

Rev 26-05-31b

We pick up our study here looking at the demise, the destruction, the judgment of Babylon. We know that this is instigated by God, but the agency is going to be the 10 horns on the beast that are given one mind by God and are used by God as the means of her destruction. The merchants sail on the ships that are on the many waters on which the woman sits, on which she has formerly been perched upon the beast.

The 10 kings are unique and separate. The merchants are those that have engaged in this traffic and commerce. We have been looking at this in Isaiah chapter 47.

As we come back to Revelation chapter 18, heading into 19, the destruction is detailed in 18, 17 and 18, in one hour, such great riches came to nothing. Every ship master, all who traveled by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea stood at a distance. This is pregnant language.

It may well be that there are actual individuals that are actually viewing this from a safe distance on the waters. This tells you that it's not Babylon, the historic city that's located in the deserts of Iraq on the Euphrates River, but is visible from oceans. And more pertinently, these oceans are the troubled seas that represent all of the people's nations, tongues, and kindreds that are godless.

The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest. Waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

And when you find the oceans, they represent the chaotic mass of people that are dominated by Satan, that are supporting those who do traffic and merchandising with the woman. The woman represents false religion, false spirituality, false appeals to the priorient desires and nature of man. And this is often expressed even as a religion of self, if not some other false system of worship.

We worship ourselves. Whitney Houston should have known better because she grew up in church, but she sang some song that the greatest love of all is to love yourself, and it's the devil's own lie. That is the worst of all loves.

We are to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow the Lord Jesus, not love ourselves and cater to ourselves and gratify ourselves and be self-centered and self-indulgent. It is a lie, but self-actualization and the need to forgive oneself and to be catered to by those who have you lay on a couch and talk all about yourself, and you pay them to listen to your self-indulgent yammerings going on and on forever is false worship, false religion, and it is represented by Babylon. So we saw this in Isaiah 47.

We come back now to Revelation. And these who travel on ships, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, they are taking advantage of, they are exploiting the herd, the masses, the sheep

they are sometimes called that are easily led, easily taken advantage of, exploited and led about. This now takes place on steroids, if you will, via the internet and social media.

People are led, they are fooled, they are given pre-digested opinions and viewpoints and filtered, distorted, and twisted facts and non-facts. Disinformation, misinformation is rife. It is extremely difficult to find the truth.

And how do you know if something is true when it comes across media? And you say, well, they're saying this and they're saying that. Who is the definition of truth? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, who says in John 14, six, "I am the truth, as well as the way and the life." So how do we recognize truth if it's not a directly biblical concept? What did Jesus say He would do when He left this earth? He told His disciples, I am leaving, but when I go, I will send you another comforter. And what is His main job? He will lead you into all truth.

You will hear a story, you will hear a narrative, you will be given a news report or some trending subject from whatever source. And if we are doing what we should do and being what we should be, if we are concentrating on being genuine overcomers and not led down the dark alley to the scarlet harlot's lair and being co-opted by Babylon, God, the Holy Spirit will give us a sense that something is not right, something is amiss. I am not going to take this at face value.

I'm not going to accept this just based on some human standard of credibility or even logic or reason that makes sense that it would be this way. This is how conspiracy theories gets launched. There are still people who think we never landed on the moon.

There are people who think that the government did 9-11. There are people who think the current presidential administration staged one or more of the assassination attempts in order to win favor and it was all a put-up job. You hear these allusions.

And if we have a need to know, if it makes a difference, there are things, you hear a story and you say, well, was there really someone who went to Mexico and a Mexican magician pulled the tumor out of them by laying their hand on it? I don't need to know if that's true or not. I don't need to know a lot of things. If I have a need to know, God's Holy Spirit will lead me into the truth I need.

There's a lot of truth I don't need. Historically speaking, was there a conspiracy around President Kennedy's assassination? Interesting, but I don't have a need to know. There are things that are happening in the present and for me to make good decisions and be a good steward of my time, my attention, my responsibilities to my spouse, to my family, to my employer, to my church, to my circle of associations, to the one another's, to my neighbor, to those who are outside and to my enemies.

I have specific biblical responsibilities and there are truths I need to know. And I can go to God and say, I need to know the truth of this so that I can do my job and fulfill my responsibilities in a

way that is pleasing in your sight and that glorifies the Lord Jesus. You have promised that your spirit will lead me into the truth.

I am asking for that wisdom. James 1, wisdom is a knowledge of the truth and how to apply it. I don't need to know how many galaxies there are.

