

The Revelation – The Fall of Babylon

Before getting into today's lesson I want to apologize for missing last week's lesson. We had received a referral for our little girl in China and needed to spend the weekend telling people and showing her off. We are praying that we will be traveling in May to bring her home. Please pray that we do.

Now in today's lesson we will look at the 14th chapter of The Revelation. This Scripture says:

- (1) And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.
- (2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:
- (3) And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.
- (4) These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.
- (5) And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.
- (6) And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,
- (7) Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.
- (8) And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
- (9) And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
- (10) The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:
- (11) And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.
- (12) Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

- (13) And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.
- (14) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.
- (15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.
- (16) And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.
- (17) And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.
- (18) And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.
- (19) And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.
- (20) And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

This chapter begins with the return of the 144,000 that were first introduced in chapter 7. These appear with the Lamb, which, of course, is Jesus Christ, for the impending victory. As these are reintroduced we see an angel proclaiming the “everlasting gospel.” The people of the earth are commanded to worship God, who created heaven and earth.

This angel is followed by a second angel which begins to really bring together what is going on here. The destruction of Babylon is complete, the Lamb has come. Now let’s just talk for a few moments about Babylon. Why is Babylon chosen as the kingdom that’s fallen? After all, the Babylonian empire had already fallen long before the writing of The Revelation.

To understand the ending sometimes you have to go back to the beginning, or at least near the beginning. If we go back into the book of beginnings, Genesis, we find the origin of Babylon. Genesis 11:1-9 says:

Gen 11:1-9

- (1) And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.
- (2) And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.
- (3) And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.
- (4) And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

- (5) And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.
- (6) And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.
- (7) Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.
- (8) So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.
- (9) Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

You see, the origins of Babylon is the kingdom of Satan, a one world government. Today we are on the brink of a return to Babylon, a return to a time when the people of the whole earth can communicate with one another.

Babylon is symbolic of a people who have exalted themselves above God. When the people were building the tower of Babel it was an attempt to get to heaven on their own. When the Babylonian empire rose it was at the hands of king who had exalted himself above God.

We are in a society today where self-esteem is considered all important. The problem with this is that people begin to esteem themselves more highly than they ought. People get to the point that anything is OK. We get to the point to where children can't be graded for wrong answers because it might hurt their self esteem. We get to the point to where competitive sports are no longer competitive because somebody has to lose. The truth of the matter is that we're all losers. Without Christ we are nothing. If, though, we put our esteem in Christ we can do all things.

Now I know that there are probably those of you out there who are disagreeing with me. After all, we see many people who appear to be successful in this world who have gotten where they are by esteeming themselves really high. I must ask the question, though, "Are these people really successful?" What is the real measure of success? Is it to hold high political office? Is it to have large amounts of money? Is it to be famous? I would argue that none of these are, of themselves, success. You see, there are many politicians, many rich people, many famous people, many people who would be considered successful by worldly standards, who will open up their eyes in the flames of hell. True success, then, comes in knowing Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

As we're told of this time of judgment God reminds us that we need to be patient. Sometimes when we see the persecution of Christians throughout the world we just wish that God would go ahead and bring down his wrath. God, though, is a God of mercy and grace. He gives every possible opportunity for repentance. Still, Babylon is lifted up, and Babylon must fall.

Now before I close today's lesson I want to talk for just a moment about the fact that just because Babylon is referred to here does not mean that Antichrist will be Babylonian. As a matter of fact, I believe that Antichrist will be Jewish. You see, Jesus told the Jews in John 5:43 that they did not receive him but that they would receive another. You see, as a whole the Jews did not receive Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. Another is coming who the Jews will, by and large, receive as the Messiah. He will trace his roots to David. He will appear, in every way, to fit the Old Testament prophecies. He will deceive many.

Don't be one of those who are deceived. Notice that the judgment on that day is great. Life will be taken. Blood will flow for 200 miles as deep as a horse's bridle. Who is able to stand? Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life. If you've never received Jesus as your personal Savior I want to invite you today to call upon the Lord, asking him to forgive you of your sin and cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and believing with everything that is in you that the death of Jesus Christ was sufficient to cover your sin and that his resurrection is sufficient to give you life. If you've done this today I want to ask you to send me an email at john@intotheword.org to let me know.

Yours in Christ,

Bro. John Rich