

(Through the Bible) Revelation 17-18

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the judgment of the false religious system, the worship of another God, and the consequences of destroying God, highlighting the victory of the Lamb in overcoming the beast.

Duration: 49:04

Scripture: Matthew 7:15, Revelation 17:1

Topics: "Through The Bible"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the judgment of the false religious system, referred to as Babylon, which has deceived many people. The speaker mentions Jesus' warning about false prophets who appear as sheep but are actually wolves. Babylon is seen as a symbol of confusion, as it originated from the tower of Babel where people tried to communicate with the universe. The confusion of languages resulted in different groups migrating away and forming their own language groups. The speaker emphasizes the confusion and deception within the religious system created by man, where some claim to be more righteous and have a greater connection with God, acting as intermediaries between God and others.

Transcript

In chapter 17, we now have the specific judgment of God upon the false religious system that has damned the souls of so many men through deception. Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets who will come looking like sheep, but inwardly they're ravening wolves. And the false religious system which traps the souls of men, and its judgment is coming.

Chapter 17 tells us of the judgment. Babylon is used in the scripture as a symbol of confusion because it was in Babylon where men in rebellion against the living God decided to build a tower whereby they could communicate with the universe. Ancient man was not as primitive and ignorant as we think him to be.

They had tremendous means of communication, perhaps even superior to ours because there are indications that they had developed methods whereby they could communicate with other beings outside of the earth. It is interesting, Stonehenge in England, one of the communication centers, it was set up to match with the Zodiac. But all through North America, the Indians also had miniature stone hedges where it was just a miniature of what was that large finding in England, where they would sit in the middle and communicate with the spirits.

And again, set exactly in alignment as is Stonehenge with the Zodiac. The large stone set on top of silicate, we know that to make a little receiver, what you do is take a crystal and by just through the crystal you can actually, have you ever had a crystal set where you tuned in and listened to the radio on a crystal set? When we were kids, we used to always be making crystal sets and it was always exciting to hear the radio with a crystal and just moving the crystal a bit, get different stations. We know that there is that communicating power within the crystal.

We also know that energy is produced by the compression of crystal or silicate and thus these large stones set upon crystal, compressing it, creating an energy force. The ability then to transmit and the ability to hear and to communicate. It is also thought that that could be the purpose of the great pyramids, which again are in alignment with the Zodiac.

So in Babylon, they were going to build this tower to communicate with heaven. And because they had advanced and developed so in their science and in their capacities, God said, look what man is seeking to do now. If we don't stop him, he's going to be delving into areas where he has no business being.

And God brought the confusion of tongues. And thus the word Babylon has become synonymous. The word babble, it's unintelligible sounds.

He's babbling. What did he say? I don't know. He's babbling.

And so the word Babylon has become synonymous with unintelligible sounds. And God brought the confusion of languages as suddenly they were not able to communicate with each other anymore. And this confusion that resulted as their whole language patterns were changed.

They began to get into groups and migrate away from that area into their language groups. Now we find that languages are based in groupings, but in many languages, there is really no relation in the languages at all, as far as sounds are concerned. With many languages, there are sort of basic.

You have your romance languages where you have basic variations. You have languages that have been made up out of other language groups. But God brought that confusion in Babylon and thus it is always scripturally a symbol of a confused state.

Now there is a tremendously confused religious state as man has sought to take over and to establish a religious system for man. And I then study in the religious order and I become a religious man and I become a go-between because I am more righteous than you and I am more religious than you and I have a greater contact with God than you. I then become a priest and I help you to get to God.

Not so in reality. In truth, I am not more righteous than you. I do not have an in with God that you don't have.

In reality, God looks at all of us the same. He doesn't look at one as more righteous or holy than another. He sees us all the same.

He sees us all who believe in Christ. He sees us all in the righteousness of Christ because of our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. And we are all equal in the eyes of God.

And there is no ranking as far as God is concerned. We're one together in Christ Jesus and he is the only mediator between God and man. Now, God can set up a perfect order.

All you need is man to make confusion out of it. And God set up in the church a perfect order, but man confused it before the church was rebuked. 20 years old, there were those who began to vie for authority and power and position and lording and ruling over others, though that was specifically prohibited by Jesus.