I don't need to know how many molecules there are, but there are things that I really need to know and I need to know their truth. And I can go to God with confidence. I can go to my father and say, please reveal to me through your word and your spirit, how I should prioritize, what goals I should set, what values I should hold, what I should support, what I should walk away from, what I should run away from, what I should stand and fight.

Where do I raise my shield of faith? Where do I swing my sword of the spirit, which is your word? Where is my helmet of deliverance? Where is the gospel of peace that I'm going to pull onto my feet so that I can walk worthy of the calling with which we have been called? You can pray with absolute confidence and listen, any truth you and I need to know, God is leaning forward from his throne in heaven to give us. It is up to us to discern. What do I need to know? What are the essentials? I love what a pastor from long ago used to say, we as believers should be inflexible about the essentials and be flexible about the non-essentials.

There are finer points of biblical understanding and interpretation. What is the truth of that? Unless I'm in a place where I need to apply that particular truth, I can put that on the shelf and wait for the Lord to give me that truth. I can put that on the shelf and wait for more light.

It isn't something I need right now. If I'm using a flashlight, I need to know are the batteries in it good right now? There's batteries in the drawer that have been laying there. Some of them I took out of other things that broke.

Are those batteries good? I don't need to know that right now. I need to know that the flashlight I'm about to depend on for something important has good batteries. I can check those other batteries later.

This is how we need to think about the power of God that resides in his word and with his spirit. What do I need to know now? This is why there are times when we need to shut everything off, be still and know that I am God. The Lord says, take time in quietness and in stillness.

The Lord Jesus said, when you pray, don't stand on a street corner and worry about everybody else. Go to the inner chamber. The King James calls it the closet.

It's not your clothes closet. Although I have done some great audio work in my clothes closet. It's a wonderful sound dampening environment, but it doesn't have to be your actual clothes closet.

It means when people say we were closeted, it means we went to a private place where it is distraction free. Find a way. You can sit in your car.

You can take your lunch hour at work. Just go sit in your car and just set aside the concerns, the distractions, the cares, casting all your cares upon him for he cares for you. If it's a stressful morning, go to the restroom, close a stall door, do whatever you have to do to find a quiet moment and resort to the throne room of God where there is order, there is peace, there is comfort and strength.

God is the God of all comfort. The Lord Jesus said, peace, I give to you. My peace, I leave with you.

It's not the kind of peace you get from the world. It is God's own peace. Claim it, resort to it.

Be encouraged and strengthened and renewed in the quiet and the peace. It's a conscious effort in some cases. It isn't just going to drop on me like an apple on Newton.

Sometimes you've got to go get it, but it's a resource, it's a promise. Don't forget that when things are getting stressful, either mentally and spiritually or physically, go to a quiet place. Secular people say, well, I'm going to go to my happy place.

We have much more than a human happy place. We have the peace and the strength and the comfort of God. Life is stressful.

The world is stressful. What comes sluicing into our hearts and minds via media is intentionally stressful, intentionally so. It is designed to move you, to irritate you, to motivate you, to get you to buy, to get you to participate, to get you to click, to get you to respond, to get you to buy so that it can track your purchases and pitch ads at you so that they can tell their advertisers, look, we got this many clicks, this many hits, this many time elements spent on a given webpage or a given product page.

We do it with email, we do it with texts, we do it with side ads. It's all tracked, Google Analytics and so on. You are the product.

You are the thing that everyone wants to manipulate and wants to exploit. Ultimately, lift the money out of your purse or your wallet. That's what they're up to.

Be still, separate, get away. It's amazing. I am amazed by smartwatches because you can wear the thing for 24 hours.

It tracks your steps, it gets your heartbeat, it will answer your phone, it will run apps, it will take pictures, it will remote trigger your phone, it will do so many things, and it'll even tell you the time. And the thing runs for hours and hours and hours. I used to think, well, it offers me this sleep tracking thing, tell me how much REM sleep and how many hours, but I've got to put it on the charger.

You can put these smartwatches on the phone and in about an hour and a half, it will fully charge and it's good for a whole day. This is what the word of God does. This is what communion with God in the Holy Spirit does.

This is what resorting to and being restored by the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who has his words and keeps them is the one who loves him. He comes to those who love him and he spends time with us.

Remember Psalm 23, he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his glory, his name's sake. Green pastures, still waters.

That is a spiritual vacation. And it only takes a few minutes and it can recover hours and hours of the day. We don't have to constantly be singing Psalms and quoting verses to ourselves.

It is powerful. The word of God is alive and powerful. You go and take three and a half minutes and quote verses to yourself, review promises, send up prayers and present cares and concerns and stresses and situations to God.

And in a couple of minutes, you will be energized like that smartwatch and you can power through the rest of the day. That's why God gives us much more practical time, task time, interaction time, living in the world time than he does Bible study time. This stuff is so powerful.

