

Babylonianism

Historical and Prophetic

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In the book of Revelation the Apostle John writes of a mysterious political, economic, and religious system that is to exist in the last days. This entity is called Babylon—Babylon the Great. The time setting of the book of Revelation is the "day of the Lord" (Revelation 1:10), a period spoken of more than thirty times in the Old Testament—a period near the close of this age when God will begin to take a decisive hand in world affairs. John says Babylon is a great city (Revelation 16:19). Spiritually speaking, Babylon is a "whore" whose illicit relations with the governments of the world have made the inhabitants of the earth drunk (Revelation 17:1–2). Babylon is called MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (v. 5). Babylon is responsible for the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (v. 6). Babylon, likened to a woman, is that great city that rules over the kings of the earth (v. 18).

God's people are warned to come out of Babylon, not to partake of her sins (Revelation 18:4). God's wrath is about to descend upon Babylon (vv. 6–10). The economic wealth and power of Babylon are described in Revelation 18:11–19, but this power and wealth will be of little avail when God decides to take a hand. God will utterly destroy Babylon, the system responsible for the blood of the prophets, saints, and all that were slain upon the earth (vv. 21, 24).

The book of Daniel reveals, in a prophecy for the latter days (Daniel 2:28), that the Babylonian system would exist from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the time of the end. An examination of Daniel 2:31–42 shows that the great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in a dream is *one* image, and while it successively became Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman, it will maintain continuity until it is destroyed by Christ when He sets up His Kingdom (v. 44).

The Old Testament Scriptures were written and preserved for our learning and admonition (Romans 15:4). What happened to the peoples of ancient times is an example for us today (I Corinthians 10:6, 11). Many of the historical events preserved in the Old Testament record are types of events destined to take place in the future. Jeremiah 27 records how God used the kingdom of Babylon to punish His people for their rebellion and sin. Nebuchadnezzar, king of literal Babylon, was raised up for the purpose of subduing the nations (Daniel 5:18–19). God is the One determining who rules in the earth (Daniel 2:21). Revelation 17–18 record the antitype to appear in the last days. This antitype is also called Babylon and will punish God's people of the last days in the same manner they were punished in the days of old. According to Jeremiah 28, God's will and purpose could not be thwarted when He determined to punish His people. Neither can it be thwarted in the time of the end when God's people are punished and His purpose completed (Revelation 17:17).

Why Should We Be Concerned About Babylon?

The adverse influence of Babylon upon all the peoples of the earth is made plain by a statement in Revelation 17:2. ". . . the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." And again in Revelation 18:3, "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . ." All the nations of the earth have been made spiritually drunk, unable to perceive the real plan and purpose of God. As a result the world today is in total chaos in its quest for peace and happiness. Today there is no peace, and happiness is equated with the number of possessions one owns.

To repeat, the evil influence of Babylon has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (Revelation 14:8). She is "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters" (Revelation 17:1). The waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues (Revelation 17:15). Babylon, represented as a woman, sits upon a scarlet-colored beast (Revelation 17:3). In the Bible a beast is a symbol of a government or kingdom (Daniel 7). So Babylonianism includes political and military power. Babylon is the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. A harlot is a symbol of a false religious or philosophical concept often crystallized into a religious system. Included in these false concepts are all forms of paganism, occultism, and false Christianity. The woman Babylon is "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Revelation 17:18). The principal kind of power cities exercise over kings is economic power. So the woman represented as a city is a financial power that controls kings by means of debt capitalism. Kings or rulers of the earth have been compelled to enter into illicit relationships with this financial power in order to survive economically. This is why the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, living "deliciously" as a result (Revelation 17:2; 18:9). The relationships between the kings of the earth and Babylon have been political, economic, educational, social, and religious. There have been great material benefits derived from such a union. When Babylon is destroyed the merchants who were made rich by her "shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing" (Revelation 18:11, 15). So will those who shipped her goods by the sea lanes of the world (v. 17). So powerful have been the sorceries of Babylon that all nations have been deceived (v.23). "Sorceries" in this verse is the Greek *pharmakon*, which means one who mixes and uses drugs. Could this be a reference to the biggest industry in the world today—'dope incorporated'?

Philosophically speaking, Babylon has been the source of worldwide depravity. As noted, "she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8), "and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Revelation 17:2). She holds "a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (Revelation 17:4). True Christians are warned to have no part of this Babylonish system, to *separate from* it, and to have no fellowship with it (Revelation 18:4). The filthiness of Babylon must be recognized and understood. It is not necessary to personally experience it firsthand, but it is necessary to comprehend its filthiness. What is

unrealized by most is that the concepts upon which we base our *modus vivendi*, including our religious views, are from Babylon. The *whole* world has imbibed of her philosophical wine—the cause of spiritual fornication!

Considering Isaiah 47:6 as a type of what is to occur in the last days (compare I Cor. 10:6, 11), God's people will be enslaved to Babylon. It is from this enslavement they are to be delivered by the hand of the Lord when He returns (Micah 4:6–10). All nations have been made spiritually drunk—deceived—by the philosophies of Babylon (Revelation 17:2). Many deceptive innovations will be rampant in the last days and many of God's people will be deceived (Matthew 24:24). Remember, the whole world is under the sway of Babylon; this includes the kings (political leaders) of the earth (Revelation 16:13–14).

What Is Babylon?

Babylon is called "The lady of *kingdoms*" (Isaiah 47:5). She boasts, ". . . I shall be a lady for ever. . . . I am, and none else beside me. . ." (vv. 7–8). Babylon arises superior to all national identities. Notice, ". . . The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Revelation 17:15). Babylon is *over* peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. Babylonianism, therefore, bridges all national considerations and is the source of deception for all nations.

