

(Revelation) Revelation 16:16-18:20

by Zac Poonen

The sermon explores the themes of God's wrath, the battle of Armageddon, and the false religious system of Babylon, emphasizing the importance of holiness and humility in true Christianity.

Duration: 1:00:43

Scripture: Revelation 16:16

Topics: "Holiness vs. Worldliness", "Judgment"

Description

Zac Poonen discusses the prophetic warnings in Revelation 16:16-18:20, emphasizing the impending judgment of God on the earth, particularly through the imagery of the battle of Armageddon and the fall of Babylon. He highlights the influence of evil spirits on world leaders and the necessity for believers to remain vigilant and pure, avoiding the entanglements of worldly desires and false religious systems. Poonen warns against the dangers of a Christianity that seeks greatness and profit, urging the faithful to pursue holiness and simplicity instead. He concludes with a call to come out of the corrupt systems that compromise true faith, reminding believers of their identity as the bride of Christ.

Transcript

Let's turn to the book of Revelation. In chapter 16, we were considering the seven bowls of the wrath of God, which are going to be poured out into the earth in the last days, immediately preceding the coming of Christ. And we saw that under the sixth bowl of wrath mentioned in verse 12 onwards, the great river Euphrates is dried up and the spirits of demons are going to go forth into all the earth.

Verse 14, to the kings of the whole world. There are passages in the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Daniel and Ezekiel, which teach that the ruling authorities in different countries are governed by evil spirits. In Daniel chapter 10, we read of an evil spirit controlling the ruler of Persia.

And in Ephesians 6, we read about evil powers who control the various rulers of the world. And so evil spirits have a tremendous influence upon the rulers of the world, prime ministers, presidents, and such authorities. And so we find these spirits go forth and gather together these leaders for the final great battle that the Bible speaks of, the war of the great day of God Almighty, it says in verse 14.

But we don't have to be there at that time. Verse 15 says, if we watch and pray and stay awake and keep our garments clear by a spirit of repentance from sin, then that day won't take us like a thief. He'll come like a thief, but 1 Thessalonians 5 says, brethren, you are not in darkness that that day should overtake

you like a thief.

We don't have to be overtaken by a thief. We can be ready so that we don't have to be here at that time. And then they were gathered together to the place which in Hebrew is called Armageddon, verse 16.

This is part of God's wrath, remember, this final battle. And the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, It is done. And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder, and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth.

So great an earthquake it was, and so mighty. And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. That's Jerusalem spoken of there.

And Babylon the Great was remembered before God to give her the cup of the wine of his fierce wrath. We'll come to that in a moment when we come to chapter 17, what Babylon refers to. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

Now if you keep a finger here and turn to chapter 6 of Revelation, verse 14, we found exactly the same thing under the sixth seal. When the sixth seal was broken, verse 12, we find in Revelation 6, 14, the last part, every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And so we find what we find under the seventh bowl of wrath is exactly the same as under the sixth seal, which teaches us that what we saw in Revelation 6, 12 onwards was a preview of what is finally fulfilled in chapter 16.

I mention often that the book of Revelation is not written in chronological order. Chapter 6 gives a preview of the whole book almost, and this is just one indication of it. And it's expanded in chapter 7 onwards to verse 16.

And then we find in verse 21 of Revelation 16, huge hailstones weighing about 100 pounds each came down from heaven upon men, and the men still do not repent. They blaspheme God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe. Now I want to turn you to the Old Testament in the book of Zechariah, which is the second-last book of the Old Testament, and show you the last chapter of Zechariah, which gives us a description of the battle of Armageddon.

Zechariah 14, verse 1. A day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle. Now I want you to notice something here.

Forty years after Jesus Christ was crucified, the Romans came against Jerusalem and destroyed Jerusalem. And in the last 2,000 years, there are various nations that have come against the city of Jerusalem. The Turks, the Egyptians, the British, the Crusaders in the 12th century, 13th century, and various people.

But there has never been a time where this verse has been fulfilled. What does it say here? All the nations. That's never taken place till today.

That's yet in the future. I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle. And that's going to be under the leadership of the Antichrist.

The city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half the city exiled. Then, verse 3, the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations. That's when he fights on a day of battle.

You see, the establishment of Christ's kingdom on the earth is going to be preceded by this final battle where the Lord's going to come down, the church is going to be raptured to meet the Lord in the air immediately before all this wrath is going to be poured out on the earth. And then the Lord will come down with his bride and destroy the forces of the Antichrist and set up his kingdom on earth for a thousand years. Verse 4, and in that day, that is the day the Lord comes down with his feet on the earth.

