

Message Five

The Principle of Babylon

Scripture Reading: Gen. 11:1-9; Rev. 17:1-6; 18:2, 4, 7

I. The principle of Babylon (Heb. *Babel*) is man's endeavor to build up something from earth to heaven by human ability, signified by bricks—Gen. 11:1-9:

- A. Stones are made by God, whereas bricks are made by man, being a human invention, a human product.
- B. Those who live according to the principle of Babylon do not see that they are limited; rather, they attempt to do the Lord's work by their natural ability with their human effort.
- C. The building of God is not built with man-made bricks by human labor; it is built with God-created and transformed stones and by the divine work—1 Cor. 3:12.

II. The principle of Babylon is hypocrisy—Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:25-32:

- A. The significance of Achan's sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment in his seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better, for the sake of appearance—Josh. 7:21.
- B. This was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit—Acts 5:1-11:
 - 1. They did not love the Lord very much, but they wanted to be looked upon as those who greatly loved the Lord; they were just pretending.
 - 2. They were not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God, but before man, they acted as if they had offered all.
- C. Whenever we put on a garment which does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon—Matt. 6:1-6; 15:7-8.
- D. Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride—John 5:44; 12:42-43.

REVELATION

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III. The principle of Babylon is that of not considering herself a widow but of glorifying herself and living luxuriously—Rev. 18:7:

- A. Only those who have fallen would consider themselves not to be a widow—Luke 18:3; Matt. 9:14-15:
 - 1. In a sense, the believers in Christ are a widow in the present age because their Husband, Christ, is absent from them—cf. 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20.
 - 2. Because our Beloved is not here in the world, our heart is not here—cf. Luke 12:34.
- B. Anything in our living which is in excess is luxury and is in the principle of Babylon—1 Tim. 6:6-10.

IV. The principle of Babylon is the principle of a harlot—Rev. 17:1, 5:

- A. Babylon's purpose is for man to make a name for himself and deny God's name—Gen. 11:4:
 - 1. To denominate the church by taking any name other than our Lord's is spiritual fornication—cf. Rev. 3:8.
 - 2. The church, as the pure virgin espoused to Christ, should have no name other than her Husband's—2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 1:10.
- B. Babylon means confusion—Gen. 11:6-7:
 - 1. In the church we should not have different kinds of speaking; we should have only one mind and one mouth under one ministry with one unique teaching for the one Body—Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:2; 1 Tim. 1:3-4.
 - 2. When we are in our mind, we are in the principle of Babylon; when we are in our spirit, we are in today's Jerusalem, in which there is the divine oneness—John 4:23-24; Eph. 4:3.
 - 3. We should not dare to have any division because our Husband is one, and we His wife are also one—Matt. 19:3-9.
- C. With the rebellious people at Babel, there was a scattering—Gen. 11:8:

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Five (continuation)

1. In the ancient time all the Israelites came together three times a year at Jerusalem; this was versus the scattering at Babel—Deut. 12:5; 16:16:
 - a. It was by this unique place of worship to God, Jerusalem, that the oneness of His people was kept for generations—Psa. 133.
 - b. Jerusalem not only signifies our spirit but also signifies the genuine ground of oneness, the ground of locality—Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rev. 1:11.
 - c. In order to come out of Babylon, we must be “in spirit, on the ground” (*Hymns*, #1260).
 2. The sin of Jeroboam, who set up another center of worship, is the sin of division caused by one’s ambition to have a kingdom, an empire, to satisfy his selfish desire—1 Kings 12:26-32.
- D. Babylon is a mixture of the things of God with the things of idols:
1. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon burned the house of God in Jerusalem, carried away all the vessels in God’s house for God’s worship, and put them in the temple of his idols in Babylon—2 Chron. 36:6-7; Ezra 1:11.
 2. In the New Testament, this mixture is enlarged with the great Babylon—Rev. 17:3-5; cf. 21:18; 22:1.
- V. The Lord’s call in the book of Revelation is for His people to come out of Babylon—18:4-5:**
- A. According to God’s Word, His children cannot partake of anything that has the character of Babylon—2 Cor. 6:17-18.
 - B. God hates the principle of Babylon more than anything else—Rev. 11:18b; 18:24; 19:2:
 1. Anything which is halfway and not absolute is called Babylon.
 2. We need God to enlighten us so that in His light we may judge everything in us which is not absolute toward Him—3:16-19.

REVELATION

Message Five (continuation)

3. Only when we judge ourselves in this way can we confess that we too hate the principle of Babylon—cf. Rev. 2:6.
 4. By His grace, may the Lord not allow us to seek any glory and honor outside of Christ—John 7:18; 12:26; Phil. 1:19-21a; cf. Exo. 28:2.
 5. The Lord requires that we delight and seek to be ones who are absolute, not ones who are living in the principle of Babylon.
- C. When God judges the harlot and shatters all her work, and when He casts out all that she is and the principle she represents, voices from heaven will say, “Hallelujah!”—Rev. 19:1-4.