after the events of the bulls in Revelation chapter 16 and the review of what is going to take place with the seventh bull, which corresponds to the seventh trumpet, which corresponds to the seventh of the angels in chapter 14, who thrusts his sickle into the earth and gathers the vine of the earth and throws it into the great winepress of the wrath of God, all of these are parallel. We will shortly have the often promised and yet to be delivered chart that is going to help us see the alignment of these things, but we don't need it tonight because after the visions that he sees in the bull judgments, men are still blaspheming God in verse 21 of chapter 16 because of the plague of hail, that plague was exceedingly great.

Then in chapter 17, we see the scarlet woman on the scarlet beast. She is labeled Mystery Babylon the Great in verse 5. This tells us something important. Babylon is only referred to three times outside of the revelation and in each case, it is a reference to the physical city.

For example, twice in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus, it is referenced as a time marker, 14 generations until the carrying away to Babylon and from the carrying away to Babylon until the coming of the Lord Jesus, 14 generations. So those are not important to our study. It is also at the close of one of Peter's letters where he says, she who is in Babylon greets you, but primarily Babylon is revealed in the latter portion of this revelation.

And we saw that it doesn't even appear for any number of chapters until we first see it beginning, I think in revelation chapter 14 is our first reference. But here we are given a clear clue as to what Babylon represents because it is a mystery. You will recall from our study of 1st and 2nd Timothy, we went into some depth on what constitutes a mystery, something that was previously

unrevealed.

And when it comes to the church and the role of the Holy Spirit and the unfolding from Pentecost until the rapture given by the apostle Paul, he is the apostle that was given stewardship of those mysteries. And we looked at the passages, behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not asleep, but we shall all be changed.

It's the mystery of the rapture heretofore unrevealed. The Holy Spirit that inspired Paul is the Holy Spirit that inspires John and the Holy Spirit as John is in the spirit on the day of the Lord and is now viewing this vision, sees this woman with Babylon written across her forehead. This is a mystery.

This means that whatever Babylon represents, it was not previously revealed in this form with these relationships and these truths associated with it. So the setting here is very important. Chapter 17 of the revelation, one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me saying to me, come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.

We know that many waters represents the Gentile nations throughout scripture. This harlot sitting on top of them is indicating she has control. A loose analogy would be the Lord Jesus walking on the waters.

If she sits on these many waters, she doesn't sink into them. She is not overcome by them. Storms did not arise and unseat her.

So this woman, we know two things about her. She is able to dominate many nations, many waters, and she is a harlot, meaning she does not conform to God's divine ordinances of marriage, family, human government that should guarantee the opportunity to pursue faith in God in our age, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a harlot, she is prostituting herself.

She is using her appeal, her influence to accomplish things that are outside the will of God. This much we know just from the first couple of verses of this chapter. We can thirdly say, beyond dominating the nations by some form of influence, where she is able to remain above them and not be consumed by them up to this point.

And secondly, as a harlot, she is an immoral entity. The third thing we can see is that she has relationships with the kings of the earth that involve fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. Why do people get drunk? A variety of reasons.

For some, it is hilarity, loosening of inhibitions, relaxation, de-stressing. For other people, it is a compulsion due to long habit. But people want to feel good.

This is why there are tailgate parties at ball games. This is why people have parties and there's a bar, or the party is held at a bar. Alcohol is a good time.

It is self-gratification. Everybody wants to feel better. So, she provides this.

People feel better after contact with her. We saw this in the description of the crafty harlot in the first dozen chapters of Proverbs. The allure, the appeal, the seductive, persuasive force is, come with me and you will feel better.

Let me entertain you. Let me provide pleasure for you that is illicit, and in some cases, the sweeter because it is breaking the rules. Many people that have sneaky affairs enjoy the adrenaline rush and the sense of danger.

And when their marriages fail and they say, well, we are now free, why don't we just get married? Those relationships fail as well because part of the appeal of it was the element of being found out and desiring to perpetrate this thing on the sly. So, just these descriptions give us so much information. Of these, the one I would encourage you to remember is what we find in verse five.

Mystery. This isn't mystery Babylon. This entire depiction of this woman sitting atop this beast, committing fornication with kings, having this golden cup full of abominations, this is a mystery.

This is something that was not previously revealed, which tells us that it is not a literal city. This is not Babylon that was built beginning with Nimrod and refurbished by Assyrians and Sumerians and kings all down through the ages. This is representative.