His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. That is the mountain from which he ascended up to heaven over 1900 years ago. He's going to come back to the same place.

And then is going to take place that earthquake which we read in Revelation 16 just now. The Mount of Olives which is in front of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split by this tremendous earthquake. That mountain is going to be split into two from the east to the west by a large valley so that half the mountain will move toward the north, the other half toward the south.

And you will flee by the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel. Yes, you'll flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Then, notice this, the Lord, oh my God, will come and all his saints with him.

They were taken up before the wrath was poured out, and they're going to come with him. And the dead will be raised and will come with him. And then it says your living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, verse 8, and the Lord will be king over all the earth, verse 9. And this earthquake, verse 10, is going to flatten that whole area into a plain.

The mountains will be removed, it will become a plain. And Jerusalem alone will stand out. And in that final war, here is a description of what's going to happen to people.

It's something like a nuclear holocaust, described in verse 12, when the people are going to be destroyed in that war. The plague with which the Lord will strike the people who have gone to war against Jerusalem, their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet. Their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.

And there will be a great panic in that day from the Lord, verse 13. And I want you to notice in the last part of verse 21, it says, when the Lord establishes his kingdom on the earth, the last sentence in verse 21 says, in that day there will be no more merchant or Canaanite or businessman in the house of the Lord of hosts. When the Lord comes to set up his kingdom, the businessmen will be removed from the house of God.

What do we mean by the businessmen? The businessmen are those who have made religion a business. Those for whom godliness has become a means of material profit. Those who have materially profited through Christianity.

Like the money changers in the temple in Jesus' day, whom Jesus drove out. In that final day, they're going to be driven out from all over the earth. And that's how we move in from Revelation 16 to Revelation 17.

Because Revelation 17 and 18 deals with Babylon. And Babylon refers to those Christians for whom Christianity has become a source of profit and gain. And there are many Christians who are going to be found in that category.

And so we see after the battle of Armageddon in Revelation 16, 16, and the hailstones that fall upon people, verse 21. The great city, verse 19, split. This is the earthquake which we read in Zechariah 14.

And then the Lord, Babylon, verse 19 of chapter 16. Babylon the great was remembered. That is the businessman whom we read of in the last verse of Zechariah's prophecy.

He was remembered, the businessman. The Lord is coming a second time to drive out the money changers. This time not from the temple, but this time from the Christian church.

When he came the first time, he drove out the money changers from the Jewish temple. But now the money changers are found in the Christian church. And Jesus Christ is coming once again to cleanse his temple.

And that is Babylon that we read of in chapter 17. One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me saying, Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters. What is a harlot? One who is engaged to be married or a wife who fools around with another man.

The Bible says that if any man loves the world, the love of the father cannot be in him. Jesus said, you cannot serve two masters. You cannot have two husbands.

And the two husbands are God and money. Remember that. The two masters are God and money.

And they cannot mix. Like oil and water, they cannot mix. You have to keep them separate.

Oil is good. You can use it to mix with the petrol in your scooter. Water is good.

It's good for drinking. But when you mix the two, you can't drink it and you can't put it in your scooter. It becomes useless.

And that's when people try to mix God and money. That's what happens. It ends up as Babylon.

We have to choose. Either we serve God or like the heathen businessmen out in the world, we are out to make money. But when people use religion and the Christian religion to make profit for themselves, finances that come in for Christian work used carelessly, loosely.

Reports sent out in order to get money in the name of religion. And then people live off that. This is the essence of Babylon.

And we see here, it's called a harlot because she was meant to be married to God. But she wanted to be married to God and to another husband called money and the world. And wanted the greatness of the world as well.

And so it's called a harlot. Do you feel there are Christians in this? We've just got to look around our own country and see the number of so-called believers who are involved in this system described as Babylon. This is not unbelievers.

The unbelievers are not engaged to Christ. They're not married to Christ. A harlot is a person who claims to be married to Christ and then plays spiritual harlotry and fools around with the world and with money in the name of religion.

And it says the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality. Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of our immorality. This is religion and politics mixed together.

Again, the kings of the earth, the political rulers and religion joined together. And in the history of the last, particularly the last 1600 years, there's been a lot of this. Ever since Constantine, the emperor of Rome, became a Christian around 300 years after the birth of Christ.