Babylonianism is first of all *economic* in nature. From "youth," Babylon has been engaged in merchandising (Isaiah 47:15). The enormity of Babylonianism's riches and commerce can be seen in Ezekiel 26:1–27:36. See particularly *The Living Bible* for a clear description in modern English. Keep in mind that Tyrus in these chapters is identical with Babylon because Isaiah 14:4–14 and Ezekiel 28:11–16 both demonstrate that Satan is the invisible ruler of Babylon and Tyrus. Tyrus, as such, is an extension of Babylonianism. Revelation 18 goes on to tell us that the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies, that a great international business relationship prospers under her aegis, and that prominence has been accorded the major businessmen of the earth.

Babylonianism is *political* in nature. The rulers of the earth cohabit with Babylon; that is, they participate in her concepts of government, which include both totalitarian and socialistic forms of rule (Revelation 17:2). The kings of the earth have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her (Revelation 18:9), which implies willing cohabitation, acceptance, and pursuit of these relationships. At the appointed time God will place all nations under the control and rule of Babylon (Jeremiah 27:7). Since Revelation 17–18 shows the power and control of Babylon over the world in the last days, we can take Jeremiah 27 to be the type. Also, keep in mind I Corinthians 10, verses 6 and 11, says that which was written in ancient times was written for our admonition and learning.

Babylonianism is *social* in nature. That is, it is the actuator of social change. Remember the tower of Babel? It was here that God confounded the speech in order to separate the several races. Babylonianism has consistently been the progenitor of racial mixing. Babylon is rebuked by God for this in Isaiah 13:14. The latter part of this verse indicates this same practice will prevail in the latter days (vv. 6, 9, 13, 14). See also Jeremiah 50:8. The social aim of Babylonianism is the mixing of the races and the disruption or loss of national identity. In addition, "lived deliciously" (Revelation 18:7) in the Babylonian context implies a riotous and uncontrolled lifestyle, a way of life that will come to an end when merrymaking and social plunder are brought to a halt (vv. 22–23). The inhabitants of the earth made drunk with the wine of her fornication (Revelation 17:2) implies a lifestyle of excess and debauchery at every level of social contact. Indeed, today the world is rapidly becoming one; and the excesses enumerated by the Apostle Paul and other Biblical authors can be seen as never before (compare Romans 1:18–32, Matthew 24:36–39, 2 Timothy 3:1–9).

Babylonianism is *military* in nature. One of the great military powers of the past was Babylon. Modern Babylon, the woman, rides a beast (Revelation 17:3, 6–7). A beast, as we have already seen, symbolizes government. Here we find a political and military structure which inflicts its will upon all peoples, particularly upon those who follow God (Revelation 17:6; 18:24). Babylonianism will war against Christ and the armies of heaven when He returns (Revelation 17:14; 19:11–21). Babylonianism is militaristic and truculent by nature and is the diametric opposite of God's Way; it is a way of rebellion against the way of Truth—the absolutes of God.

Babylonianism is *educational* and *religious* in nature. But this education (including all religion) is deceptive. Deception is a mental disorientation. The basis for this disorientation is the educational approach—the various concepts of Babylonianism. Education is the acquisition of knowledge, whether right or wrong. The Bible tells us the whole world is deceived (Revelation 12:9); that is, it is mentally disoriented. It has acquired erroneous knowledge. Deception is the basis of the educational philosophy of Babylonianism. ". . . The inhabitants of the earth have been made [by means of controlled education] drunk [reeling in the pleasures and heady intoxication of their carnal hopes, purposes, and achievements] with the wine [concepts and philosophies] of her fornication [illegitimacy]" (Revelation 17:2). The woman has "a golden cup in her hand full of abominations [fetishes, beliefs, and practices found in every level of society, including religion, education, various customs, etc.] and filthiness of her fornication" (v. 4). She is indeed "the mother of harlots [organizations] and abominations of the earth" (v. 5). She is the inventive genius, the mother of the ideas, concepts, and beliefs of society. "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . ." (Revelation 18:3). The Babylonian educational philosophy is *common* to every nation on the face of the earth. This educational philosophy is common to all the political entities—governments—of the world. In addition, it is the philosophy of international business, as the latter portion of verse 3 tells us.

The nations of the earth are not Babylon! Rather, the nations have drunk of the inordinate, illicit wine *of* Babylon. The rulers and leading businessmen of the earth engage in intercourse *with* her. Babylon arises as a force and influence which is superior to all nations, religions, peoples, languages, and races. Babylonianism is a way of life, a philosophy by which peoples are ruled, educated, and taught to conduct business. It is by her sorceries (drug culture and the various practices, customs, ways, and philosophies) that all nations were deceived (Revelation 18:23).

A Great City?

The Bible describes the "nerve center" of Babylon as "that great city" which made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (Revelation 14:8). When modern Babylon is destroyed by God "the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath" (Revelation 16:19). ". . . Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come" (Revelation 18:10). ". . . What city is like unto this great city!" (Revelation 18:18.) ". . . Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness. . . !" (Revelation 18:19.) ". . . Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (Revelation 18:21). These Scriptures indicate that a single city, of these last days, serves as the nerve center of all international agreements, whether they be economic, political, religious, etc. Perhaps this city is New York or London.