He said, you're not to be as the Gentiles who loved the Lord over one another. If you want to be chief, then learn to be the servant of all. And he rebuked the church of Pergamos because they had brought in a priest system.

Then the priest over the laity, the Nicolaitans ruling over the laity. And God said, Jesus said, I hate that. Why? Because he died to abolish it.

He died to open the door so that every one of us can come to God freely through the grace that is now ours in and through Jesus Christ. So man brought confusion and that has developed through the years as the organization and structure has become so great and powerful, began to rule over nations and kings. But God is going to bring it into special judgment and that judgment is declared here in the 17th chapter of Revelation.

There came one of the seven angels. Now, John just saw these seven angels as they poured out their plagues. One of them came to John.

And as you remember, in the one plague, six plague Babylon was brought into judgment and so forth. And so it was a fifth vial on the throne of the beast and the kingdom was full of darkness and so forth. And then in the 19th verse in the seventh plague, Babylon was brought into remembrance before God and judged.

So no doubt the seventh angel, which specifically dealt with judgment on the city of Babylon, came to Daniel to give him further explanation on the destruction of that religious system of man that ensnared man's souls. So there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials and he talked with me saying unto me, come hither and I will show unto you the judgment of the great whore that sits on many waters. And spiritually, this would be a false religious system leading men to a trust in something other than Jesus Christ for their relationship with God, trusting in their works, their goodness, or something other than Jesus.

In the Bible, in a spiritual sense, adultery is the worship of another God. And so God said the nation of Israel in the worshiping of Baal and Moab and Amalek and so forth were committing adultery. They had gone out in their whoredoms.

So false worship of God or the worship of other gods is spiritual harlotry. So the great whore that has led so many people into a false hope because they are not worshiping God in spirit and in truth according to the word of God, sitting upon many waters or nations with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit to the wilderness and I saw a woman who was sitting on a scarlet colored beast, the scarlet colored beast, of course, being the Antichrist full of names of blasphemy, the beast itself having seven heads and 10 horns.

The description of the beast. Again, we go back to Revelation chapter 12 and 13. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color and she was decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery Babylon, the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. That's God's view of her. Mystery Babylon.

Why? Because she brought into the church many of the practices of the old Babylon religion that had been cursed of God. Time does not permit us to go in to the parallels that do exist in the practices that take place in many of the churches today in those practices and those practices of ancient Babylon. Suffice it to say that in ancient Babylon, there was the worship of Nimrod, also called Tammuz, and his mother, Semiramis, also known as Ashtar.

They were the mother and child. He supposedly was born by a virgin. She was supposedly a virgin and he was born by virgin birth.

He was worshiped by the people. He was a mighty hunter opposed to God, according to the scriptures, called the mighty hunter before the Lord. Actually, the Hebrew is against the Lord.

According to the stories, while hunting, he was gored by a boar and died and his body lay out there for three days and he resurrected. And thus, the people began to celebrate his resurrection by coloring eggs and by the worship of the rabbit, which is, of course, known for its productivity. And they had a great celebration.

They called Ashtar in which they worshiped his coming to life with the colored eggs and all. And it was a celebration year by year known as Ashtar, from which, of course, we get our word Easter. And it is interesting that we have adopted the custom of coloring eggs.

He was supposedly born on December 25th. His birthday was celebrated by decorating trees, bringing them into your house and decorating them with silver and gold and different decorations because the tree and the evergreen tree, the symbol of life in the evergreen tree, and thus brought into the homes and decorated, accompanied with a lot of parties, gift giving and drunken orgies. Now, of course, we don't have anything in the church that we can liken to that, but these things were all of Babylonian origin, the Madonna and child with a halo about them.

That kind of art existed a thousand years before Jesus was born as they worshiped Semiramis, the mother, and her virgin born son Tammuz, Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots. And so God identifies the woman who is sitting upon the beast. And the woman was drunken with the blood of the saints, read Fox's Book of Martyrs, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

And when I saw her, I wondered not with great admiration, but with great wonderment. And the angel said unto me, Why did you thus marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carried her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. I'll explain it to you.

The Lord said the beast that you saw was and is not and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit or out of the Abuso in the Greek and go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world when they behold the beast that was and is not and yet is. Now here is the mind which has wisdom.

The seven heads are the seven mountains on which the woman sits. Or the city of Rome, the city of seven hills. There are seven kings, seven emperors that have reigned over the Roman empire.