The political head of Rome was a Christian and joined hands with religion and he became the head of the church. And the beginning of Babylon started. And it's significant that it started in Rome.

Now remember, John wrote this long before all that happened. He wrote it at least 200 years before Constantine arose. But he says in verse 9, here is the mind which has wisdom.

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. That means this harlot is going to begin with her headquarters in Rome. That's the city built on seven mountains.

And verse 18, the woman whom you saw is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. It's again specified this is Rome. And through the years, we can see how political power has joined hands with religious power, centering mostly in Rome through the centuries, that has resulted in spiritual harlotry and the corruption of Christianity.

That is the beginning of Babylon. And that's what it says in verse 2, The kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality. Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.

In other words, the influence of this corrupt Christianity has spread all over the earth. And he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast.

The beast is the Antichrist, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. We saw that they were the seven kingdoms that have been there through the ages. The ten horns speak of the last, the ten kingdoms that are going to arise in Europe.

We don't want to be dogmatic about it, and we cannot say exactly what it's going to be. One thing we know from Ezekiel 38 and 39, that it is going to be something north of the nation of Israel. And the Antichrist is going to lead forth an army from the north of the nation of Israel.

And if you look at a map or a globe, you find that the nation immediately north of Israel is Syria. And we see things getting prepared for that, with Syria's taking over of Lebanon, immediately north of Israel. And directly, almost directly north of Jerusalem is Moscow.

And this could refer to the nations, to perhaps ten countries that are together under Russia. We don't know. But in any case, it is going to be a power from the north of Israel that's going to be headed up by the Antichrist.

Those are the ten horns. We saw that also when we studied Nebuchadnezzar's image with the ten toes. And the woman, this is the religious harlot, was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls.

I want to tell you, this is the bride of the Antichrist. The bride of Christ we shall see later in chapter 19. She's also dressed, but her dress is slightly different.

Chapter 19, verse 8, we read, She's clothed in fine linen, bright and clean. We don't know the color, but we know it's simple. It's not gaudy.

It's bright and clean. The picture there is of cleanliness and purity. Whereas here, that's the bride of Jesus Christ.

But here in Revelation 17, verse 4, is another bride. This is the bride of the Antichrist. The false religious system that is interested in greatness in the world and the wealth of the world is clothed in purple and scarlet.

It's unbecoming for a woman to be clothed in these gaudy red-purple colors with gold and precious stones and pearls. Picture that. Two types of brides.

We think God's not much interested in clothing. He certainly is, because it's an indication of what is inside one's heart very often. She has loved this gaudiness in gaudy colors and gold and silver and precious stones and pearls with which she wants to deck herself.

The glory of this world. Having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations. What are these abominations? I want you to see Luke 16, verse 15.

Luke 16, verse 15. It says that in the last part of that verse, that that which men esteem highly is an abomination in the sight of God. What is that which God calls an abomination? Everything which man values highly has no value in God's eyes.

It is also detestable and an abomination in God's eyes. Remember this, dear brothers and sisters. Whatever we have which brings to us the esteem of ungodly people in the world has no value in the kingdom of God.

Our human greatness, our cleverness, the family we belong to, our cultured manner of speaking, our refinement. It's all an abomination in God's eyes. It has no spiritual value.

Absolutely none. The fact that people in the world speak well of us is an abomination in the eyes of God. It has no value in the kingdom of God.

Absolutely none. That political leaders invite some religious leader has no value in God's eyes. It's an abomination.

And here it says Babylon, this harlot, this false person who played false to Christ has got a gold cup full of the abominations of her immorality. Her immorality is her spiritual adultery with the world. Coming and sitting in the church, claiming to be the bride of Christ.

And then going out and seeking the things of the world, the greatness of the world, money in the name of religion, and worldly greatness. These are the abominations which he has accumulated. Do you think believers don't do this? Many, many so-called believers are involved in this type of accumulation of abomination.

And here is the test. Let each one of us ask ourselves one question. In my heart, do I care one bit for the approval and esteem of worldly people? My brother and sister, if we have that desire, that some unconverted relative must think highly of me.

That I feel proud when some worldly great person invites me or gives me some honor. It's an abomination. Do you know that the Nobel Peace Prize is an abomination in the eyes of God? That's a worldly honor.

It has no value in the kingdom of God. Any of these earthly decorations and awards, how many of us would be thrilled if we got some worldly honor like that? Then we know that we are a part of Babylon. We've got religion, but inside our heart we've got these things which God calls an abomination.