Babylonianism Is Totalitarian

Daniel, chapter 3, is the historical manifestation of the totalitarianism of Babylon. This totalitarian concept has never changed. It is for this reason that the historical manifestation recorded in Daniel is the type of a worldwide system of Babylon found in the last days. Remember Romans 15:4 and 1Corinthians 10:6, 11. The Babylonian system is idolized today and its worship soon will be compelled upon all. All who refuse to do so will be killed (Revelation 13:12–15). Notice carefully the parallel between Daniel 3 and Revelation 13:12–15. Religious freedom will be taken away from the masses. Babylon will make all nations drink the "wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8). This implies a loss of choice and that in all aspects the populace will be compelled to accept and live according to the dictates of Babylon. The woman (Babylon) is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Revelation 17:6). Those called servants of God will refuse to compromise their faith and convictions. The result will be death.

The Success of Modern Babylon

"... [T]he woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. . ." (Revelation 17:4). Her attire indicates opulence, greatness, dominance. Babylon will be enormously successful economically. Those who have perpetrated this system will come to realize the aspirations, dreams, and hopes that are thousands of years old. "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously . . . for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Revelation 18:7). But note, "that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. . ." (vv. 16–17). What sorrow for those who have advanced Babylonianism when they cry, ". . . Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! . . ." (Verse 19.)

Babylonianism is the philosophy which holds together the fabric of modern society. It arises superior to all national identities and philosophies. It encompasses the total orientation of peoples of the last days. It involves politics, religion, the military, all social aspects of society, economics, and education. It is the root of all deception found in the world. Babylonianism has surfaced from time to time throughout history, but will attain its apex in the last days just prior to the return of Jesus Christ. What was its beginning? What is its source? Where did it come from?

Where Did Babylon Originate?

If Babylon had a time of youth (Isaiah 47:15), then it had a beginning. Where is it first mentioned? The answer is found in Genesis 10:8, 10. Babylon was the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom. "And Cush begat Nimrod. . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel. . . ." This was the first political manifestation of Babylon and the first fabric of deception. Remember, ". . . for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived" (Revelation 18:23). Who is the author of deception? "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which *deceiveth the whole world*. . ." (Revelation 12:9). A time is coming when "he should deceive the nations no more. . ." (Revelation 20:3). So, according to the Scriptures, the actual deceiver of the world is Satan the Devil. The fabric of that worldwide deception is Babylonianism. Babylonianism is the creation of Satan, the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan has been the invisible ruler of the world from the beginning (Luke 4:5–7). Babylonianism, therefore, began with Satan. Both Isaiah 14:12–14 and Ezekiel 28:11–16 reveal Satan's attitude and rebellion against the Way of God. Babylonianism is the philosophy and way of "life" Satan has used to deceive mankind. Babylon was the physical system used by Satan to insinuate this deceptive philosophy upon all mankind. But, when did this deception begin? By determining the beginning of Satan's deception we will be able to see that this deception coincides with the beginning of Babylonianism.

Babylonianism From the Beginning

An early manifestation of Babylonianism was the slaying of righteous Abel. Notice, "And in her [Babylon] was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of *all* that were slain upon the earth" (Revelation 18:24). In a similar manner Christ held the religious leaders of His day responsible for the blood of the saints. He said to the Pharisees, "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias [the most recent martyr] son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (Matthew 23:35). Since Revelation 18:24 holds Babylon accountable for all the blood spilled on the earth, Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees proves that the same hateful spirit of Babylon emanated from them in His day. The actual beginning of the humanistic spirit of Babylonianism was in the days of Adam and Eve. Notice again, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. . ." (Revelation 17:6). Suffice it to say that Babylonianism is the nemesis of the saints. Babylonianism began with Satan the Devil—the deceiver of all mankind from the beginning. Babylonianism is the philosophy utilized to deceive mankind, while Babylon is the physical entity used to implement this deception. Babylon has asserted its ambitions periodically throughout the history of man and is the cause of problems for all the saints of God.

The Manifestations of Babylonianism

In the last days Babylonianism is *universal*. Since Satan is the present god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) who has deceived the whole world (John 8:44, Revelation 12:9; 18:23), he is the author of Babylonianism. The first manifestation of Babylonianism occurred, therefore, when Satan rebelled against God. This rebellion is recorded in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. Satan's intent was to establish a kingdom based on the concept of opposition to God and His Way of life. This rebellion against God was unsuccessful (Revelation 12:4, Luke 10:18), and Satan and his demons were cast down to this earth where Satan and these cohorts now rule as the adversaries of man. This rebellion of Satan was the beginning of Babylonianism. Since Satan's domain is universal, Babylonianism arises superior to all the physical kingdoms of this world. All the kingdoms of this world are a part of Satan's domain, not distinct from it "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. . ." Revelation 18:3). Satan's intent was to establish his own kingdom (Matthew 12:24–26, Mark 3:23–26). His goal is *one* government over the entire earth—to consolidate all the physical, fragmented governments into a one-world order under his direction and sway. This one-world government, from the Bible perspective, will be a kingdom of darkness (2 Peter 2:4).

A second manifestation of Babylonianism was the rebellion of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Who was the one who motivated this sin against God? Satan, of course!

Read the account in Genesis, chapter 3. The result was a human society separate from God (Genesis 3:23–24), and Satan became man's new god. The subsequent struggle since then has been between the good Way of God and the evil nature of man. Contrary to the popular conception, there is no struggle going on between God and Satan. What takes place in this world is by God's express permission (Isaiah 43:8–13; 46:9–11, Daniel 4:35). Satan's Babylonish system has a definite allotted time period (Revelation 12:12). At the appointed time God will intervene in the affairs of man and Babylon will be no more (Revelation 18:2–3).

