

# (Genesis #10) Symbol of Revolt

by J. Glyn Owen

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*The sermon explores the spiritual conditions that produced Babel, the eventual confusion that overtook it, and the biblical condemnation of the spirit and deeds associated with Babel.*

**Duration:** 47:17

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 31:34, Ezekiel 36:26-27, Matthew 25:34, Matthew 25:41, John 4:34, Hebrews 8:12, Revelation 18:1-2

**Topics:** "Rebellion Of Man"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the greatness of God and His sovereignty. He warns about the spiritual influence of Satan that unites sinners in an evil course, using the story of Babel as an example. The preacher also discusses God's judgment and how it can take different forms. Sometimes, God frustrates the purposes of evil men, as seen in the story of Babel. Other times, He allows people to have what they want, but sends a leanness of soul as a form of judgment. The sermon highlights the importance of recognizing God's authority and seeking righteousness.

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## Transcript

Now, the subject before us tonight, we have called a symbol of revolt. And our theme, of course, is going to be that which we find in the reading that Greg Scharf has taken for us from Genesis chapter 11, verses 1 to 9. After the flood, life begins anew. Life begins anew in one sense, at any rate.

But in another sense, it's very much the same old story as the other side of the flood. I don't know how you feel as you read the record, how it strikes you. Are you perplexed or disappointed that this side of the flood as before, you have the same kind of arrogance in the heart of man, setting up the same kind of rebellion against God, showing the same desire to live a life that is independent of God? Now, apparently the Holy Spirit, who inspired the writers of Scripture, was so concerned that we should get this, that having already given us a general history of the sons of Noah in chapter 10, he feels necessary now to retrace his steps and to go back, as it were, into the centre of that history again, to the time of a man called Peleg.

Now, we're not very familiar with Peleg. He refers to him in verse 25 of chapter 10. For in his days, the earth was divided.

The great separation, the great distribution of men took place. And he's referring, of course, to the incident before us here. So he's taking us back now into the history that is provided in miniature in chapter 10, and he wants to bring out this one particular incident again, because he wants to underline the principle that is

involved, namely this, that man is very much the same after the flood as he was before the flood.

Adam was saved from judgment, but--I'm sorry, Noah was saved from judgment, but Noah is still a sinner. And he has brought with him in the very ark that God provided the sin of his heart, the unbelief of his soul, in certain respects. And his children manifest this awful rebellion, which manifests itself in the building of what we've come to speak of as the Tower of Babel.

Now, let's look at this picture, then, and see what have we to look at. What have we to say, or what is the book to say? What is the message? The first thing I would like us to notice, we can speak of in these terms. I want us to look first of all at the spiritual conditions that produced Babel.

What brought this on? How did men get this kind of notion in their heads or in their hearts? Why set about to build a tower whose top reaches to the heavens? What's the idea? The building of Babel--Babel's city and Babel's tower-- was not something that happened overnight. It was something that exhibits and manifests the soil of the human heart and the rebellion of the human soul against God. Now, there is an underlying attitude that we see coming out here, and I want to say two things about it, other than, of course, that it's the same attitude as we found in the Garden of Eden.

Namely, it's the attitude of rebellion. It's the desire to go beyond what God has permitted. It's the desire to do what God has said ought not to be done, and therefore, of course, to set oneself over against the God who's made us and the God who sustains us.

Let me say two things concerning the underlying attitude. The builders of Babel were aggressively disobedient to the divine command. Now, that's the first thing.

There is a rebellion here in the sense that they simply did not want to obey the word of God. Now, you remember that early in Genesis, in chapter 1, verses 28 to 30, God had told Adam--we read these words-- God told Adam, he blessed the two, Adam and Eve, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the flesh of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. God has made man his viceroy.

God has given man a position of authority over the whole universe, and man is responsible to God for what he does with the universe. He is responsible for ruling the whole of the universe for God. Now, after the flood, you remember, we were considering this one night, beginning with the first verse in chapter 9, God says almost identically the same thing to Noah and his sons.