Five are fallen or are already dead at the time that John is writing. One is and the other is not yet come. And when he comes, he will continue for a short space.

And the beast that was and is not. Even he is the eighth and is of the seven. So the beast is, according to this, one of the five previous Roman emperors prior to the writing of the book of Revelation by John.

At the time that John was writing, he no longer was alive. He was in the Abuso. He ascends out of the Abuso.

But the world will wonder at this man who once lived, was dead and is now alive again of the seven of the major Roman emperors. And of course, the one that comes closest to fitting the description is none other than Caesar Nero, whose name numerically in Hebrew totals to 666. Caesar Nero was called by the early church, the beast.

That was the common name because he wrecked so much havoc among the church. Quite apparent that he was possessed by demonic spirits. The things that he did could only be done by a mind perverted by Satan.

The horrible atrocities that this man brought against the Christian church could only be done by a mind that was totally deranged by demonic forces. And so the beast that was and is not is of the is the eighth. He is of the seven and he is heading towards perdition.

Now, the ten horns which you saw are ten kings which have not received the kingdom, but they receive power as kings. That is, they are not actual kings as such, but they receive the same kind of a power as a king for one hour with the beast. And they have one mind.

And that one mind is to make war with Christ and to destroy him when he comes to set up his reign upon the earth. That is the one mind of these kings. And so they turn their power and their strength over to the Antichrist.

He becomes the leader in the effort to thwart the establishing of God's rule upon the earth. Now, as John said when he wrote this epistle, he said the spirit of Antichrist is already at work in the world. The spirit of Antichrist is at work in our world today.

There are already many powerful men who have dedicated themselves to the destroying of God. The humanists in their Humanist Manifesto and many of our major congressmen and leaders are humanists and have subscribed to the Humanist Manifesto. And these men such as Norman Lear, tremendous power to influence our nation, have dedicated their talents and their powers to the eradicating of the thought or the consciousness of God from the minds of the people.

They're out to destroy God. And so his programs put those who believe in God in a sort of a weird, you know, funny category. There is the endeavor in the programming to make fun of strong beliefs or faith or convictions, to make a man look like a fool, like a bumbling idiot who may have strong convictions on a particular subject.

And the whole idea is to destroy by ridicule. For in the Humanist Manifesto, they are determined to eradicate once and for all the superstitious beliefs in a supreme being or in God by men. They're out to destroy God.

Their goal is the destruction of God and the idea and the concept of God, which they say is archaic and belongs back in a past age of ignorance. Now, the purpose in destroying God is to free man so that he can live after his flesh without any kind of remorse or pangs of conscience. Thus, they want to get rid of any kind of a moral base that has its roots in the Bible so that any of the prohibitions of the Bible, adultery, fornication, and so forth, are so obliterated from your mind that you can do these things without any conscience that would bother you or trouble you because, you see, that consciousness comes from a biblical base and we're trying to destroy God and get rid of any feelings of guilt that man possesses as a result of his past superstitious beliefs in a supreme being and the Bible as his word to man.

That is the avowed goal of the Humanists in their Manifesto. And you can get the Humanist Manifesto and you can read point by point how they plan to bring to pass the destruction of God. So, the spirit of Antichrist is already at work.

And many of the powerful leaders have embraced the idea of the destruction of God. And we see that they have been highly successful. In Europe, their job is just about complete.

You go to Europe today and you are in a post-Christian era. You find out what the world is going to be like after the rapture has taken place. And you can see the hopelessness in the eyes of the people, the despair.

And, of course, you see the other things that go along with such a society. You see the degrading of womanhood as you see these poor girls standing in the windows, beckoning to the men who walk by, displayed like merchandise, standing there like mannequins, except that as the men walk by, they try to entice them on in. And you can walk down the street and window after window, see the degraded state of the women brought about by men whose minds are so perverted because of the absence of the consciousness of God that they have again degraded the woman back to the position that she was 2,000 years ago before Christianity came on the scene and elevated her to a place of beauty and respect and honor.

As they take advantage, and as you see the nude pictures, as you see the pornographic magazines, and all of these things that attract the flesh, as you see people wholly given over to their own fleshly desires. You see the drunkenness and the hopelessness, and you realize these men have been successful in their endeavor to destroy God from the minds and the consciousness of the people. They are hard at work in the United States, and they have come a long way here.