A third manifestation of Babylonianism was the murder of righteous Abel. As noted, God holds Babylon responsible for all the blood shed on the earth, beginning with the slaying of Abel (Genesis 4:8, Revelation 18:24; 17:6, Matthew 23:35). This murderous influence is from Satan (John 8:44). Cain knew God's will but was intent on pursuing his own way, the way of flesh, the way of the natural mind (Genesis 4:3–7, Hebrews 11:4). As a result of his sin, Cain was forced into exile and was separated from God (Genesis 4:14, Isaiah 59:1–2). Cain did not want to obey what God commanded. Rather, he wanted to "reason" with God. He wanted an easier way of life; he complained bitterly about his lot, about the necessity of overcoming the evil pulls of his nature. In process of time Cain's attitude became known as "the way of Cain" (Jude 11). Cain's way is the way of all people who are rebellious toward God (compare Jude 11, 18–19 with 2 Peter 2). Cain's attitude was clearly a manifestation of Babylonianism (1 John 3:11–12).

The great Flood brought this manifestation of Babylon to an end. The works of Babylonianism are seen in Genesis 6:5–7, 11–12. The earlier human manifestations began with Adam and Eve and ended with the destruction of the entire human race except for Noah and his family. Noah, alone, was found to be righteous before God (Genesis 6:8). He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Righteousness, according to the Bible, is obedience to the commandments of God (Psalms 119:172). Noah and his family were saved from the Flood (Genesis 7:1, 2 Peter 2:5). So evil was the generation of Noah that in the sight of God it was no longer fit to live. Yet, the manifestation of Babylonianism in the time of Noah characterizes the generation of the last days (Matthew 24:37–39). The last days, the period near the time of the end, is destined to be engulfed in Babylonianism as it was in the days of Noah. The conditions of Noah's day are the same existing in our day. Both are manifestations of Babylonianism. The rebellion against God in the days of Noah foreshadows our own time and both represent significant manifestations of Babylonianism.

Historical Babylon—The Type

Genesis 11 lists the first attempt to achieve a one-world government. Notice, the location was the land of Shinar. According to *Unger's Bible Handbook*, the land of Shinar was located in the very fertile plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The land of

Shinar was given the name "Babel"; it was a manifestation of the Babylonian concept (Genesis 11:9). Following the Flood, the people of Babylonia developed highly skilled crafts and abilities. In human arrogance, they set about to develop a system designed to preserve and protect their "rights." "Let us make us a name," they said. This entire exercise was an act of rebellion against God, who had instead established the patriarchal system. Sometime earlier Nimrod had broken away from God's direction and initiated a rebellion. *A Handbook of Ancient History in Bible Light*, by Dorothy Ruth Miller (p.63, Fleming H. Revell Co., N.Y.), states, "The empire founded by Nimrod was apparently of brief duration. At some time before 2000 BC, the Hamitic control of Babylonia was succeeded by the rule of a dynasty of kings whom historians believe to have been Semitic. The line of kings is known as 'The First Dynasty of Babylon.' The sixth of this line of kings was Hammurabi; who has been identified with Amraphel, king of Shinar (Genesis 14:1). He was a great conqueror and the builder of a mighty empire."

God had allowed time for the numerical increase of the human race following the Flood. The Tower of Babel was their attempt, after the Flood, to establish a universal government apart from the direction of God. God had to intervene and confuse the languages in order to prevent this machination. The result, "Babel," meaning confusion, characterized their endeavors. The events of Genesis 11 occurred approximately one hundred years after the Flood. By comparing the Bible and the works of Eusebius and Josephus, we can see that both Shinar and Babylon were located in the same area. To repeat, the land of Shinar was called "Babel"; it was a manifestation of the Babylonian concept.

Abraham Called Out of Babylon

Shinar was a part of the Babylonian kingdom (Genesis 10:10). It was in Shinar that the tower of Babel was built (Genesis 11:1). Abraham was born and lived his early life in Ur of the Chaldees (vv. 27–28). Ur, in Hebrew, means "fire"—probably from the fire worship practiced there. Ur could refer to a district or to a particular city much in the same way that Chaldea could refer to the whole of Babylonia or to a single province, the capital being Babylon. See *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, volume 1, page 92. Following the death of Haran, Abraham's brother Terah took his family to Haran, which was located in northern Mesopotamia near the Belikh River on the busy caravan road connecting Nineveh, Asshur, and Babylon. Terah, Abraham's father, died in Haran. It was from Haran that Abraham departed to come into the land of Canaan. Abraham was called out of Babylonia (Genesis 12:1). In the same way that Abraham, the father of the faithful, came out of Babylonia, we too are required to come out of Babylonianism (Revelation 18:4). Christ's kingdom is not of this world (John 8:23; 18:36). Christ came to deliver us out of this present evil world (Galatians 1:4). We are not of this world (John 15:19; 17:14–16) and are not to conform to it (Romans 12:2). This world is on its way out (1 Corinthians 7:31), and it will be a matter of time only before God's Kingdom will begin (Daniel 2:44).

Israel Encounters Babylonianism

Historians may wrangle as to which is more ancient—Babylon or Egypt—but according to the Bible the first civilization was in Babylon. Egyptian civilization followed Babylon and, as a consequence, absorbed many Babylonian concepts. This is seen in any totalitarian form of government and the subsequent confiscation of property and possessions by the government when the economy fails, along with the loss of personal freedom for the people (Genesis 47:13–20). The Egyptian people sold themselves to become slaves and vassals of the state (vv.23–26). Joseph, a descendant of Abraham, was instrumental in much of this transfer of wealth, and the end result for the people was feudalism (Exodus 1:8–14; 3:9).

