

35. The Description of the Fall of Religious Babylon

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the last three bowl judgments that will come upon the earth. We saw that these judgments will have a tremendous impact on the entire earth. In this topic, we will see that the fall of religious Babylon is described.

We see that John was promised by an angel that he would be shown the destruction of religious Babylon. Revelation 17:1-2 says, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.’” Here, we see that it was one of the angels that had one of the seven bowls of judgment that spoke to John about the judgment that would come to religious Babylon. This judgment is called the judgment of the great harlot.

Many times in the Old Testament, fornication and prostitution were used to describe unfaithfulness to God. Jeremiah 3:6-9 illustrates this when those verses say, “The LORD said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: ‘Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these *things*, “Return to Me.” But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.’” In these verses, we see that both Israel and Judah committed adultery with rocks and trees. This spoke of the altars that they made to worship their idols on the mountains and under the trees.

In the same way, the great harlot here, in Revelation, speaks of false religion. Revelation 14:8 says, “And another angel followed, saying, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’” Here, we see that the harlot makes all nations participate in her false religion. Revelation 13:16-18 says, “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.” These verses show that every person will be required to take the mark of the antichrist in order to buy or sell. False religion which worships the antichrist is here described as the great harlot who sits on many waters. Revelation 17:15 says, “Then he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.’” Here, we see that the antichrist and his false worship will rule over the nations with the result that the nations are unfaithful to God. This is spiritual fornication, just like Israel practiced in the Old Testament.

Revelation 17:3-5 says, “So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and

ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” The woman is false religion. False religion, by many people of the earth, was introduced in the Bible in Genesis 11:4, where we read: “And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” This was in direct disobedience to the statement of God to Noah in Genesis 9:1, where we read: “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’” God had to change the languages to stop the building of this tower. This mystery Babylon is not the city (it still existed at the time John wrote). Instead, it is the false religion that began at the tower of Babel.

We see that false religion will be sitting on a bright red beast that is full of names of blasphemy. This red beast is the evil governments of the world. The antichrist will work with the governments as he gains power during the first half of the tribulation. We see that evil governments will be dressed in expensive clothes of bright red and purple. Evil governments will also have great riches of gold, precious stones, and pearls. 1 Timothy 6:10 tells us, “For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” Then, 2 Timothy 3:1-5 adds, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” Here, we see that this love of money causes evil governments and false religions to be religious but to deny the power of God.

At the middle of the tribulation, the antichrist will set up his image. Matthew 24:15 says, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand).” The construction of this image is described in Revelation 13:14-15, which says, “And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.” Here, we see that the false prophet who says worship the beast will tell people to make an image to the beast and then will kill all who will not worship that image.

Once the antichrist sets up his image, worship of the antichrist will replace all other false religions and this worship will become the false religion. We see what the antichrist and his false religion will do in Revelation 17:6-7, where we read: “I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. But the angel said to me, ‘Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.’” Here, we see that the

antichrist and his false religion will be drunk with the blood of the saints. Throughout history, false religions have persecuted the true followers of God. Once Christ died and rose again, this persecution has been particularly focused on the destruction of the saints who follow Christ. This persecution has often been carried out by both false religions and evil governments that deny God.

This same thing will be true in the tribulation. We see that it says that the woman will be drunk with the blood of the saints. This refers to the tribulation saints. Revelation 7:9-10 says, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” Then, Revelation 7:14 adds, “And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’” During the tribulation, religious Babylon will be filled with the blood of the tribulation saints as false religion makes every effort to destroy anything that represents Christ.

We see that these saints are called the martyrs of Jesus. The word translated “martyr” is used thirty-four times in the New Testament. The word is usually translated “witness”. For example, Acts 1:8 says, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” However, this word is translated “martyr” twice in Revelation, and once in Acts 22:20, where we read: “And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.” Stephen was the one who was stoned to death for his faith in Acts 7:57-60. Here, we see that these are the faithful witnesses who will be put to death for their faith in Christ during the time of the tribulation.

When John heard that the harlot and the beast would work together, he was filled with amazement. This amazement was due to the fact that the antichrist will gain world power by pretending to be a friend of religion. Then, he will suddenly set up his image and the people will be required to worship his image. The mystery that John did not understand is how the antichrist and false religion would work so well together to control the whole world when the antichrist will require everyone to worship his image. That ability for false religion and evil government to work together to destroy Christ and His followers was illustrated in John 19:15, where we read: “But they cried out, ‘Away with *Him*, away with *Him*! Crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar!’” We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that false religion and evil government can work together when they are united together against Christ and His followers. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.