In other words, the purpose of God remains unchanged. Adam failed. Now God turns to this man that he's brought into a new world by his sovereign grace, and to his descendants, and he says, Look, you take up the work that has not been done.

Pursue along the same lines, master everything for me, till the soil and so forth. You are to be my servants. I hand over the universe to you, but you've got to do this, that, and the other.

Now, the fulfillment of God's plan, as given first to Adam, and then reiterated to Noah and his sons, required them gradually to spread over the face of the earth. And as they did thus spread themselves, to exercise control over everything for the glory of the Creator. But listen to what happened.

I'm reading now from Genesis 11 and verse 4. Come, say the builders of Babel and its tower. Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, lest

we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Now, will you please mark those words particularly, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth. What we have here is a rebellion. The architects and later the builders of Babel say at this point that they don't want to be scattered and to be separated the one from the other.

They don't want to be about the program that God has given them. On the contrary, they want to live close together in community. A standard of revolt is already raised.

And if we are right in our understanding of these chapters, then a man by the name of Nimrod, chapter 10 verses 8 to 11, was at the helm. The very name Nimrod, at least the verb that gives us the noun, means quite literally let us revolt. Nimrod is a form of the Hebrew verb.

And what it means is let us revolt. Now, if you read the story of this man and read what the Bible tells us about him, you will find that he was a great hunter. But more than that, he was a man who was cross, arrogant, proud, strong, and would exercise his strength and exercise his influence purely for his own self-glory.

Dr. Alan Richardson calls him a military despot. He compares him with Napoleon and Hitler in his day. Now, I don't know whether that is justified or not, but that's the kind of man that Nimrod was.

Led then by this kind of character, the architects and then the builders of Babel decide that they will not be scattered. They're afraid to be scattered. And they want to live together, even though God has appointed for them a different program.

Now, that's the spirit. Fundamentally, then, the builders of Babel were disobedient to a divine command. The second feature I want to mention is this.

They disbelieved the terms of the divine covenant. Now, Scripture does not say that specifically. And so I have to indicate that.

In saying that, I'm saying what, it seems to me, is the general understanding of Scripture here, rather than point to a direct statement. I take it that the tower of Babel was of such dimensions as it was, a very high, lofty edifice, not because these people wanted to present posterity with a work of art. That was not the significance of the tower.

I believe that the significance of the tower was this. They want to rebel against God, and yet, they want to be prepared for any judgment that God may send upon the earth. He has covenanted that he will not cause a flood to come again.

But they have in their hearts a sneaking suspicion. Of course, this is the kind of suspicion that unbelievers and disobedient people always have. You can't have the comforts of God, and you can't have peace with God, whilst at the same time you're rebellious in your heart.

And quite naturally, these people wanted to be prepared. If God does send another flood, well, we want a place where we can run and hide, and climb above the waters. And it seems to me, at any rate, that the idea of making a name for themselves by the building of this tower was not by the production of a work of art, but rather something far more significant than that, a place to which they could run and hide from any storm or tempest or judgment that may come in the near future, because they cannot or will not trust their

God.

The underlying attitude, the overweening ambition. Now, Greg Scharf has referred to this in prayers tonight, and I'm very grateful to him for the way he's done it. Because he's put his finger, and saves me from saying very much at this point, he's put his finger right on the artery.

The whole idea, the whole notion here is this. They want to make a name for themselves. And so, you see, life has been turned upside down.

The end of living now is not God and his glory, but it is man and his name. There is no more pathetic man on the face of this earth than the man that is set out to make a name for himself. There is no greater contradiction of biblical religion from Genesis to Revelation than a little puny man, a fallen child of Adam, set about to make himself a name.

Who are we to make our own name? We are given life, and we are redeemed by the grace of our God in Jesus Christ, not to make names for ourselves, but to make a name for our God. By obedience and service and self-sacrifice and the giving of our own lives to the uttermost, it needs be. This is our calling.

When man decides that life is an opportunity to make a name for himself and to write it into the pages of history, rather than to write the name of his God into the breasts and the hearts of men, the world is turned upside down. But this is what it is. Come, they said, let us make a name for ourselves.