Very important to see that. Verse 5, upon her forehead a name written, a mystery. It's a mystery because she claims to follow Jesus.

But it's all a deception. It's a counterfeit. Babylon the Great.

Notice the contrast when it speaks about Jerusalem in chapter 21. It says in verse 10 of chapter 21, verse 10, Jerusalem is called the holy city. Babylon is called the great city.

Eleven times in the book of Revelation you find Babylon is called Babylon the great. And Jerusalem is consistently called Jerusalem the holy. And in those two words you see the distinction between the harlot and the bride.

The harlot is great. The bride is holy. If I desire greatness, I do myself to be a part of Babylon.

If I want to be great, whether in the world or in the Christian world, I'm going to end up in Babylon. But if I want to be holy, if I want to pursue holiness, as it says in Hebrews 12, 14, that's the way to be a part of Jerusalem. Why is Babylon called eleven times the great city Babylon? She has no interest in holiness.

She has only an interest in greatness. And any so-called believer whose interest is greatness, to become big in the eyes of others, to be a leader, to be a superintendent, to be a chairman and a director and something or the other, and to be a lord over others, instead of being a humble brother and a servant like Jesus was, I want to say it because I don't want anyone's blood on my hand, is heading towards Babylon. If not having become a part of it already.

Babylon the great, the mother of harlots. There are many harlots because there are many denominations who are involved in this. It's not just one.

It began with the Roman Catholic Church. There's no doubt about that. That's why John speaks about that city which sat on seven hills and that city which ruled over the kings of the earth.

But that's not all. From the Roman Catholic Church has come forth a lot of Protestant churches and Pentecostal churches, which have ended up as harlots just as much, become just like the mother. The mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.

Never forget that. How do we identify it? That which seeks greatness in the world. That which lives on pomp and show.

That where the leaders are decorated with purple and scarlet and gold and silver and pearls. You can be sure that's all Babylon. Jesus was not like that.

Jesus came riding on a donkey. He didn't have all these decorations hanging around his body. And there it is so clear.

Can you imagine Jesus getting a bride like this? No. The bride of Jesus is as described in Revelation 19. In simplicity.

In verse 6, I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. Through the years, not only the Roman Catholic Church but many other denominations have persecuted the true saints of God. It's a fact.

I've read through church history and through the years. It is in millions that the true saints of God have been persecuted and killed by this religious system called Christianity. Which did not follow the word of God.

And did not follow the truth. And did not follow the Lord Jesus Christ. You've only got to read in history about what is known as the Spanish Inquisition.

Conducted by popes who tortured people, monks, with crosses around their neck. Tortured people. Burnt them because they would not submit to the pope.

It's horrible to read of the things that they did seven, eight hundred years ago. Amazing. They're drunk with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

This is true. Things have got a little more refined now. But the Lord's kept a note of all this.

And when I saw her, I wondered greatly. And the angel said to me, why do you wonder? Verse seven. I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns.

The beast which you saw was and is not. And it's about to come out of the bottomless pit. Now, human beings are not sent to the bottomless pit.

Human beings, when they die, if they're unconverted, they go to hell. As Jesus said in Luke 16. The bottomless pit is the abode of demons.

So when it says someone comes out of the bottomless pit, it's a demon. It's a demon who is in charge of, who is going to be in charge of the Antichrist. Just like there are demons who are in charge, evil spirits who are in charge of various world rulers.

And when it says he was and is not, that means the same demon at one time was in charge of one of the world's great empires. We saw in another study of the world's great empires, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. One more is going to come, the Lord told John.

And after that, the eighth one. And the eighth one is going to be the same demon that was in one of these five that were there before Rome. One of the world rulers, the same demon that controlled him, who is now back in the bottomless pit, is going to come back and rule the Antichrist.

That's the meaning of verse 8. The beast that you saw, this Antichrist, was, the spirit in him, was one of the world rulers. Perhaps the ruler of Greece, the spirit that ruled Alexander the Great, may be the one that's going to come back into the Antichrist. Is not, that means in John's time when Rome was ruling, that spirit was no longer there, gone back into the bottomless pit, but will come out and will finally be sent back to destruction.

And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. And here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

And they are seven kings, or as we said, seven kingdoms. And in John's day, 180, five have fallen. Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece.

Five have fallen. One is, that is Rome. The other has not yet come.

We don't know which the other one was, whether it's communism or some other government that has come during the last 2,000 years. And when he comes, he must remain a little while. In verse 10 onwards, a brief preview, a brief review of world history.