God allowed Joseph to be sold into slavery and be sent to Egypt to preserve life (Genesis 45:4–11). Later, God instructed the patriarch Israel to go to Egypt for the purpose of becoming a great nation (Genesis 46:1–4). Yet, Egypt all this time was a hotbed of Babylonianism. It took many years for God to purge this contamination from His people when Israel was freed from slavery years later by the hand of Moses.

Spiritually, Egypt typifies the world of Satan. Since Satan is the god of this world and Babylonianism is the philosophy he uses to implement his designs upon the world, Egypt, then, was a manifestation of Babylonianism. In the last days Jerusalem is regarded as defiled as was Sodom and Egypt (Revelation 11:8). If Babylonianism is universal in the last days (Revelation 18:3), then spiritual Egypt (Revelation 11:8) is a part of that system. God called Israel out of Egypt, that is, out of Babylonianism—physically, geographically, and spiritually. When called out, Israel was given a Way of life and commanded not to return to the ways of Egypt, meaning Egyptian (Babylonian) politics, economics, militarism, socialism, religion, and education.

The nation of Israel was given the land of Canaan as an inheritance. Alexander Hislop tells us in his book *The Two Babylons*, page 13, that the Phoenicians (Canaanites) derived their religion from Babylon, as did Egypt and Greece. At the time of the Exodus the physical, spiritual, and moral conditions of Canaan were comparable to those of Egypt (Genesis 47:15; 15:16). The Canaanites also were immersed in Babylonianism. The lifestyle of the Canaanites included every moral and spiritual abomination imaginable (Leviticus 18, 19, 20, Psalms 106:34–42, Ezra 9:1–2, Judges 3:5–7). Israel was commanded not to walk in the practices of the Egyptians and Canaanites—the practices of Babylonianism (Leviticus 18:3). Canaan was yet another manifestation of Babylonianism. The Israelites did not heed God's warnings and soon compromised the Way of God (Joshua 16:10, Judges 2:10–13). As a result the Israelites were taken into captivity by the Assyrians and eventually were lost from sight (2 Kings 17:6, 19). History indicates that Assyria was originally a colony of Babylonia. When Assyria became independent, it continued to pursue the culture of Babylon and attempted to control all the commerce of the ancient world.

About 120 years after Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians, the kingdom of Judah was removed to Babylon by the Babylonians (2 Kings 20:12–18; 24:1–4, 10–16, 1 Chronicles 9:1). Seventy years after this captivity, a remnant of the Jews returned to Palestine and was reestablished. They continued as a nation intermittently until they were absorbed into the Roman Empire shortly before the time of Christ. What is generally not understood is that these Jews absorbed much of the Babylonian philosophy during their captivity in Babylon and were thoroughly indoctrinated into Babylonianism by the time Christ appeared on the scene.

Babylonianism From the Time of Christ

Little is said about the Jews in the Old Testament Scriptures after their return from the Babylonian captivity. Many of Daniel's prophecies made during this general time period, however, form the basis for many events yet to happen in the future. Christ's first encounter with the prince of Babylonianism—Satan—occurred as a babe. This was when Herod killed all the male children in the vicinity of Bethlehem in an attempt to kill Christ (Matthew 2:1–18, Revelation 12:3–4). Then Christ faced Satan in a fundamental test of purpose during which Christ came out victorious (Matthew 4:1–11). During His public ministry Christ was in constant conflict with the religious establishment of His day. While the scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat (Matthew 23:2), and were the continuation of the Old Testament church (Acts 7:38), they had utterly perverted the Truth given by Moses and had embraced most of the fundamental philosophies of Babylonianism. In attempting to practice their version of the Law of Moses they were hypocritical and Christ condemned them soundly for this, as recorded in Matthew 23. Their spiritual paternity went back to Satan (John 8:44), and when Jesus said they were accountable for all the righteous blood spilled upon the earth (Matthew 23:35). He was candidly telling them the origin of their Babylonian philosophy.

After the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the apostles encountered this same Satanic system. It came first in the form of Jewish persecution as seen in both the early and later chapters of the book of Acts, and later in the Gnostic heresy promulgated by Simon Magus (Acts 8:9–24). History shows Simon Magus turned against the apostles and the Truth of God and became the father of all the Gnostic heresies. Within the lifetime of most of the apostles, apostasy began to creep into the New Testament Church, and by the middle of the second century there were very few faithful believers remaining who maintained the faith once delivered. Paul called this form of Babylonianism the "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

The gospel message preached by Christ and the original apostles was being perverted; the majority of professing Christians were resorting to human reasonings in order to repudiate the revealed knowledge they had originally received (2 Corinthians 10:4–5). As a result an entire organized system of heresy surfaced which began to preach a different

Christ and a different gospel (2 Corinthians 11:13–15, 4, Galatians 1:6). Many were returning to their original pagan concepts, to the weaknesses of the flesh, and to the occult (Galatians 3:1; 4:8–10; 5:17–21). Division and strife arose in Philippi, as some were preaching Christ out of contention (Philippians 1:15–16). Humanism and Gnostic concepts made inroads into the church at Colosse (Colossians 2:8, 18, 20–23). Heresies appealed to those who were carnally oriented (2 Peter 2:1–3, 10–22). Antichrists were making their appearance (1 John 2:18–23), and deceivers were challenging the fidelity of revealed doctrine (2 John 7–11). Rebellion against the Truth had taken over in the physical body of the church and the faithful were excommunicated (3 John 9–10). Notice the parallel in John 9:22 and 12:42. And by whom was this done? Compare Matthew 23:1–2, 34–35 and Revelation 18:23–24. The entire book of Jude is a warning against this same heretical system.

