

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

*The Mystery Babylon, Pt 2*  
**Revelation 17**

**Keywords:** Revelation, End Times, False Religion, Idolatry, Babylon, Prophecy

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** None

**SermonAudio Blurb:** In today's sermon Pastor Henry seeks to show the importance of Babylon throughout the biblical record, climaxing in Revelation 17 and 18. At issue is how are we to view these references? Are they purely symbolic? Do they connect to any specific time in the future history? Or are they to be taken as a literal, physical city? Finally, what is behind all of this that makes Babylon become such a central point in the book of Revelation?

**I. Introduction.**

- A. Review of last week.
  - 1. Behind all things we see and sense is an entire world of the supernatural that is as real as any of us.
  - 2. It is the realm of angels and demons and the bible gives us several references that help us see that there is much more that what we think is going on.
  - 3. God created angelic beings with the purpose to work on His behalf among the nations. They are even called *elohim* or gods by Him.
  - 4. We learned that many of them did not honor their role and rebelled, instead of working toward righteousness and justice, they worked these nations toward wickedness and rebellion.
  - 5. We saw that there is a consistent, if not constant, invisible war that occurs, where demons clash against angels.
  - 6. The key point made was that there is much more going on behind the scenes in how politics, entertainment, religion, education and such develop.
  - 7. Good book is *The Unseen Realm* by Michael Heiser for a full treatment on this whole thing.
- B. Three quick examples to see this invisible reality.

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1. Genesis 6.
  2. Job 1-2.
  3. 2 Kings 6:8-23
- C. Read Revelation 17.
1. Vs 1-2 a woman with whom the kings/leaders of the earth commit immorality along with everyone else.
  2. Vs 5 A mystery revealed, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.
  3. Vs 6 she is drunk with the blood of both Old Testament believers and New Testament believers.
  4. Vss 7-13 She is the power behind kings and kingdoms.
  5. Vss 16-17 She will be destroyed by the very kingdoms she used and ruled.
  6. Vs 18 She is now defined as a “great city” which reigns over the kings of the earth.
- D. Quick observations:
1. First, this woman is not a woman literally, but a personification of a great power/influence that controls kingdoms and people across history. At least four times it speaks of her power over the “leaders of the earth.”
  2. Second, her influence is immense and for evil.
  3. Third, she is an ardent enemy of those who love and follow God.
  4. Fourth, she can be seen as a city.
- E. The nature of the use of Babylon in the Bible.
1. I want to show the importance of Babylon throughout the biblical record, climaxing in Revelation 17 and 18.
    - a. It is worth noticing that John devotes two entire chapters to this place.
    - b. Think about that in comparison to Revelation 20 where the 1,000 year reign of Jesus on the earth is given only 7 verses.

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2. At issue is how are we to view the many references of Babylon? Are they purely symbolic? Do they connect to any specific time in the future history? Or are they to be taken as a literal, physical city? Or possibly they are both symbolic and literal?

## II. **Babylon The Great City.**

### A. Genesis 10:8-10.

1. We have the table of nations laid out for us. Here we have the beginnings of the human civilization.
2. We see a man who becomes prominent named Nimrod.
3. He was a king over the land of Shinar that include Babel, Erich, Accad and Calneh.
4. Remember that phase, land of Shinar.

### B. Genesis 11:1-9.

1. Again the people come to the land of Shinar.
2. Note the three “comes” in vss 3, 4, 7 for they control the flow of the story.
3. The divine command for them was to scatter and fill the earth. They decided to do something else—build a city with a huge ziggurat.
  - a. Notice the goal for them in doing this (4c).
  - b. And the motivation as well (4d). It is pure high-handed rebellion.
  - c. What you have is a city for the glory of Man, not for the glory of God.
4. So God comes down (note the Trinitarian language used in 7-8, plural to singular).
  - a. The common language was removed.
  - b. The differences were so great that they had to scatter in accordance to their respective languages.
  - c. This specific city did not get finished but that was not the end of it.