And then we come to verse 11, the Antichrist. And the spirit in the Antichrist is going to be one who was in the earth before. Was and is not, is himself an ape and is one of the seven.

That is, one of the seven spirits that rule the leaders of one of these seven kingdoms. Which one, we don't know. He finally goes to destruction.

And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings. That is, ten nations who have not yet received a kingdom. But they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

And that is the hour of judgment when God is going to judge the world. And so we see there are going to be ten nations that are going to band together. And there's one nation that's going to rule these ten.

That's why I said it could be a group of ten nations in Europe. It could be Russia and ten of her satellite countries. We don't know.

However, it's going to be headed up by one person called the Antichrist. And these satellite countries are going to give the power to the one who is the ruler on top. And they have one purpose, verse 13, and they give their power and their authority to the beast.

Now, it says here they're going to be united. And they're going to wage war against the Lamb. Now, I want you to turn to Daniel chapter 7. I want to show you a verse there which says something about this.

If you want to study it later, Daniel 7, verse 24 and 25. It says here in verse 24, Out of this kingdom, ten kings will arise. That is the ten kingdoms in the last day.

And another will arise after them. That's the Antichrist. He will be different from the previous ones and he will subdue three of the nations.

Out of the ten, he's going to subdue three. There are going to be seven others and he's going to be the eighth. And he will speak out against the most high.

And he will wear down the saints of the highest one. He will try to make alterations in times and in the law. And they will be given into his hand for one year, two years, and half a year.

Which means three and a half years. And then the court, verse 26, of the Lord will sit for judgment. And his dominion will be taken away.

And then the dominion, verse 27, will be given to the saints. That is when Jesus establishes his kingdom on the earth. And so we see, this is how it is going to be.

And then back to Revelation 17, to the bride of the Antichrist. It says here in verse 14, these will wage war against the Lamb. That is when Jesus comes down and sets his foot on the Mount of Olives.

And the Lamb will overcome them. It's not going to be a big war, it's just going to be a matter of a few moments. With the word of his mouth, he's going to destroy them.

Because he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. And those who are with him, that is the 144,000, the bride, they are called, chosen, and faithful. Many are called, few are chosen.

And fewer still are faithful. Notice three things here. Called, chosen, faithful.

It's a blessed thing to be among those who are not only called, not only chosen, but also faithful. Are we faithful? In the little things, our faithfulness is tested. It's not in the big things, brothers and sisters.

It is in the small things of life that God tests our faithfulness. Little, little things in daily life. There we prove whether we are among the called, the chosen, and the faithful.

Most believers are found among the unfaithful, careless, and unfaithful. Blessed are those who take it seriously. To be faithful in the little things, faithful to the smallest commands of Jesus.

And he said to me, the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, which means the harlot has spread her influence over the whole world. And then, notice what is going to happen. The ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot.

You see, the political power is going to use this religious system only for its own ends. And once their own ends are accomplished, then they have nothing more to do with this. For example, I remember during the last election in the United States of America for the President of America, that was four years ago, in 1980.

There was a huge chunk of the American population which claimed to be born again. And therefore, both the people who were contesting to be President claimed to be born again. Because that's the only way to get the votes of these people who claim to be born again.

You see how much it has penetrated into such a powerful country. Politics and religion. It's impossible for a man to be the President of the United States of America and not tell lies.

They have to tell lies when they get into those high positions. And the Bible says, the one who tells lies, the devil is the father of lies. How can such a person claim to be a born again Christian? That's impossible.

That to me is the clearest proof that a man who claims to be the President of the United States can never be a born again Christian. So it's impossible for him to sit there and not tell lies. He has to tell lies.

Yeah, that's just an example. But finally, when the political power has made use of religion for its own end, then they will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, will eat her flesh and burn her up with fire. For God has put it in their hearts to execute his purpose by having a common purpose and by giving their kingdom to the beast until the words of God should be fulfilled.

God is going to allow judgment to come upon false apostate Christianity by the political power with which she held hands. He's going to destroy her. The Lord doesn't have to destroy her.

That political power will destroy her finally, just wait and see. And the woman whom you saw is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Now, chapter 17 speaks about Babylon as a religious system.

Chapter 18 speaks of Babylon as an economic commercial system. It is religion plus money working together. And right from the beginning of the history of the human race, you'll find there were two types of religion.