Remember, Satan is the god of this world. He has deceived all nations. The system he has employed from the beginning is Babylonianism. Its chief manifestation within the Christian church was the Gnostic heresy which took either an ascetic or antinomian bent. Both of these approaches are seen in the heresies listed in the New Testament epistles. The responsibility borne by the faithful is to avoid those who espouse doctrine different from that received initially (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15), and to avoid questions which only create ill-will and doubt (Titus 3:8–11). The faithful should not aid or encourage those who espouse heresy—doctrine which is contrary to that originally received.

That Babylonianism was to be extant during and following the days of Christ and the apostles is clearly demonstrated in Daniel 2:31–44 and 7:1–14. Here the continuity of Babylonianism is seen from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Thus, the Babylonish system continues from the days of Babylon II until the coming of Christ. The image which Nebuchadnezzar saw was *one* image, manifesting continuity from head to foot. The feet and toes of this image most certainly refer to the Roman Empire which culminates in modern Babylon (Revelation 17, 18), as the head refers to Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar's time. The fourth beast of Daniel 7 refers to Rome, as does the fourth kingdom in Daniel 2. While many anticipate the revival of the Roman Empire in the last days, what is generally not understood is that both Daniel 2 and 7 show the continuity of Babylon, not Rome. Rome *absorbed* Babylonianism and is therefore a manifestation of it, not a separate entity. What continues, according to Daniel, is Babylonianism, not Romanism. Babylonianism is the basis for all deception and was manifested long before the time of Rome. The force of Babylonianism began its insidious work at an early date in the New Testament church. It was "the mystery of iniquity" referred to by the Apostle Paul. Babylonianism has been responsible for all the blood shed on the earth, and specifically so for the blood of the saints (Revelation 18:24). When God punishes the world for its wickedness, the apostles and saints will be avenged for the persecution and murders perpetrated by Babylon (Revelation 18:20).

Apostasy Prophesied for the Last Days

From 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11, and Romans 15:4, it is clear that what happened to ancient Israel historically is the basis for last-day prophecies. Jeremiah 23 describes how the servants of God became corrupt and scattered the flock. Verse 20 indicates that the prophecy applies to the last days. Here we find the house of God full of wickedness (vv. 10–11), the messages uttered by the ministers totally subjective and without inspiration (vv. 16–18, 26–28, 32), the leadership sanctioning adultery and walking in lies (v. 14). The people as a whole have turned away from the Truth (vv. 10, 27, 36).

The Apostle Paul spoke of an apostasy to occur in the last days (2 Thessalonians 2:1–3), during which one who comes out of the Body—the man of sin—will be the direct instrument of Satan, subverting the called and chosen people of God (vv. 3–4, 8–9). Since Satan is the author of Babylonianism, the man of sin will employ Babylonianism in order to accomplish his deceptive goals. Paul says that the deception to occur in the latter times (last days) will come from seducing spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1). The people of God (the Church) turn to Babylonianism because they do not really love the Truth of God (2 Thessalonians 2:10) and prefer to have their ears tickled by those who will tell them what they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:3–4; Ezekiel 13:31–33). False teachers are condoned and catered to (2 Peter 2:1–3), and change is touted as the acceptable thing (Jude 3–4). Both 2 Peter and Jude apply to the last days, as is seen in 2 Peter 3:1–7 and Jude 18. Jeremiah foretold, as a type, the time when Babylonian servants would dominate in the house of God (Jeremiah 51:50–52). The Babylonian universal obligation to worship an image is revealed by the type given in Daniel 3. Compare this with Revelation 13:12–18 to see the extent of forced idolatry in the last days. One should not make the mistake of assuming this idolatry could not occur in the true church of God in the last days.

It is the determinate goal of Babylonianism to destroy all Truth and those who subscribe to it. Daniel 8:11–12 indicates that in the last days (v. 17) the sanctuary of God is cast down along with the Truth. A powerful "king of fierce countenance" shall stand up and by inspiration from an outside force destroy the holy people (Daniel 8:23–24). But he will be destroyed by Christ (v. 25). At the time of the end a conspirator will mingle with those who have departed from the Truth and the sanctuary will be polluted (Daniel 11:30–31). Is the historical fulfillment of this event a type of what will happen to the true Church of the last days? The beast, ridden by the apostate woman, will war against the saints while the rest of the world worships this power and authority (Revelation 17:3, 6; 13:17–18).

The people of God, during both the Old and New Testament periods, are subjugated and thereby punished for disobedience. God has selected Babylon as His instrument of punishment for both periods of time (Ezekiel 21:24, Daniel 11:35; 12:1, 7). As a result of this punishment the people of God will be purified and cleansed (Jeremiah 30:14–15; 50:20). The defiling of the sanctuary and the captivity of Judah are types of the bondage God's

people will experience in the last days (Ezekiel 12:8–16; 24:19–27). Some who knew the Truth will face tribulation, to be purged and refined as a result (Daniel 11:35; 12:1–3, 10, Revelation 7:14). God's purpose shall stand. Babylon, chosen for God's purpose, will then be punished for her false assumptions in failing to consider God's doing (Jeremiah 50:23–24).

The historical captivity of the people of God described in Jeremiah 24 is a type of the captivity that will occur in the last days. Verses 6–7 of this chapter indicate a time period far in the future. Those who refuse to repent and turn back to God must suffer the consequences (Jeremiah 32:26–36). Notice again, the time setting is far in the future (vv. 37–42). This is seen also by type in Jeremiah 46:25–28 and Ezekiel 12:1–16. These passages apply to the last days as well. Occultism is a major form of the religious practice of Babylon. This is seen in Ezekiel 21:18–24 and in Revelation 18:23. The parallel between the types listed as historical examples in the Old Testament and the prophetic indications in the book of Revelation are too numerous to take lightly.