They have petitioned the courts which have allowed them to publish such filth as we find in the girly type magazines that are open and available for the children to pick up and to leaf through in the grocery store on the corner. They have been able to rule God out of the classroom in school. The Supreme Court has ruled that it is unlawful for the state of Louisiana to have the Ten Commandments written on the board in the classroom, even though it is written on the walls of the Supreme Court itself.

They have declared that it is illegal to have the children sing Christmas carols in the public schools. Thank God we have courageous teachers who are Christians, who are the salt of the earth, and in the public school system still shine as a glorious light in a dark place. I thank God for every one of you who are in public education and are putting up with the malaise of the broken society and these children who have come from this chaotic condition.

And you're putting up with it in order to bring light unto them, and you're willing to go ahead and wherever you have opportunity, share the true light of God. Thank God for you Christian teachers. You are the light of the world.

Continue to shine until they kick you out. And so these ten kings give their power to the beast in order that they might, through their combined efforts, destroy God once again, to make war against Jesus as he returns, to stop the establishing of God's law and God's rule upon the earth. They don't want God to rule over them.

And they will make war, verse 14, with the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them. No big battle, no big deal. They make war with the Lamb, but he overcomes them.

Actually, just with the word that goes forth out of his mouth, they're destroyed. I don't know what those words will be. I imagine it's just, hey, you've had it, man.

And he destroys them, for he is the King of kings. And he's the Lord of lords. And they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.

God has called you to be his child. If you have responded to that call of God, he has chosen you to be a part of that eternal kingdom. And as we walk in faithfulness to him, we have the promise that because you have been faithful and have kept my commandments, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation which is going to come upon the earth.

He said unto me, the waters that you saw where the whore is sitting are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues and the ten horns which you saw upon the beast. These shall hate the whore. These kings that give their power to the Antichrist, they take advantage of the church, but now they turn against this religious system and they shall make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will. It's interesting, that's God's will against this false religious system. And so they do it, but they only do it as God has put in their hearts to fulfill his will.

It is interesting to me that God uses many times very unrighteous persons to accomplish his will. He can plant his will in the hearts of an evil person. That was the problem that Habakkuk had when God revealed to Habakkuk that he was going to use the Babylonians to punish his people by taking them into captivity.

And Habakkuk said, now Lord, come on, that isn't fair. We're bad. I know that.

But hey, they're worse than we are. They're more evil than we. Why would you allow a nation more evil than us to conquer us? God said to Habakkuk, I told you, you wouldn't understand if I told you what I was doing.

So God puts in their heart to do his will and to agree and to give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Now, after these things, I saw another angel, maybe one of the other seven.

It doesn't really declare or it could be outside of the seven. It's just another angel, as far as we know, coming down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lit up with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice saying, Babylon, the great is fallen, is fallen and has become the habitation of

devils and the hold of every foul spirit and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird.

So this whole satanic system that seems to be centered now in this time, in this city of Babylon, which has become the commercial center of the world, the world banking and all of the commercial interests now become centered in this city, Babylon. Now, what city this is or where the city is to be located is a matter of speculation. There are many Bible scholars who believe that the ancient city of Babylon will be chosen by the Antichrist for his capital and will be rebuilt at a tremendous expense.

As they put it up in a hurry, there are indications that this city will be built quite rapidly. That craftsmen from all over the world will be paid premium wages and thousands will descend upon this area with unlimited funds to build this awesome, wonderful city that shall be the center of world banking and world commerce. Now, we are told in the book of Daniel that when the Antichrist establishes his reign, that the craftsmen will prosper in his reign.

In other words, he will inaugurate vast building kind of programs that will necessitate the use of hundreds of thousands of laboring men, and thus people will be able to get jobs at tremendously high wages, premium wages, and they will prosper exceedingly under his reign. That is quite possible. That the city of Babylon described here does not yet exist, but will be built by the Antichrist for his capital and for the commercial center of the world.

And as they bring the goods by ship and all into this city, that there will be a time of tremendous economic prosperity. After these things, I saw another angel coming down. The earth is lighted with his glory.

He cried, Babylon, as great as fallen has fallen, become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful birth. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, come out of her, my people, that you be not the partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you.