All you need is like Elijah, eat what is provided and he goes in the strength of that food 40 days and 40 nights. The Lord Jesus went into the wilderness and fought Satan successfully for 40 days tested in the wilderness by the strength of the word of God. It's a picture for us.

Why are we told these things? Don't forget, just like a little leaven will leaven the whole lump, a little of the word of God will power us for hour after hour after hour. Don't forget who we are and why we're here. Remember which city you're heading for.

Don't be co-opted by Babylon. Don't be dazzled by the purple and the fine linen and the scarlet and the pearls and the gold. So attractive, so flashy, so alluring.

Shut your eyes, turn your head, head for the springs of living water. Pray without ceasing and rejoice evermore. That's the cause and effect in the word of God.

So don't be the Babylon of Isaiah 47. Don't partake of her sins and endure her plagues. Why do that? It's just crazy.

Back to Revelation. So verse 21 follows verse 19 and 20. They threw dust on their heads.

These that float on the sea, these that avail themselves, they profit by this interaction. Distracted people participating in false religion generates money. So they cry out when they see the smoke of her burning, saying, what is like this great city? They throw dust on their heads, cry out

weeping and wailing and saying, alas, alas, that great city, that great complex, that great complicated, organistic building, complex situation.

A city is made up of all kinds of components, all kinds of structures and systems. That great city in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth, rich by her wealth. We say, well, Babylon is false religion.

I don't really understand, you know, what are they doing? Selling crosses in the gift shop or what is it? Let me give you a few statistics. This is an article from the Michigan Journal of Economics. Just one, if you research this, this is just the tip of the iceberg.

I just wanted a quick summary. This article is called Faith-Based Fortune, the \$1.2 trillion impact of religion on the US economy. This is annually.

Religion, quote unquote, \$1.2 trillion annually. What does this comprise? The article says, Christianity has helped shape the moral and philosophical foundations of the United States. These principles still echo through the nation's identity to the present day.

Fast forward, religion of all kinds now contributes \$1.2 trillion annually to the US economy, a sum that rivals the gross domestic product of some of the world's largest nations, underscoring its profound, often overlooked role in shaping American life. Immensely, religion has influence through direct financial contributions, ethical guidance, and its shaping of societal values and public policies. It isn't common to think about religion in a capitalistic way unless you read Revelation, unless you read Isaiah, unless you read Jeremiah, unless you have a biblical point of view and see what religion so-called does economically, unless you study the history of the Catholic Church and where its wealth derives, unless you study Islam and where its wealth derives.

Even Buddhism and some of the other large world religions, there is a money flow like you can't believe. Beyond the pews, beyond the prayer mats, religion's footprint in the United States is a quiet powerhouse of the American economy. With over 344,000 religious congregations spread across the country, houses of worship do more than just offer spiritual refuge.

They contribute a staggering \$418 billion annually to the U.S. gross domestic product. That's a grim and grim study from 2016. It's even more than that 10 years later.

This multifaceted contribution fuels local economies through the value of services that support individuals such as counseling and support groups, estimated at \$159 billion. Educational activities they provide, \$91 billion. Direct spending on operations, salaries, and local services constitutes \$83 billion a year.

Congregations generate value through magnet effects, drawing on visitors from hosting weddings, funerals, performances, lectures, and tourism. Faith-based institutions ranging from

universities, hospitals, and nonprofits inject another \$300 billion annually, offering not just services, but economic lifelines. This economic influence extends into the broader business sector as well.

Pull up the article if you're interested. Look at other similar articles, other studies. Here's the point.

This \$1.2 trillion effect all goes away when Satan decides that he is going to interact with the world population directly. All faith-based groups, ministries, organizations, anything that's got Saint in front of its name, universities with any sort of affiliation or heritage of having come from a seminary and branching out into being a university, all of these are going to be rendered illegal and will be eviscerated. In some cases, physically destroyed if they in any way refuse to comply.

The 10 horns are going to render them moot. They will not be able to do transactions. They will not be able to interact economically.

They will not be able to pay staff. They will not be able to pay rent. They will not be able to pay utilities.

They will not be able to access the internet for their online course content or their fundraising efforts. Those who control the power sources, which is communication, which is everything from positioning satellite access, internet access, communication access, utilities access, someone who is at this level transcending international and national borders will just shut the power off to anyone who refuses to comply. Anyone who doesn't bow the knee directly to Satan.

This is the destruction of Babylon. And all of those who have been transacting business and making money in all of these areas is going to stand afar off and mourn because now the only way to survive is to bend the knee directly to Satan. This is the culmination.