Prophetic Indications of Babylon

Historically, God honored the Word which He gave through His servants, the prophets. Those prophets delivered long-range prophecies which relate to the last days, prophecies which relate to His people and to Babylon in our day. What are the prophetic last-day indications of Babylon?

For one thing, modern Israel must learn that obedience to God leads to blessings while disobedience leads to curses. Israel's oppression at the hand of Babylon is to demonstrate the lovingkindness of God, as He will show His mercy and yet choose Israel (Isaiah 14:1). Israel is to be placed in a condition of captivity, oppressed by the oppressor—oppressed by one who assumes the role of God (vv. 4, 12–14). The real inspiration behind Babylon is Satan (Isaiah 1:12–13), the deceptive source behind all the error that exists in this present world (Revelation 12:9). It is Satan who is the real king of Babylon, the ruler of rulers, who rules in wrath over the whole earth. The Babylonian system is dominated by a city (Isaiah 14:4, Revelation 17:18). Influential within that city is one man (Isaiah 14: 16–20). That the time setting of Isaiah 14 is for the last days is seen by what is stated in verses 1–3 of this chapter, clearly a reference to the time of the end, the time of restoration just before and after the return of Jesus Christ (compare Acts 1:6–7; 3:19–21).

Daniel was given the understanding of Nebuchadnezzar's vision—a vision for the last days (Daniel 2:19, 28, 31–45). The image represented the continuity of the Babylonian system. The great Stone struck the image on the toes and feet only, but the entire image was destroyed (vv. 34–35). The entire Babylonian system exists until the return of Jesus Christ—the time when it will be destroyed. God made the truth regarding Babylon known

to His servant Daniel. It is by means of the Word of God preserved in the book of Daniel that we can know the truth regarding Babylon today. Nebuchadnezzar, a type of all world rulers, had to come to realize that it is God alone who rules (Daniel 4:32–37). The people of Israel must learn at the hand of Babylon (Micah 4:8–10), and when they have learned their lessons well, they in turn will be used by God to punish other nations (Micah 4:11–13).

Babylon is a servant of God used to punish Israel in the last days. Assyria was first used to punish the ten tribes of the northern kingdom (2 Kings 17:5–6). Keep in mind Assyria had its origin as a district of Babylon. God then sent Babylon against Judah; the Jews were cast out of His presence (2 Kings 24:24). It was both the Assyrian and Babylonian custom to remove captive peoples to new locations. Judah, like Israel, was removed as a direct result of the will of God (Jeremiah 20:4–6). God even assisted the enemies of His own people in order to fulfill His purpose (Jeremiah 21:1–10). The ancient Israelites, as well as most of their descendants, failed to realize corrections in life must be made before it is too late. God's mercy and tolerance do have an end. If corrected by God there is a way of coming through, providing one accepts God's purpose for punishment. What God decrees will come to pass, as those who have criticized and brutalized His servants have come to realize (Jeremiah 32:1–5, 26–28; 34:1–3; 37:1–10). Those who refuse to accept the necessary punishment are decimated (Jeremiah 19:1–10; 43:7–13). God purposed to give Judah over to the Babylonians, to break down the government, to remove national identity (Daniel 1:1–2, Ezekiel 19:9–14). For this, Babylon was well rewarded (Ezekiel 29:17–20).

Israel and Judah, as we have seen, were punished for their disobedience toward God. An examination of Ezekiel 23 reveals that God's people were heavily involved in various practices of the occult and had borrowed their religion and social customs from the Babylonians. As a type of what is to occur in the last days, this chapter portrays the present time period. This historical record shows that Israel and Judah were punished by Assyria and Babylon because they refused to walk in God's statutes and judgments; they served pagan gods; they forsook the covenant their forefathers had made with God; they practiced an evil and profligate lifestyle; they supported a false ministry because of what they wanted to hear; they permitted and encouraged leaders who were hypocritical and who had double standards; they incorporated paganism into their national religion; and, they refused to be corrected or to accept the punishment God decreed. See 2 Kings 17:8–20, 2 Chronicles 33:11–17, Jeremiah 22:8–10, 13–30; 25:1–11; 29:20–23, 30–32; 34:8–22; 35:11–17; 40:2–6; 44:1–30; 52:1–3. Prophetically, these conditions also apply today.

Israel and Judah were not the only ones punished for their sins. God used Babylon as an instrument to punish many wicked nations (Jeremiah 27:1–8). Babylon became "the hammer of the whole earth" (Jeremiah 50:23). By virtue of His authority, God gives lands and peoples to whomever He pleases (compare Acts 17:26 and Deuteronomy 32:8 with Jeremiah 27:5, 7; also Daniel 2:36–38 and Acts 1:6 with Acts 3:19–21 and Isaiah 63:17–19).

Babylon of the last days is characterized as the world's dominant force (Revelation 17:1–2, 18). Whatever the time period God chooses to punish the people of the earth, it is important that these captive people respond properly. The historical record demonstrates that it is necessary to accept the existing situation and learn to live with it, to accept the decreed punishment not seeking deceptive justification (Jeremiah 29:1–19). In the appointed time, God will restore His people, as the historical type demonstrates (Ezra 1:7–2:2, 5:11–13, Jeremiah 25:11).