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- C. Genesis 14:1ff.
1. The king of Shinar (Babylon) aligns himself with several other kings and attack other cities, one being Sodom.
  2. Lot, the nephew of Abraham lived there as was captured.
  3. So Abraham, the one chosen by God to be the father of man nations, most importantly Israel, goes and defeats them and rescues Lot.
- D. Joshua 7:19-26.
1. This is the sin of Achan.
  2. Note what he saw and succumbed to stealing? Vs 21, a mantle/cloak/robe from Shinar.
  3. The result was that his entire household was destroyed
- E. Isaiah 11:1-11.
1. Here we are seeing prophecy of the Millennial Kingdom to come. Not the New Creation.
  2. We see this wonderful description of the Messiah who reigns on King David's throne.
  3. Sin is still present but the King will deal with it promptly and righteously.
  4. And He will gather His people, Israel, from the many lands in which they are scattered, including Shinar.
- F. Daniel 1:1-2.
1. God is using Babylon to punish Judah. And some of the vessels from God's temple are now brought to Nebuchadnezzar's temple for his god.
  2. At this point the image given is that YHWH is not greater than the Babylonian god.
- G. Zechariah 6:5-11.
1. A series of visions given, this is the seventh one.

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2. He sees an ephah, which is a basket of a specific size.
  3. It is then described as being “their appearance” in the NASB but “iniquity” by ESV and NIV. In another translation, the NET it is seen as “the eye.”
    - a. This is due to different manuscripts and some translators went one way and the others chose a different set.
    - b. I actually hold to the final choice, the “eye” because it fits well with the eyes of Zechariah 4:10 where eyes are used to describe the omniscience of God. This is just a demonic counterfeit.
    - c. Those that hold to iniquity point that it fits with what is in the basket. Either works and ultimately does not change the point.
  4. Inside the basket is a woman and she is called “wickedness.” She apparently is seeking to escape so they slam the leaden lid back down.
  5. But notice the question and answer in vss 10-11.
    - a. A temple is to be built for her and there she will be worshiped.
    - b. Where? The land of Shinar.
    - c. This is something that has not occurred even to this point in time and shows that the city of Babylon is to be rebuilt.
    - d. And here is the key, it will then become the center for all the false/counterfeit worship on the earth.
  6. The correlation between this passage and what we see described in Revelation 17 is striking.
- H. Over and over this city and land comes up in the biblical history.
1. It is a place of great wealth.
  2. It is also a place where evil abounds and God’s people are resisted.
  3. And it is the ordained place for the center of wickedness to reside.

### **III. Conclusion.**

- A. Last week we saw that there is a great, invisible war taking place throughout time.

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1. It is a clash of kingdoms. The kingdom of the evil one and the Kingdom of God.
2. This brings up the necessary reality that all other religions that are out there are simply one in reality. They worship in whatever way that fits them the god of this age, Satan.
3. And what we see in Revelation is that once Satan reveals himself and his two companions, the Antichrist and the False Prophet that he then brings all of those disparate faiths together under him. And a true, one world religion comes into being.
  - a. These were revealed in Revelation 13.
  - b. And in that day that one religion was put into place.
- B. Remember then the interlude in Revelation 14:8. Here the place is identified.
- C. Then remember chapter 16:21 at the end of the outpouring of God's wrath three dwelling places were affected.
  1. Jerusalem.
  2. Gentile cities.
  3. Babylon.
- D. And now in 17 and 18 God turns His focus upon that one city, Babylon.
- E. And in doing so what you see is the dismantling of the entire worship and power structure of Satan leading to the establishing of the promised earthly kingdom of Jesus Christ.
  1. It is a time of horror for all who put their hope on anything but Jesus Christ. Everything they thought was true and had hope in will be ripped away from them.
  2. And it is a time of great joy for those who were faithful in their trusting God promises in Jesus Christ.

## **IV. Benediction/Doxology.**

**Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.**

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## **Small Group Questions**

- What stands out in the sermon?
- If you did not meet last week then go through those questions for that sermon, as it is more important.
- How can we inadvertently cooperate with this Satanic kingdom and its program?  
How do we resist it well and wisely.
- As this next month flows by try to see the bigger picture that is playing out before you. Pray for discernment as you watch the news to see things better. For what you are watching and reading is all connected to this Satanic kingdom.