So again, the idea of the eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, the fairness of the judgment of God. And double unto her, double according to her works, in the cup which she has filled, fill it to her double. How much she has glorified herself and lived deliciously or delicately, sumptuously, luxuriously.

So much torment and sorrow give her, for she says in her heart, I sit as a queen, and I am no widow, and I will not see sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord that judges her. And so this city that has become the center of the world's riches, the center of world commerce, in one day is destroyed by God.

And on the earth, the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her, shall bewail and lament for her when they see the smoke of her burning. And standing afar off for the fear of her torment, it sounds like it is destroyed by a nuclear blast of some kind and there is heavy radiation which causes them to fear to approach the city. In each case, they are standing afar off and they're afraid to approach it, which does sound like a lot of radioactivity around the destruction of the city.

The fact that it's destroyed in just a moment's time, it sounds like a detonation of a nuclear device with heavy radiation falling. And so the king standing far off, fearful to approach, wailing, the merchants of the

earth shall weep and mourn for her, for no man buys their merchandise anymore. Their merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linens, purple, silk, scarlet, and thiamine wood or thiamine wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory and vessels of most precious wood, brass, iron, marble, cinnamon, odors, ointments, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, beef, sheep.

I mean, the whole gamut of commerce is into this and centered in this area. And the fruits that thy soul lusts after are departed from thee, and all of the things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things which were made rich by her shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment and the weeping and wailing.

So the kings stand far off for fear. The merchants stand far off for fear. And they say, alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, for in one hour so great riches has come to nothing, all of the wealth wiped out in just an hour's time.

And every ship master and all of the company of ships and sailors and as many as trade by sea, they stood afar off and they cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, what city was likened to this great city? And they cast dust on their heads and they cried, weeping and wailing, saying, alas, alas, that great city wherein we were made rich, all of us who had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness, for in one hour she is made desolate. All of the wealth that was brought in to build the city, all of the wealth that was centered in the city, now destroyed, and the world is weeping, the kings, the merchants, and those merchant men who had brought in the ships, bringing the goods and the valuable costly items, all weeping as they see her destruction. In heaven there's a different scene.

Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone. Now a great millstone could easily be a rock as large as this pulpit, as wide as this pulpit, and the hole would be in the middle, it would be round.

I've seen millstones as large as this pulpit, they must weigh 1,200, 1,500 pounds. Jesus said if a person deliberately destroyed the faith of a little child, it would be better for that person to have a millstone hung on his neck and throw him into the sea than to destroy the faith of a little child. I sometimes wonder about these teachers, humanists, who are seeking to destroy the faith of the children who come into their classrooms.

Boy, I'll tell you, I wouldn't want to stand in their shoes when they face the eternal living God. The angel takes this great millstone and he casts it into the sea and he says, thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all. It could be that God will cover the area where this city once lived with the oceans again.

That in the kingdom age, the geographical area will be under the sea as the millstone fell to the bottom. It could be that when the cataclysmic changes take place upon the surface of the earth, that this area will be covered with water. It'll never be found.

It'll never be brought into remembrance again. And the voice of the harpers, the musicians, pipers, trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee. And no craftsman of whatever craft he be shall be found any more in thee.

And the sound of the millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee. And the light of the candle shall shine no more at all in thee. And the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee.

For thy merchants were the great men of the earth and for by thy sorceries all of the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints and of all that were slain upon the earth. And so, God's judgment as we centered in on the commercial system and the false religious systems.

Next week we finish the book of Revelation. So from chapter 19 through 22 next week and we'll get out of this judgment scene and we're going to move into something far more exciting and glorious as we deal with the new heavens and the newer that God has planned for his people and for his children. Father, we thank you that you have called us and you have chosen us and ordained us that we should be your disciples and that we should bring forth fruit, abiding fruit.

Now, Lord, may we commit ourselves unto your lordship to that rule of your spirit over our lives. Make us like you, Lord, in all ways. Pure as you are pure, righteous as you are righteous.

Holy, Lord, as you are holy. May we be a holy people walking before the Lord circumspectly in total reverence unto thee, O Lord, that we will be accounted worthy in that day to stand with you in your kingdom and to share in the eternal glories that the Father has purposed to give unto you and to those who love you and walk with you. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

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