Adam, among his many sons, he had two sons about whom the Bible speaks, Cain and Abel. Was Cain a religious man? What do you think? He was. It says he came with an offering unto the Lord.

He had a form of godliness. Abel also came with an offering to the Lord. Abel came with the blood of a lamb.

Cain came with the vegetables from the ground. And it says the fire of God, and I believe that's the way the Lord approved Abel's offering. The Lord accepted Abel's offering which means supernatural fire came down from heaven and consumed it and Cain saw that and he felt jealous because no fire came on his.

And he slew Abel. That was the beginning of the fulfillment of verse 6 of Revelation 17. What did we read in verse 6? The blood of the saint, the woman was drunk with it.

Who was the first person who shed the blood of a saint? Cain. Was he a religious person? He was. To whom was he offering a sacrifice? Was it to a false god? Was it to a heathen god? Was it to Vishnu? No, it was to the true God.

But there was a corruption in his religion. There we see the beginning of Babylon. And there we see in Cain and Abel the beginning of Babylon and Jerusalem.

The false religion and the true. Growing up in the same home. Drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

And we read that God wiped out the sons of Cain. During the flood. And Noah came forth from the flood.

He was a descendant of Seth. Not of Cain. There is no descendant of Cain in the world today.

I hope you know that. They were all wiped out in the time of the flood. But Noah.

A division came among his son. He had a godly son called Shem. And he had an ungodly son called Ham.

And Ham was cursed. And Shem was blessed. Through Shem came Abraham.

And the Jewish race. And Christ. Through Ham.

Came, if you turn there for a moment. To Genesis 10. It is very interesting to see how what you see in the end of the Bible.

Starts off in the beginning of the Bible in Genesis chapter 10. Ham was cursed because he did not respect his father. It is very interesting to see that.

That his curse began with a lack of respect for authority. That is part of the beginning of Babylon. When people don't respect authority.

When children are not taught to respect their parents. You are breeding them for Babylon. Chapter 10 we read.

Ham had a son. And the name of Ham's son. Verse 6. Was Cush.

One of his sons was Cush. Verse 8. Cush. Begat.

Became the father of Nimrod. And he became a mighty one on the earth. And he was a mighty hunter.

Before the Lord. That means against the Lord. And they used to say like Nimrod.

A mighty hunter against the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was. Babylon.

That is where Babylon began. And you read about it in chapter 11. Where they built this tower of Babel.

Which was a sign of rebellion against God. But it began with a man called Nimrod. I want to just take a few minutes to give you something from secular history.

Which is very interesting. Nimrod. This doesn't come in the scriptures.

But secular history tells us this. Nimrod. Who was the grandson of Ham.

The cursed one. Had a wife. And the wife's name was Semiramis.

Nimrod. Was a great hunter. And history tells us he rid the world of wild beasts.

And so he became a sort of world leader. A type of the Antichrist. And.

He was finally slain. Violently. There was a prophet in those days.

That was Shem. Who was still alive. The son of Noah.

Prophesying the truth. A picture of the true church. Standing up against the abominations of the Antichrist.

Nimrod was slain. Nimrod was a person who was almost worshipped. By people.

But he was slain. And Semiramis' wife. When she saw.

That her husband had died. And that her power. Would now go.

She did something very clever. She was a very adulterous woman. Like Babylon.

The bride of the Antichrist. So was Semiramis. The wife of Nimrod.

And she had a child. Through her adulterous life. And look at her cleverness now.

When this child was born. She said. This is Nimrod.

Come back to life. And so began. Began the worship.

Of the mother. And the son. I want to tell you this is not a Roman Catholic idea.