This is the gloves coming off. This is the mask falling away. The whore of Babylon is swept aside and you see the grinning all powerful, God-hating face of Satan himself.

This is the great and terrible tribulation. This is the time of Jacob's trouble. Israel by definition is a faith-based group tied directly to God.

This is the woman who has to be protected in the desert from the flood that comes out of the dragon's mouth at the close of this 70th week. So why is there the rejoicing that we are going to see in chapter 19? Because this heinous evil exchange in so many cases, not to say that there's not wonderful things being done by faith-based organizations, but the bulk of it is done for profit. The bulk of it is done and there are people with golden bathtub faucets and big mansions and fancy cars and organizations that are self-sustaining, resting on the donations of God-fearing people whose pockets are being picked by those who deceive and pretend and are defrauding.

Look at just the tip of the iceberg we are starting to see unfold in the uncovering of fraud and waste and abuse. Things done in the name of childcare and elder care and hospice services and

the money disappears. There's no organization, there are no children, there's no service being rendered.

It's in a good cause and often done under the blanket of some religious motivation and it is self-aggrandizement. It is evil misuse and subterfuge. It promises one thing and delivers something else.

This has been going on century after century. So a mighty angel in verse 21 takes up a stone like a great millstone, throws it into the sea saying, thus with great violence, this great city Babylon shall be thrown down and shall not be found anymore. Pay close attention here.

The city is destroyed. It no longer exists. It does not function.

It has no material visibility or existence. It is well and truly gone. It's not suffering.

It isn't writhing in agony. It isn't experiencing pain. The destruction of Babylon is a destruction.

This is apolia. This is being no more, out of existence. This is important because of something we're about to see.

Thrown down and shall not be found anymore. You can't find it, it doesn't exist. Notice, the sound of harpists, musicians, flutists and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore.

This is celebratory music. This is music that captures the senses, that gets people up and dancing and singing, that distracts their minds. I am somewhat horrified.

I suspect if I wrote down every verse I can recall and then wrote down every song lyric I can recall from my days of youth up to the present, I fear, I'm afraid that I know more song lyrics from the radio than I know scripture. That troubles me. Why is my mind occupied with knowing song lyrics that are in some cases somewhat tawdry and there's a lot of innuendo and suggestion and allusion involved in that that isn't even healthy.

I would rather that my mind was captivated by the word of God and that what I knew that comes to my mind are hymn lyrics and psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in my heart to the Lord and not to the beat, if you will. Harpists, musicians, flutists, trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore.

The sound of millstones shall not be heard in you anymore. Notice these are representative of entertainment industry, manufacturing industry, agricultural industry. These are representative of huge swaths of economic effort that generates trade and merchandise that is gone.

This is what defines the city. This is what the city is. This is what these people live and die by.

The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore. Notice even in Babylon, there are lamps that

shine. There are areas where you can still find enough illumination to see what's going on and leave.

Light is of God, darkness is of Satan. Go from Babylon, you need a light to light the way and get out of there. You gotta find your way out the streets, back up the dark alley, out past the outskirts and the borders.

But the light of a lamp will no longer shine in you. The voice of a bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. This is perpetration.

Brides and bridegrooms get married and have children and the next generation rises up and they have brides and bridegrooms. This means your continuity is no more. Marriage as we're going to see with the marriage of the lamb and his bride is a picture of continuity of progress into the future.

This kind of marriage is going to cease. And notice this is brides and bridegrooms. It doesn't say the sound of fornication and adultery will not be heard.

This is perpetuation, moving on to a new generation that will do even bigger and grander things. Will not be heard in you anymore. Your merchants were the great men of the earth.

By your sorcery, all the nations were deceived into thinking this is what life is about. This is what success is. This is what constitutes progress, advancement, meaning and purpose and definition.

It's a big lie. They will believe the lie. Even believers that go into the eternal future are gonna be outside the city with the dogs and the fornicators.

Those who believe and practice the lie will be outside. No inheritance, no possession inside, waiting for the creaking wagon with leaves from the tree of life to come out to partake. We'll see that before long.

Notice verse 24, in her, in Babylon was found the blood of prophets and saints and of all those who were slain on the earth. Prophets, this is what tells us that this goes back to the earliest days. Enoch was a prophet.

Enoch, seventh from Adam, prophesied. Prophets, all of the Old Testament, forth tellers of the word of God. Those who communicated the word of God were attacked and in many cases slain.

Read the latter part of Hebrews chapter 11, the fate of those who were persecuted, hounded out of civilization, sawn in two and so on, stoned to death. The blood of prophets, the blood of saints, sanctified ones that have been slain for their faith, not just in a few years of the 70th week, all through history. This is an enormous number of witnesses.