Nimrod and his associates wanted a reputation. And they got it, but not the kind of reputation that they had in mind. Their reputation is written into the pages of history, and when you go through the Bible and you come to the book of the Revelation, you will find, as I am going to show you before the end of the service tonight, that Babylon, Babylon is written into the books of God as something that is going to be destroyed, locked, stuck, and barren.

None of the dust or ashes of Babylon will stand in the eternal courts of God. So we have here a united action, sinners uniting together as a cohesive force for a moment. There was no strike, no lack of material.

They're all united. They want to make themselves a name. Now, when people are united in an evil course like this, you can be well assured there is a satanic influence that holds them together.

Sin is a disintegrating force. Naturally, sin separates men. They don't get on together.

They quarrel and so forth. This is the natural order. When you find sinners united together as a cohesive force to do something and to succeed in doing it, I tell you, there is the mighty hand of Satan, the spiritual conditions that produced Babel.

Secondly, the eventual confusion that overtook the builders of Babel. The story is so well known, I don't need to dwell upon the details tonight. Can I just mention them, just two or three of the threads here? First of all, we have a divine examination.

It's clothed in anthropomorphic terms, as theologians would say, truths about God conveyed in very human terms. And we read in verse 5 of this chapter 11 that the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. As if God couldn't see from his throne, wherever he is, in the heaven of the heavens.

Even so, the writer wants to convey something here, and what he wants to convey is this, that God came right up near to scrutinize, to examine. God came on the scene, and he looked and caused his eye to scan over the whole thing into the hearts, into the motives, into the spirits of those concerned, as well as the edifices they have built. God came and examined the city, and examined the people who built the city and the tower.

A divine examination, and then that is followed by a divine evaluation. And we have it here. Behold, says God, there are one people.

This is remarkable. It says as if, it is said almost as if God himself was surprised. I said almost.

As if God himself was surprised. There are one people. This is marvelous.

But you see, it is the hand of Satan. There are one people, and they have all one language. And this is only the beginning of what they will do, and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible to them.

God evaluated man's concerted power to perpetrate the rebellion he had begun, as it was suggested by this massive tower and emerging city of Babel. God evaluated it. He saw that such gifts as he had given to man were now being used to defy mankind, and to defy his own will and his own purpose.

And he sees that the unity of the race, and the things that provide for that cohesive force, especially their language, is a key that can be used for further Satanic ends. And so God intervenes. God said, Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another.

Verse seven. This, of course, was as much an act of mercy as it was of judgment. It was an act of mercy in serving man from himself.

But it was an act of judgment in declaring that God the Creator is displeased, the God who sent Adam and Eve out of the garden and kept them out, the God of the deluge of Noah's day, that same God is displeased with what has gone on here in the tower of Babel. And so this is what happened. He comes down and he confuses them.

We read in verses eight and nine, So the Lord scattered them abroad from over the face of the whole earth, and they left off building the city. Apparently the city was not yet complete. Therefore its name was called Babel, or Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth.

Use your imagination for the moment. This must have been a very shattering moment, as bewildering to human understanding as it was a breakup on human sinning. Imagine it.

Here are people who have been getting on together and planning together and scheming together, sharing one another's thoughts together, and suddenly something comes between them and they don't understand one another. Oh, the innuity and the resourcelessness of God. I think you and I need to regain this kind of conception of God, who is never at his wit's end.

God sent his flood at the time of judgment a little later on. But it isn't only the waters of the heavens and of the earth that God has at his command. God has other means whereby to fulfill his purposes.

God is never at his wit's end. And here is a most strategic deed performed by the Almighty. He confuses them, and he separates them, and little by little the power and ingenuity of man is torn to shreds.

What he could do in concert with his fellows, he cannot continue to do on his own. I guess we need to interject here. God doesn't always express his judgments in the same way.

Here, the Lord broke into human life and frustrated the purposes of evil men. They got so far, but no further. They've got their tower, they've made themselves a name, and now the whole world is before them, if only they can keep together.

God says, no, full stop, no more, no further. But you see, we do have instances in the Bible when God's judgment falls upon men and takes an entirely different shape. Sometimes he gives men exactly what they want.