The worship of the mother and the son. It began. In Genesis chapter 10.
In Babylon. With Semiramis. And her son.
And there were images of mother and son. Around the world. Hundreds of years.
Before Christ. This is history. This is the beginning of Babylonian religion.
Now I want to show you. Two Old Testament verses. Jeremiah 44.
This is before Christ remember. Jeremiah 44. Verses 15 to 18.
Israelites. Also got corrupted. With this Babylonian religion.
It says here. Jeremiah 44 verses 15 to 18. All the men in Jeremiah's day.
600 years before Christ. Who were aware. That their wives were burning sacrifices.
To other gods. Along with the other women. And they came to Jeremiah and said.
To Jeremiah verse 16. As for the message you have spoken. We are not going to listen to you.
But rather we will certainly carry out. Every word. That has proceeded from our own mouths.
By burning sacrifices. To whom? To the queen of heaven. Do you know there was a queen of heaven.
600 years before Christ. That was. Originated with the wife of Nimrod.
Semiramis. And pouring out libations to her. Verse 18.
Since we stopped burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven. Pouring out libations. We have lacked everything.
But when verse 19. We were burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven. And our husbands were making little wafers.
In her image. And poured out libations to her. Then we were blessed.
This was the idolatry that was going on in those days. And this queen of heaven. Had a son.
You read of that son. In Ezekiel chapter 8. Ezekiel 8. Verse 14. Then he brought me to the entrance.
Of the gate of the Lord's house. Which was toward the north. And behold.
Women were sitting there. Weeping for Tammuz. Tammuz.
Was another name. For the son of. Semiramis.
The mother and child. The queen of heaven and Tammuz. They were weeping for Nimrod who had died.
But who was resurrected. In this child of Semiramis. This was Satan's counterfeit.
Of the death and resurrection of Christ. And so began the worship. Of the mother and the child.

And what was the name of this child. Tammuz. And the first letter of Tammuz.

Was the T. From which began. The sign of the cross. The sign of the cross.

That is not. A Christian or a Roman Catholic. Or a Roman Catholic origin.

It is Babylonian. It all began there. That T was the cross.

With which. They. Marked themselves.

The sign of the cross. This was linked up with the worship of the sun. And that is why they used to have round wafers.

Symbolizing the sun. Which they used to eat. And around the heads of these Babylonian gods.

Would be a picture of the sun. Which we today call a halo. It is actually the sun.

It began with sun worship. And behind Semiramis's head. Would be the sun.

Behind the head of Tammuz. The sun. The child would be the sun.

What we call the halo. This is the Babylonian religion. That has penetrated Christianity.

From the time of Constantine. And corrupted it. And it has spread into all branches.

In various ways. Do you know that history tells us. There is an amazing book.

If any of you want to read it. It is called the two Babylons. By a man called Alexander Hislop.

Where he says rosary. Candles. Lamps.

Everything. Vestments. Priest garments.

Idol possessions. Everything began there in Babylon. It is all there.

It was taken over by Christianity. When Constantine became the emperor of Rome. And today.

Blindly Christians follow that. And this is what led to immorality. It is amazing if you were to read.

The history of some of the Popes who lived a thousand years ago. They were so immoral. They had multitudes of illegitimate children.

And all types of immoralities went on there. That is the result of false Christianity. Now this is not only there.

Rome is the mother of harlots. But there are many many daughters. Adultery has spread to leaders in Protestant churches.

Pentecostal churches. Physical adultery. Spiritual adultery.

And then we come to chapter 18 of Revelation. And that is the mixture of religion with money. When you come to Revelation chapter 18 you read verse 1. After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven having great authority.

And the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great. And she has become a dwelling place of demons.

And a prison of every unclean spirit. And a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. Evil spirits have got into Christendom because it has not emphasized purity and holiness.

If we emphasize greatness and honor and riches, that's the easiest way to open the door for these unclean spirits to build their nests in our midst. If we emphasize putting the flesh to death, mortifying the flesh, and holiness and purity, that will drive out these unclean spirits in no time. The birds will run away from their nests in no time.

But it's rare to find an assembly that emphasizes that. It says here, Babylon has become a prison of every unclean spirit. And all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality.

And the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her. And the merchants of the earth have become rich. Think how many merchants make millions at Christmastime in the name of religion.

The birth of Christ has become a big opportunity for businessmen. This imaginary Santa Claus. You have Santa Claus now going around with half-naked women in these five-star hotels at Christmastime.

This is Babylon through and through. It's in the name of Christianity. The birth of Christ they're celebrating.

It's the birth of the sun god. The Babylonians celebrated, the Romans celebrated the birth of the sun god around December 25th because that was the time the sun came back from the Tropic of Capricorn and started moving northwards. That was the origin of December 25th by the way.

The winter solstice. When the days started becoming longer. That was the sun god coming back.

And they converted it into the birthday of Christ. The nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality. Verse 3. The kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her.

The merchants have become rich. Now verse 4. Here is the sad thing. Oh, what a grief to God it is! What a grief to God it is! That in this corrupt system there are true believers who should not be there.

And the voice from heaven says come out of her my people. Can you see the grief in the heart of God when he says that? You are my people. How can you be in this system? Come out of her my people, that you may not participate in her sins.