Remember the blood of the martyrs? Martireo, this is the testifiers. Testimony, martyria, we saw

this last time. Those who have the witness of Jesus, those who have had the witness of God throughout history have been slain by false religion, slain in the name of civil improvement and getting rid of naysayers and those.

Why was John the Baptist slain? He was the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, directly foreshadowing and announcing the coming of the Lord Jesus. And he was beheaded for his witness and testimony. He is a martyr, not just someone who was slain, he is slain because of his testimony.

And this has happened from earliest days. Abel, in the offering of a lamb on his altar, was a witness and he was slain by Cain. He is the first of the witnesses to the need for the shedding of blood for the remission of sin.

And Cain killed him for it, murdered him for it. And Jesus talked about this, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias slain between the altars. You can look that up, it's a wonderful study.

In Jesus's Bible, Zacharias slain between the altars was in the last book and Abel was in the first. That blood will be required of this generation and of every generation that took that blood. This is a sweeping historical judgment and it transcends our understanding of how God is going to simultaneously judge every citizen of Babylon all at once.

But that's what's gonna happen. And all of those who were slain on the earth, only have a minute to talk about this. Slain, those who are slain, this word doesn't mean, this is not just thanateo, this is a word that means ritually slain, ritually slain.

Verse 24, the verb is sfago, S-P-H-A-G-O. This is not just killing, this is ritual slaying. This is slaying someone for one's personal ends, a personal goal.

Primary under this, those who wanted to remain in power in ancient days, slaying the opposition. This includes every abortion that has ever been committed. I will give you a quick statistic, a set of statistics.

There is a website, you can visit this for details. It is called numberofabortions.com. In the United States today, 1,258 abortions already committed, already performed. In the United States this year, 385,653 abortions as of this minute.

These are tickers based on averages, and it's like the US national debt clock. When you go here, these numbers are changing upward every minute. Worldwide abortions just since 1980, 1,816,676,890, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 98, 900.

It is going up. Abortions are happening worldwide by the second. These are lives that are taken in the womb, overwhelmingly because of an inconvenient pregnancy.

There are, of course, those that are done out of medical necessity. That is rare to the vanishing

point. They are almost always done because it is inconvenient.

Those that are classified as self-serving are slain under the ritual category. Slain because I will get a benefit. I will pass my son or daughter through the fire to Molech because it will improve my economic prospects.

My crops, my flocks and herds will prosper if I give this child to this particular God. It is the God of emotion. It is the God of convenience.

It is the God of this may screw up my life. This is not a good time. I wanna have fun, but I don't wanna bring a life into the world at this point.

So I didn't think about that when I was having fun. I'm thinking about it now, and I will take a radical step at someone else's expense. I will take a life to justify the good time I had a few months back, a few weeks back.

In the United States, just since 1973, when Roe v. Wade was passed, there have been 67,818,275 abortions. 67 million and change, almost 68 million just since 1973. The blood that is mixed in the cup of Babylon is composed of the blood of prophets, the blood of followers of God and of Jesus who bear the testimony and the witness and those innocents who have lost their lives because someone figured it would benefit them.

That's what ritual slaying does. It isn't limited to Babylon in the end times or the U.S. as an incarnation of Babylon now, which I think it is. This goes back all the way to the blood of Abel.

Cain gratified himself by slaying his brother. I'll make myself feel better about the rejection of my sacrifice by killing my brother. It was a ritual slaying.

It was related to sacrifices accepted and not accepted. That is the first blood to enter this cup and it has been going on ever since. But as you see in chapter 19, read it, we'll look at it either Wednesday or Sunday, depending on how our experiences this evening go.

Why is there so much celebration in heaven? This is a celebration unlike any other, greater than when a sinner repents. There are groups in heaven, separate groups that celebrate. It launches the marriage of the bride and the lamb, this celebration, because Babylon is finally gone.

It is because this Babylon stretches throughout time and encompasses the judgment of everyone who has become a citizen of Babylon, has perpetrated and promoted her values and her practices. It's the biggest judgment in human history. And that's what we're looking at.

We don't wanna be a part of it. We don't wanna partake of her sins. We certainly don't want to come under her plagues.

Judge yourselves, lest you be judged. If we would judge ourselves, examine ourselves, see if we

are in the faith, this is a real thing. This is a no kidding daily responsibility we have to make sure we are traveling the narrow road and headed to the straight gate.

Nothing more important, nothing. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the light that it shines on us, on our hearts, on our path.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will help us to understand these things and put them into application in the hours and days ahead. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.