We read in the Book of Psalms of a time when God allowed the children of Israel to have exactly what they asked. He answered their prayers even, and gave them precisely what they wanted, exactly, even though they were in rebellion against him. But then we have this little rider, and he sent leanness into their soul.

It's as certainly God's judgment as the other mold, but it takes quite a different form. And you see, there are many people in this world tonight who are under God's judgment in the second sense. God determines the way he judges men.

There are people who have everything that they can ask, humanly speaking. They've wanted this, they've set off, they've got it. There's nothing they lack, humanly speaking.

But along with everything that they've got, they have this other commodity, this other thing, this other phenomenon, this leanness of soul. This is one way whereby God still judges men. He allows us to be satiated and satisfied and filled and flooded with what we want.

And we get it. The more we have, the more dissatisfied we are. It's like feeding on dust.

Here, it's of the other order. I think it is necessary to interject when we're considering this, that God's method of judgment is not necessarily the same in all circumstances. The spiritual conditions that produced Babel, the eventual confusion that overtook Babel, and the other matter I want to consider tonight is this, the biblical condemnation of the spirit and deeds associated with Babel.

Now, we're not involved in building a tower like this tonight. The rebels of the twentieth century are not doing anything quite like this. I don't need to refer again to the kind of things that we've already heard from the lips of Greg Sharp.

But we do build our towers. And there are men and women who do defy the Almighty God in one way or another because they want to make themselves a man. What I want to say now is this.

From beginning to end, the Bible condemns this kind of thing. The spirit and the attitude that produces a Babel, not just the material entity itself, not just that, but the spirit, the underlying ethos, the atmosphere, the point of view, the attitude. Scripture everywhere speaks of Babel or Babylon.

And, of course, they refer to the same place and the same spirit. The Babylon of later history is the Babel of Genesis 11. Scripture everywhere speaks of Babel or Babylon as a symbol of what is an affront to God and is to be avoided by His children at all costs.

Babylon is the center of pleasure, illicit pleasure. And it stands in the Bible symbolically for illicit pleasure, for sin and for superstition. May I read you a passage from the book of the prophet Isaiah? I want to read

some passages tonight from the RSV.

I think it brings out the truth very, very clear. Let me just read you a few verses. Come down, says the prophet, in the name of God.

Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon. Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. For you shall no more be called tender and delicate.

You said, I will be mistress forever. So that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end. Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures.

This is Babylon. Who sits securely. Who say in your heart, I am and there is no one beside me.

I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children. These two things shall come upon you, says God through the prophet. In a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure.

In spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments. You felt secure in your wickedness. You said, no one sees me.

Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray. And you said in your heart, I am and there is no one beside me. Can you see it? That's the spirit of Babel and of Babylon.

But evil shall come upon you. For which you cannot atone. Disaster shall fall upon you.

Which you will not be able to expiate. And ruin shall come upon you suddenly. Of which you knew nothing.

Now if you pursue this chapter, you will find that it speaks primarily of this one theme. Babylon is the place of pleasure and of sin. It's the place of harlotry.

It's the place of all kinds of sensuality and of sin. It's become symbolical of that aspect of life from which the people of God should always keep it there. Babylon is invariably the source of persecution to the people of God.

And it's presented in scripture symbolically in this sense. Indeed, historically, of course, that is true. When you come to the book of Daniel, you will find that Babylon is the archenemy of the people of God.

In chapter three, you will find those three young men cast into the burning fiery furnace. And later on, you will find Daniel thrown to the lions. Why? It's because of the power of Nebuchadnezzar or his successor in Babylon.

Babylon is the center of opposition to God as well as of pleasure. It persecutes the people of God. But not only that, when you come right through the Bible and you come to the end in the book of the Revelation, you will find that this is the picture that we have of Babylon as the persecutor of the people of God.

Let me read to you a few verses. Revelation chapter seventeen. Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bulls came and said to me, Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot.

