

THE FALL OF BABYLON

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First, let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

INTRODUCTION:

The religious and political life of Babylon was started in an act of rebellion against God (Gen 10-11). Babylon is credited with starting the worship of Semiramis, known as the "queen of heaven" (Jer 7:18; 44:17-19, 25), and the worship of her son, Tammuz (Ezk 8:14). Babylon was the mother of many mystery religions which corrupted Israel's walk with God so that she disregarded the Word of God, disdained His way of salvation and deplored his command to be separated from the world. This religious Babylon is the harlot that will strongly influence Antichrist at the beginning of the Tribulation, but Antichrist and his ten kings will destroy her in the middle of the Tribulation and will demand all people worship him or be killed.

In addition to Babylon's spiritual influence for evil in the world, her political influence for evil was equally bad. At the beginning she defied God's command to scatter into all parts of the earth to replenish it after the flood (Gen 9:1). Nimrod gathered the people together to form a city, lest they be scattered abroad to all parts of the earth (Gen 11:4). So God divided their single language into many languages to scatter them to various parts of the earth. Even so, sinful men have determined not to obey God's command and have followed Babylon's example. They have built large cities where sin and crime flourish. Nations are largely defined by the character of their large cities. Now nations are uniting into a one world government. This unity of sinful people is fostered by Satan to promote rebellion against God. This political rebellion against God will end in Babylon in the very place where it all started. At the end of the Tribulation, He will destroy Babylon and cast Antichrist and the False Prophet, its leaders, into the Lake of Fire.

AIM OF THE LESSON:

Instruct the students to be separated from the sins of the world so God can receive them.

God tells believers to come out from the world where the influences of Babylon prevail and be separated from it, not being involved in the unclean things of the world; then He will receive them (2 Cor 6:17).

OUTLINE OF THE LESSON (use the Study Notes to add to this lesson plan as the Spirit leads you):

I. Destruction of Religious Babylon (17:1-18)

A. Her Defilement Described (17:1-6)

Religious Babylon is described as a great harlot who controls the people of many nations (17:1, 15). Over the years she has changed faces many times, but consistently has been against God. She may put on the robes of piety and lead her followers in a semblance of worshipping God, but her real interest is power over the nations. By making alliances with rulers she has enhanced her power, her prestige and her wealth, but this is why she is called a harlot. She has been unfaithful to God and has sought the pleasure of rulers and kings. She is a spiritual harlot. Who is she? She is that great city that reigns over the kings of the earth. (17:18). She is identified with Babylon because that is her birthplace under the influence of Nimrod (Gen 10-11). She is the mother of harlots, that is, false religions have adopted her practices and performed in similar ways in other nations (17:5). Since she is the mother of many false religions, it is likely that she will be able to unify many of these religions into one religion that will work with Antichrist at the beginning of the Tribulation. She is against the worship of Jesus Christ as God. She may agree that Jesus was a good man, a prophet of God, even a son of God, but not the Son of God, that is, God in the flesh. She will be so fervent in her anti-Christ stance that she will be responsible for the death of multitudes of Christians that truly worship Jesus as God (17:6).

APPLICATION: Surely you will not want to be a part of any religious system that is unfaithful to God and kills His people. If you discover that you are in such a church or organization, you must obey God and leave that group or you will be sinning against God by not separating yourself from those people.

B. Her Destroyers Defined (17:7-18)

Religious Babylon will have political power in the revived Roman Empire under Antichrist (first half of the Tribulation) as she had in the political affairs of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. She is a harlot riding on the beast with seven heads (the seven nations stated above) and ten horns (the ten

kings that serve Antichrist in the revived Roman Empire). After Antichrist is raised from the dead, the ten kings and Antichrist will destroy the harlot. Now Antichrist is given sole worship and power (17:16-17).

APPLICATION: You cannot find eternal security in any ecumenical group, because it will be destroyed. You can only find eternal security in Jesus Christ, because He will never be destroyed. Therefore, be separated from any religious group that does not worship Jesus Christ as God.

II. Destruction of Political Babylon (18:1-24)

A. Her Destruction Deserved (18:1-8)

Political Babylon is the kingdom of Antichrist in the Tribulation. It will rule the world through its system of religious commercialism. No one will be able to buy or sell without worshipping Antichrist and receiving his mark on their forehead or hand (cf. 13:16-17). Many will corrupt their soul by worshipping Antichrist so they can prosper in their commercial enterprises. This commercial city is Babylon on the Euphrates River. Antichrist will rule the world from Babylon during the last half of the Tribulation. It will be the political and commercial center of the world, the capital of Antichrist (18:10,16,18,19).

The fall of political Babylon is announced after the destruction of religious Babylon (18:1-2). The reason for her fall was her sin of fornication with the nations (18:3). This sin was done by her law that no one could do business without worshipping Antichrist. The nations were not able to buy or sell without receiving the mark of Antichrist, but when this mark was received it identified these nations with Satan's kingdom and this is their sin against God. For her sin, political Babylon will be destroyed by God (18:4-8).

APPLICATION: You must never sin against God to gain a financial advantage as these nations will do. The desire to be rich is fertile ground for sin. Keep yourself from compromise with the sinful policies of the world.

B. Her Destruction Deplored (18:9-19)

Those who became wealthy through commercial ties with political Babylon will be tormented when they see their source of riches destroyed. The kings of the earth will wail (18:9-10), the merchants of the earth will weep (18:11-16), and the transporters of these goods will cry (18:17-19) when they see the burning of Babylon.

APPLICATION: You must never become attached to the riches of this world. If you wail when they are taken away, it will prove that riches were your god and you deserve to lose them and your spiritual life.

C. Her Destruction Described (18:20-24)

Political Babylon will be destroyed by God to avenge for the death of His servants by Antichrist and the False Prophet. The destruction of Babylon that brings sorrow to sinners on earth will bring great joy to saints in Heaven (18:20). This judgment will be done quickly in one day (18:8). To illustrate this destruction a mighty angel took a great millstone and threw it into the sea where it sunk quickly and could be found no more (18:21). So will it be when God destroys political Babylon. The place that once bustled with activity will be deathly silent (18: 22-23). That is the price for slaying God's people (18:24).

APPLICATION: Those who persecute God's people are wicked people. If they are friends or partners in business with you, separate yourself from them or you will suffer in some degree with them. Lot learned this lesson the hard way.

COME OUT FROM THE WORLD AND BE SEPARATE.