Babylon Destroyed Forever

Babylon, the instrument of punishment in the hands of God, will in turn suffer the wrath and punishment of God. When God's people realize who they are and come to their senses, God's purpose for Babylon will be complete. It will then be Babylon's turn (Psalms 137:1–9). In the great and terrible Day of the Lord—the time period when God will begin to punish the nations of this earth—God will turn the nations against Babylonianism and the whole of Babylon will be destroyed (Isaiah 13:1–22; 21:1–10). Remember, it was after the seventy-year punishment upon Judah that Babylon was destroyed. God will do judgment upon Babylon as the historical type reveals (Jeremiah 51:47). Revelation 15 through 17 shows the final judgment upon the whole Babylonian system. In these texts we see the seven last plagues of God; the people of God liberated; man's continued resistance to the punishment of God; Satan's attempt to deceive the world by means of miracles and wonders; Babylon destroyed; and the judgment upon the woman who sits astride Babylon. Many Old Testament prophecies attest to the manifestation of Babylon during the last days. Isaiah 13 is a good example, as is Isaiah 47. The reader should have little difficulty in noticing the parallel with Revelation 17–19.

The destruction of Babylon will be complete. The Bible uses various expressions in the Old Testament type to describe the finality of the destruction of Babylon. In Jeremiah 51:2, the land of Babylon will be completely emptied. Total desolation is decreed in verses 25–33. Complete ruin is described in verses 37–44. Babylon will go into a perpetual sleep according to verses 53–58, which is a Bible description of death. Babylon shall sink as a stone cast into the water (vv. 60–64). When this occurs the international reaction will be that of total shock (Jeremiah 50:46; 51:47, Revelation 18:15–19). All vestige of Babylon is wiped out and no one will come to her aid (Isaiah 14:21–23).

Babylon, chosen by God to serve His purpose, failed to understand the limit of that purpose (Jeremiah 50:23–24). Even though Israel is to be punished, it is not God's intention to destroy His people. Babylon, in resisting God's purpose, must be destroyed (Jeremiah 51:5–11). Her enmity against Israel goes far beyond the correction God intends (Jeremiah 51:34–36). Babylon has ruled with unrelenting anger (Isaiah 14:4–11). She brutally punished Israel (Jeremiah 50:17–18). The evil purpose against Israel and Judah will have

to be limited (Jeremiah 51:48–52), the enmity against Israel abated, as we have seen in Jeremiah 51 :34–36. Babylon has manifested her arrogance against Israel and all the nations of the earth (Isaiah 47:6, Revelation 18:7–9). God's punishment upon Babylon will be measure for measure (Jeremiah 50: 14–15). Babylon has assumed authority beyond what God decreed (Isaiah 47:7–8, Revelation 18:7–8). Babylon made all nations subscribe to her concepts (Revelation 14:8), concepts embraced by the educational systems of this world, which according to God are "brutish," that is, stupid (Jeremiah 51:17). God's purpose and plan will not be thwarted(Isaiah 14:24–27, Jeremiah 50:11–13).

God's purpose for His people Israel has never changed; Israel is to be the possessor of all the earth (Romans 4:13). The ultimate fulfillment of Romans 4:13 is seen in Romans 2:28–29 and Matthew 5:5. But Babylon attempts to accomplish its own eternal inheritance by means of an empire of authority and rebellion against God (Isaiah 14:4–6). The real ruler of Babylon is Satan (Isaiah 14:12–14). Daniel 7 relates the long history of Satan's attempt to create a permanent empire, which in part will exist in the last days (Daniel 2:41–43); but this final empire will not be cohesive and will not last long. It will think to hold Israel captive forever (Jeremiah 50:33–34). But, like its predecessor of long ago, it will have to learn that disrespect to the will of God can be catastrophic (Daniel 5). It is God's purpose to use Babylon to punish His people, not to change His ultimate purpose for them. God will not share His glory with any nation (Isaiah 46:9–11). The historical lesson of Daniel 4 must be impressed upon modern Babylon, as she must recognize she was raised up for God's purpose, not by her own power. The nations who were once a part of Babylon will turn against her (Isaiah 13:3–4, Jeremiah 51:27–28). Internationalism will be forsaken and peoples will return to their allotted homelands (Isaiah 13:14, Jeremiah 51:9). God will yet choose Israel, His chosen people (Isaiah 14:1–3). Redeemed Israel will begin to fulfill God's purpose for the first time; the people will be regathered and enter into an everlasting covenant with God. Israel, once corrected, will be taken out of the land of Babylon (Isaiah 43–44, Jeremiah 32:36–44; 46:27–28; 50:4–8).

God's Kingdom to Stand Forever

Satan, the king of Babylon, has endeavored to establish a cohesive kingdom that could stand permanently. Jesus referred to Satan's kingdom in Matthew 12:25–26. The temptation Christ faced regarding Satan's kingdom was whether Christ would worship Satan in order to receive the "glory" of that kingdom now (Matthew 4:8–10). Christ came to prepare a kingdom that will replace Satan's (Matthew 25:34). That kingdom is the essence of the gospel message (Mark 1:14–15). Men are now being called from the kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God (Acts 26:18). At the appointed time the Kingdom of God will destroy the kingdom of Satan (Babylonianism). Those who have qualified during a life of trial and testing in the true Way of Life will assume command with Christ (Daniel 2:44–45). They will rule with Christ over the nations for a thousand years (Daniel 7:27, Revelation 5:9–10; 20:4). The Kingdom of God is destined to be an everlasting Kingdom. However, Satan's kingdom—Babylon—is destined to be destroyed forever.

Babylon is finished—never to rise again!