Because if you do participate in her sins you will also receive of her plagues. For her sins have piled up as high as heaven and God has remembered her iniquities. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Come out of a system that is anti-God. That has got religion but not purity. That's got tradition but not the word of God.

Any system whether it's the mother of harlots or any of the daughter harlots. Then the voice from heaven says pay Babylon back even as she has paid. Give back to her double according to her deeds.

In the cup which she has mixed mixed twice as much back for her. That is judgment. To the degree that she glorified herself.

Here is in two words we can say in a nutshell the essence of Babylon glorified herself. She sought the honor of men to glorify herself. This is what I need to beware of.

Glorifying myself will make me a part of this system. The bride glorifies Jesus Christ. She sings the new song which says thou alone art worthy O Lord.

We are not worthy. We don't want any position or greatness or money or anything in this world in the name of religion. We want to be servants and just down in the dust.

But she glorified herself. She lived sensuously, lived luxuriously in the name of religion. Used money given for God's work to live luxuriously oneself justifying herself saying I'm serving God.

I'm a leader. I'm a pope. I'm a pastor.

I'm a preacher. I'm a servant of God. I've got to live off the offerings of people.

I send reports and get money from them and live luxuriously off the offerings of poor widows and poor people without any sense of conviction in one's conscience. This is the abomination that's going across our land in so called Christendom. Well, they're going to get a double from God one day.

To the same degree, give her torment and mourning for she says in her heart I sit as a queen. I'm not a widow. I'll never see mourning.

She doesn't know mourning for sin. She knows only how to live in grand style. Money in the name of religion.

For this reason, in one day her plagues will come. Pestilence, mourning and famine and she'll be burnt up in fire for the Lord God who judges her is strong. And the kings of the earth who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning.

Standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment saying woe, woe, the great city Babylon, the strong city for in one hour your judgment has come. Babylon's judgment is going to precede the battle of Armageddon and so the kings are going to see that and laugh. And then the merchants of the earth, the people who made money in the name of religion will weep and mourn because no one buys their cargos anymore.

And here are the cargos gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, brothers and sisters I just want to tell you as you go through this list just make sure you don't have the slightest interest in any of these things listed here. Gold, silver, precious stone, pearl, costly clothes, purple, silks and red. Why does it mention purple and red these gaudy colors so often? Silks, fancy silks, expensive woods, scented woods and ivory and costly wooden carvings, all types of useless things which have no serve no purpose.

Just bought for vanity. Bronze and iron and all the things you can go down commercial street and it's all there. And cinnamon and spice and I don't mean the necessary things for life, I mean the unnecessary vanities which are there just for display, for honor which serve absolutely no function.

Cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil, fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep and cargos and horses and chariots and what is the final result of all that? The bodies and souls of men as it says in the margin. When people get involved in all this finally their body

and soul also gets locked up in Babylon. And the fruit you long for has gone from you and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you.

Men will no longer find them. This is the judgment on one who has lived for earthly things. The merchants of these things who became rich from her will stand at a distance because of the fear of a torment, weeping and mourning.

Saying woe, woe the great city she who was clothed. Notice again the colors, fine linen not bright and clean like the bride but fine linen and gaudy purple, gaudy red adorned with gold precious stones and pearls. People say God's not interested in all these things.

He certainly is. He takes a note of all this type of decoration. For in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste and every ship master and every passenger and sailor as many as make their living by the sea stood at a distance and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning saying what city is like the great city and they threw dust on their head and were crying out weeping and mourning and saying woe, woe the great city.

Notice again the great city not the holy city in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth. For in one hour, hour of judgment she has been laid waste. Rejoice over her oh heaven and you saints and apostles and prophets who were slain and persecuted by her.

Now God has pronounced judgment for you against her. This is a picture of a system it's a mixture of religion and money. Brothers and sisters let me conclude with this.

Revelation 17 and 18 teach us there are two things we are to beware of. Revelation 17 tells us we are to beware of a religion that leads to greatness and not to purity. Revelation 18 says we are to beware of being entangled in money and luxuries and earthly things and especially if it is in the name of religion.

These are the things by which we can get into a religious commercial Babylon that will finally be judged by God. And I believe there is much here that applies to what we see around us today of Christianity. And the word of God comes to us come out of her my people.

That's the call that comes to us now. We are to pursue after purity not greatness. For all that is great in the eyes of men is an abomination to God.

We are to pursue after simplicity not luxury. God gives us money not to waste on luxury but to use for the necessities of life, to help others, to use for the kingdom of God. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

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