Babylon is a mystery. So, anything we can see in scripture in terms of, is it Rome? Is it Jerusalem? Is it the original Babylon that is Nebuchadnezzar's capital? It is transcending that and is presented here as a mystery. And that's very important because when we understand this, the application is going to be quite apparent for us.

So, this woman is sitting on a scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and 10 horns. We saw last time that as you keep reading, you find the interpretation given that these, in verse 10, seven kings are represented by the heads. Verses nine and 10, the mind that has wisdom, the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

There are also seven kings. Now, notice in verse nine, that sits is present tense. The current emanation of the pattern, the current expression of this mystery revelation is Rome.

At the time that John is writing, Rome embodies and fulfills the role of Babylon, the mother of harlots. But it isn't limited to Rome as we're going to see from scripture tonight. But because it says in the present tense, the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits currently.

So, the Roman empire, the Roman government is represented here. And there is control that is exercised by the woman over this. We'll see what that control is.

Then in verse 10, there are also seven kings, five have fallen. One is, the other has not yet come. When he comes, he must continue a short time.

So, these are secular human governments. They are kings or the kings represent any form of government. It could be a democracy.

It could be a theocracy. It can be controlled by religious zealots or by benevolent stand-ins. It can be government by common consent.

King just means there is a government. Remember, this is a code. We decode.

A king means a government. So, the one that has not yet come must continue a short time. So again, the beast with the seven heads, the currently active head is the Roman empire currently in John's day.

But the principle, the pattern that this beast and this woman represent span history back to the earliest days when men began to spread out on the earth after the flood, all the way down until the end of the tribulation period. Extremely important to understand so that we understand the judgments. Back to the introduction here, the woman is sitting on a scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy.

These are not governments that started out like ours, saying we are one nation endowed by our creator with inalienable rights. There was a great deal of recognition of God in the founding of our nation despite what secular people would like to have us believe. All you have to do is read the language of the earliest colonial and later state constitutions, our own constitution, the writings of the founding fathers.

They are replete, including George Washington with references to divine providence, to God in heaven. And this is not a nation that began as a head full of names of blasphemy. We are now, but we weren't when we started.

So it tells you about godlessness on the part of these. Think back to what the heads represent, the five that have fallen. Egypt, nothing to do with the God of Israel, except temporarily when Joseph was second only to Pharaoh.

But Egypt, for dynasty after dynasty, worshipped all manner of strange gods. The same thing with Assyria, the same thing with Babylon, the same thing with the Medes and the Persians, the same thing with the Greeks. You remember the pantheons and all the stories of the gods and demigods that they perpetrated.

Rome had its own gods and the revived form of secular government is going to be a head that follows the one that now is in John's day. And it will also be full of names of blasphemy, rejecting God, bitter excommunication toward God, animosity toward those who might want to worship God,

blasphemy. As we will see in the words of this harlot.

Seven heads, ten horns. We've seen that there are more governments than there are places to govern. And you get the idea that these are very influential entities that don't have territory.

Kings without a kingdom. Think of the large corporations that exist today that provide and manage technology. Need I say more? They are huge.

They have as much or more influence as any government on earth, but they don't have a kingdom. They don't have authority through algorithms, through filtering, through providing or restricting. And you can imagine, you can fill in some names in our current day, if it were to happen soon, who some of these might be.

And you can even name the king. You can name the head of some of these AI providers or search engine providers and so on. So, ten horns, seven heads.

There will be this one head that is going to subsume what the previous ones, the kings that have fallen, whatever their territory is, whoever's currently ruling them, this is going to be a near one world government. But don't panic. We don't need to really map this onto geopolitical reality at this moment.

The woman is 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. The purple and blue, or blue and scarlet, the purple there is just blue. We've seen this in past studies.

So, it's red and blue. If she's wearing a white garment, you could imagine red, white, and blue. Once again, this is an entity that sits above the waters.

The United States is not Israel. We're not the new Israel. We're not a replacement Israel.

We are another Gentile nation that is referenced, assuming it still exists during these times. And the woman sits atop it. So, despite some previous speculations, the woman is not the United States just because she's red and blue on white.

Although it is suggestive by way of comparison, but she is not directly representing the United States at this time. She is adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls. Where did she get them? Women were typically not in business.

She didn't get these by legitimate profit earned through hard work and diligence. She's a harlot. These are things she has procured from her clientele, the kings of the earth.

And this entity is supported financially and is aggrandized and is made beautiful to look upon to the world by monetary gain accrued across time. And she has this golden cup in her hand full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. Filthiness of fornication.