Now, you remember what I tried to say a few moments ago, the kind of sin symbolized by Babylon, right? It's here again in Revelation. It's consistently presented throughout the Bible. Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot, who is seated upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth, notice,

this runs in high places, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the dwellers of the earth have become drunk.

And he carried me away, says John, in the spirit into a wilderness, of course. This is a wilderness, morally. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns.

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication. And on her forehead was written a name of mystery, Babylon the Great, mother of harlots and the earth's abominations. And I saw, says John, the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Babylon, in spirit, still represents not only this looseness morally and this laxity, but Babylon always represents opposition to the people of God and the persecution of the true church of God. And Babylon is unquestionably destined to the utter and unqualified judgment of God. Now, you notice, I've gone from Genesis to Revelation.

If we had a week here, we could deal with the intervening passages, we can't do that. But I've gone from Genesis to Revelation because this theme that has begun in Genesis is concluded in Revelation. Everything that the ancient Babel stood for is condemned at last.

This is the thing that I want to say now. Babylon is unquestionably destined to the utter and unqualified judgment of God at last. Let me read to you again.

I hope you don't mind my reading so much. It's nothing like reading the book. It speaks for itself.

I read from Revelation, chapter 18. Just a couple of verses chosen at random. After this, I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, says John.

And the earth was made bright with a splendor, and he called out with a mighty voice. What's he got to say? Fall on this Babylon, the great. It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul and hateful bird.

For all nations have drunk the wine of her impure passion, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness. And then this, and the kings of the earth who committed fornication and were wanton with her will weep and will wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. They will stand far off in fear of her torment and say, Alas, alas, thou great city, thou mighty city Babylon, in one hour has thy judgment come.

And again, rejoice over her, O heaven. O saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her. Then the mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and he threw it into the sea, saying, So shall Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence and shall be found no more.

This is so because he represents human pride at its highest and worst. You read of that in Daniel, when Nebuchadnezzar said, I will set my throne in the heavens. And you read the same in the book of the prophet Isaiah, where we read these words, When the Lord has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service which you were made to serve, you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon.

What is the taunt? Let me just read two verses, three verses. How you are fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven above the stars of God. I will set my throne on high.

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the most high God.

But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit. What does the book say? My friends, what it is saying is this, that the spirit and the attitudes that produced this early Babel lives on because of sin. And it will live on until the end of the age, but it will be exterminated.

And it will be brought low, and those who are guilty of it shall be cast into hell. That is what the book is saying. But my last theme tonight must be this.

Scripture everywhere speaks of Babylon as symbolic of sin and what God condemns. But so also does Scripture announce everywhere a salvation that is adequate to save man from the spirit and the disaster of which Babylon is symbolic. Isn't this wonderful? Salvation means this, that we can be saved from such a disaster and from the attitude, from the spirit that would create it.

Perhaps I ought to say a word in turning to it, to this effect. I want you to remember that God was able to save His people even in Babylon. We read about the blood of the saints and of the martyrs.

Only when God saw fit to yield them up and to make them an offering, I want to remind you of something to which we have referred before, that God can keep His young men in the flames. And God can keep His Daniels in the lion's den when it so pleases Him. And He only yields His servants to the flames when that is pleasing even unto Him and for the furtherance of His purposes of grace.

He is able to save to the uttermost those who call upon Him, even from the harlot. But God's sovereign power is expressed in that kind of salvation. God's sovereign grace is expressed in His willingness to serve to the uttermost men and women who have attitudes and a spirit and an ambition, the kind of which we meet back here in Babel in Genesis 11.

Do you know anything of this? What's your purpose in living, my friend? You don't need to answer me. But what are we living for? Is it for the sheer expression of self-will and a pandering to self-glory? What are we living for? The gospel of the grace of God as it is proclaimed from Genesis to Revelation is a gospel that offers salvation from self, self-deification. You remember the terms of the new covenant as it was announced by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel? The benefits included in promise at that point meant, first of all, the forgiveness of sins.

Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more. With the forgiveness of sins, Ezekiel stresses especially one thing, I will write my laws upon their hearts. That's a most remarkable utterance of scripture.