This goes beyond simple mutual gratification. Fornication, in the simplest case, is two people who should not be sleeping together, but they do anyway. And it is refined into adultery if one or both of them are married to other people.

We typically talk of fornication between single people who should be waiting for marriage and aren't. Fornication goes into the spiritual realm in terms of pattern where it is giving yourself to something other than what God provides, what God commands, what God has designed and ordained. You give yourself to it.

There is spiritual fornication when people throw themselves into work and become invested in it and define themselves by it and measure their righteousness by the degree to which they rise in their profession or their organization. This is especially true in entertainment and politics. And it is a prostitution, it is a fornication of self when any attention to spiritual things, any responsibility toward God, sin, righteousness and judgment is completely set aside.

It is rejected as not pertinent, not relevant, not important, not even existent in the minds of these people. And so this is the fornication. So at the first instance, it provides a kind of gratification and there is some sort of mutual benefit in these ungodly relationships.

But it rises beyond that. And instead of just the parties involved in the fornication, now the evil spreads. And this is the filthiness.

Fornication can harm others. It can produce undue influence where decisions are made. You can corrupt a judge or a governor or a mayor or a senator or a congressman or a cabinet level individual through fornication.

You can compromise them. You can gain leverage over them. You can blackmail them.

And you now are using this fornication relationship to perpetrate an even greater evil. This is why, and it is almost always the case, it seldom ends in a simple dalliance. Someone is hurt.

Someone is disappointed. Pledges and promises that are made have been broken with consequences. And in some cases, it's not immediately seen.

It comes back to haunt people later. Oh, it was a harmless dalliance. A few years later, this person reappears on the scene and there is a child that the father didn't know about.

Or there is some other consequence. This is the filthiness. I'm just elaborating here.

She has a golden cup in verse four full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. All of its tentacles, its aftereffects, the poison that leaks and spreads and harms others who had nothing to do with the initial liaison. But her cup is full of this and she drinks it.

Do you see people who are actually proud of evil that goes on that celebrate if a bad thing

happens because it suits them? We've seen this in recent days. On her forehead, a name written. The name Babylon written on her forehead means when you know what Babylon is, it's easy to spot.

If you have eyes to see, if you have a desire to discern, if you have a mind with wisdom, you can read the name on the forehead of this entity and it is Babylon. I used to think that my father had a name that was only visible to dogs on his forehead that said, soft touch, sympathetic, go to this guy, he'll take care of you, which he always did. He loved dogs.

He had, I can't count how many across his lifetime, but I always thought some kind of way dogs just instinctively knew that even though my father was a Marine and could be very gruff and exude command presence, dogs knew he was going to be great with them. It was invisibly written on his forehead, I think. This lady, this entity will be easily identifiable.

It's on the forehead. It's not an ID card in her hip pocket. The mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth, this evil that is perpetrated by this primary entity is repeated.

It spawns more of the same. It is seen at a high level. You can look at recent examples of fraud in this country, in various states of the union that it's now being uncovered and investigated.

Somebody initiated the fraud and found that it worked. Next thing you know, someone else in their community says, well, if it worked for them, it'll work for me. And the initiator and the designer of this scheme is copied and becomes an archetype for others.

So this entity doesn't corner the market on evil. Rather, the strategies and the techniques and the influences used by this great entity that sits atop the nations is going to be worked out in smaller examples, high and low throughout the world, mother of harlots and of the abominations, the filthiness that all of these things spawn. It is going to be wickedness, evil, fraud, waste and abuse, selfishness, self-centeredness, insensitivity, callous disregard for others on a scale never before seen.

But it has been seen before and it is seen now. We're going to see that Babylon spans human history. This is the culmination.

This is the fullness. You talk about the fullness of times. This is the fullness of the Babylon principle, the Babylon spiritual entity that has existed ever since Satan became the god of this world, because Babylon is his capital.

That is enough to chew on in terms of application when you realize that all of these things that we have observed and seen by way of description exist now. Are we a part of it? Are we enmeshed in it? Are we carried along by it? Or do we see it for what it is and follow the Old Testament exhortation to go from Babylon, to leave Babylon, to separate from Babylon, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord? Well, in order to separate, we have to know

what it is. Passages like this help us see where it is, what it is, how it functions.

And when it comes close to us, we endeavor to minimize our contact and ensure that we are not seduced and carried off by any harlot, especially the mother of those harlots. More about this when we come back from the break.