When God writes His law upon the hearts of men, and that guarantees that they will want to please Him. When He commands in His word there will be something in their souls which says, that's the kind of thing I ought to do. God means me to do that, and I want to do that.

I find it difficult. Satan tempts me. The flesh is weak.

But I know that's what I ought to do. The law written in their hearts. And then this, there will be no need for one man to tell another about God.

Each of them shall know me for myself from the highest to the lowest of them, says God. The knowledge of God. Now this is salvation.

And if that was salvation in promise, that is exactly what the New Testament offers you and me tonight. Forgiveness of the past. Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more.

The writing of the law of God upon our hearts, so that in some measure we may be able to say with God's only begotten and well-beloved Son, my meat, my joy is to do the will of Him that sent me and finish His work. Not to set out to do something for myself. Not to write my own name into history, but His.

Because I come to know Him, and He's bigger and He's greater and He's glorious. You know, it's mischievous to say that He's greater than I am. He's greater than you are.

It's a profanity to put it into words. But we have to say to ourselves that God is greater than we are. The Lord is King.

Lift up your voice, O earth, and all ye heavens rejoice. The Lord is King and none but He. Do you know God? The real God? Lastly, it's a somber note, but I must sound it because it is in the book.

God's sovereign purpose is pledged and written into Scripture. He will scour the earth and the whole universe of the last trace of the spirit and of the attitude that produces Babylon. He will cast Babylon to the pit and there will be no trace of her anymore.

Christ died and He rose from the dead. He sent His spirit to convince men of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. And He's coming again to judge the nations, to judge all men.

That will be the great divide. Let us not forget. The same Lord who will say to some, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

According to the same Scripture will say to others, Go, depart. I cannot for my life of me understand the logic or the reasoning of people who believe the word that says that Jesus will one day say, Come and don't believe what the word says. When it gives us forenotice that He will also say, Depart.

Tonight, therefore, you and I are presented with a picture. It's the picture with which the book of the Revelation concludes. We've come a long way from Genesis.

But this is a theme of the whole book. It's a tale of two cities. Really, the whole of the Bible is a tale of two cities.

There is the building of Babylon, which epitomizes everything in this world, of fallen men and women concertedly united together to do their own thing, irrespective of the will of their maker. That's Babylon. On the other side, there is the other city, New Jerusalem.

And this New Jerusalem is coming down from heaven like a bride adorned for her bridegroom. Into this new city, noth but defileth shall ever enter in, though its gates are opened day and night. On all sides of the city foursquare, nothing but defiles enter into this city.

But in that city, you can have all the defilement that you desire, and you can be satiated with sin. That's the city for sinning and lusting. That's your home, if that's what you want.

But the tale of the two cities doesn't end there. Their fate is as separated and separable as heaven is from hell, as God is from Satan. Where is your name written, my friend? To which city does your heart gravitate at this moment? Where is your sympathy? For where your heart is, where your treasure is, there is your heart also.

I beg of you, if there is the still lingering desire in your soul for the Babylon spirit and the Babylon sin, turn round. Come to him who alone can make us clean and purge the past and bring us into the holy city of God. You know, a church is nothing other than the outpost of the city.

And by coming to Christ and to his people, trusting him as our Saviour and taking his people as his brothers and sisters and living and serving alongside of them, we take our place in the Jerusalem that is from above. I close and I leave you with a question. What city do you belong to? Let us pray.

Our God and our Father, we are so impotent in presenting these amazing, these Himalayan truths of holy writ. They are so great and so important that we feel we have hardly begun to understand them, let alone declare them faithfully and adequately. But despite all human feebleness, we pray that thou wilt write the message into our every heart and conscience tonight.

Grant that we may be known as men and women who certainly have no truck with Babylon, save to declare to Babylonians that a Saviour has been born, and his name is Jesus, and he is able to save men from their sin, even to the uttermost, even from the gates of Babylon, the city of the great rebellion. Our God, hear us. Make us worthy citizens of the new Jerusalem, and may the mould of life that belongs to it in that eternal city be so practised by us right here and now that when at last we arrive we shall be at home.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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