***Further Prophecies against Babylon

RV221-02***

We are studying Revelation 18:1-24. Our subject is "Political Babylon," and this is segment number eight.

**The Council on Foreign Relations**

We remind you that Revelation 18 deals with the future destruction of the city of Babylon on the Euphrates River, and along with it, the collapse of the world government and the economy of socialism which will flow from that city. There are powerful forces in the world today that move nations under satanic guidance. Sometimes these people are referred to as the insiders, which is probably a good term. They, in one way or another, control the policies of nations. You have heard about some of those organizations. One is the Council on Foreign Relations. This group has for decades dominated the levers of power in the American government, and they do so today. They are in the Cabinet offices, and they are in charge of the departments of government. Their influence is everywhere. The Council on Foreign Relations puts out a publication, a magazine of information. Those who follow that publication are soon aware of an idea which is enunciated in the Council of Foreign Relations magazine which, within a short time, suddenly pops out as the policy of the United States government.

**The Trilateral Commission**

So, very wisely and correctly, the connection has been made that these men of finance, business, education, and various institutions of American society have a powerful influence. It has an associate organization called the Trilateral Commission, which is the international organization. These two organizations are just some of others that are building a system of economic alliances between nations. And the latest of these was the NAFTA arrangement.

**World Government**

These alliances are for some purportedly good reason. But they all have a bottom line (the ultimate goal) of getting nations to be joining together into a world government. That's what Revelation 18 tells us all about – that there is coming at a time when the world will be united under a government under one man.

This ultimate goal has been in the past disguised. Now it is more openly declared. It's called the New World Order. The agency for bringing about such a world government is the United Nations. So, every effort is now being pressed forward to give that United Nations increasingly powerful capacity, including to come to the point where it militarily is superior to all nations, so that its will might be imposed.

That is exactly where you would think the world would go if the Bible is true. This world government will be, of course, controlled by the insiders who themselves will gain enormous wealth under a system of world socialism: people under governmental control; people dependent upon government; and, people who are in charge, pulling the levers of power. The objective is ultimately for mankind to be fully dependent upon government, and to have to look to government for its needs to survive. This is the world that will exist under the antichrist. The Bible says that he will decide it all – what you can buy, and what you can sell, and all aspects of your life.

Now the United States has a big problem in such a scenario, obviously. We are a nation which was born in Christian principles; a nation which is structured upon personal freedom and independence; and, a nation that is built upon private property ownership that gives the individual freedom to do what he wants to do within the confines of law. Something has to be done, obviously, to bring the United States down where it too needs to be dependent upon a world government, and to be willing to be part of such a system. The insiders have now, for decades, systematically, been planning this kind of a collapse of the American economy to finally drive into an international association.

I want to give you a little bit of a background, because I think that will make the Scriptures considerably plainer to you. For decades now, since World War II, the United States Congress has, year-after-year, increased the national debt. This has being driven by the Socialist Party of the United States and its philosophy of government care and provision of the people. 100 new congressmen went to Congress this year, and everybody said, "Now there are going to be changes. These people want to stop this growing national indebtedness." But nothing has changed. Increased taxes have come back. The national debt is growing. The deficit each year is greater. That makes the debt greater, so that nothing is changed.

How could this be? Doesn't matter what political party is in control. The results are still the same. It is because there are controls behind the scenes ultimately driven by Satan to achieve what he thinks is going to be the millennium that he could create without God. Recently, there have been publications by prominent economists (men who have a tested track record of proven reliability in their estimates of the economic situation of the world and of the United States. They shocked the economic community by coming out with a conclusion that declared that the American dollar will have a tremendous fall in its value within the next 23 months. This will be a fall of the American dollar that has continued now for years, where even in your lifetime, you could buy so much more with a single dollar than you can today.

Within your lifetime, there was a time when the American dollar was so strong that it took something like four or four-and-a-half deutschmarks, which is a very strong currency, to equal one American dollar. Today you only get one-and-a-half deutschmarks for an American dollar. In a short span of time, our dollar has been deliberately undermined in its value.

What these men indicated is that by 1995, the American national debt will have grown beyond the government's ability to control its expansion. It's like a nuclear reaction. You can bring the material together that will cause a reaction, and you can control it, unless you go beyond a certain point. Then you can't control it anymore. It goes beyond your capacity to control. What these men are saying is that the conditions have now been brought about, by the international financial forces, such that the American dollar will become of such little value, and the debt will grow at such an astronomical rate that it will be an explosion out of control.

The interest payments, they have pointed out, to the bankers who hold the United States notes, will be larger than all that the government will be able to collect in income taxes. Do you understand that? By 1995, the interest payments alone will be larger than all the money that the government collects from income taxes. How will you pay for everything else?

**The National Debt**

Here's the historical progression: In 1964 for Lyndon Johnson became president of the United States. At that time, the total indebtedness (the national debt) was $316 billion. That was 1964. By the time President Reagan left office, the national debt had climbed to $2.6 trillion, and the interest payments to the bankers from whom the government had borrow this money was $214 billion each year. Remember that 1 trillion is 1,000 billion. So, this is an astronomical figure. To say one trillion, you can't even grasp that number. And a billion is 1,000 million. That's an astronomical figure, and $214 billion is just the interest. By the end of 1990, the national debt of the United States had risen to $3.3 trillion, and the cost of the interest was $259.9 billion. That's only a few years ago.

You can see the progression. Since the time of Lyndon Johnson, it has gone steadily upward. The debt has become bigger and bigger, and the interest rates naturally have climbed with it, because the interest rate is where the insiders make their big money. The interest payment in 1990 was the single largest cost of government after Social Security and defense. It was the number three largest cost of government. First comes defense; then Social Security; and, then paying interest on your debt. Can you live like that, personally?

The question is: what if this trend continues? And you can count on the fact that the Socialist Party, which is now in control of the United States, is determined that it will continue. The deficit will be greater each year, and consequently, the national debt will be greater. What if it continues? That's what these economists have put together for us that was such a thunderbolt these past weeks when they made their public declaration of their analysis, and these are men who have always been on target. If this does continue, then by 1995, the national debt will be $6.5 trillion, and the interest costs will be $619 billion. That would be nine times what the government's annual income will be. We're talking about 23 months down the line. Are these men right? Do they know what they're talking about, or not?

Let me bring this to some figures that maybe you and I can relate to. Suppose that you have a person who makes $50,000 a year. What will happen in 1995m in relationships to government debt and government income, would be as if you, making $50,000 a year, had an indebtedness of $450,000 to pay off. That's the comparison. That's where the American government stands. You make $50,000 a year, and you have $450,000 indebtedness to pay off, and you're increasing – you're borrowing more every year.

In 1991, the federal government spent more on its three largest items of the budget (the interest on the national debt, defense spending, and Social Security) than it collected on individual income taxes. That was 1991. It was already greater than what they collected in income taxes from individual people. The surplus then was made up from corporations and other places that paid income tax. All the tax money collected from individual Americans was less than what these three budget items required. So, by 1995, just the interest alone on the national debt will exceed all the tax money collected from individual Americans.

Now, here is the role of the insiders who have been behind this kind of economic destruction of the United States. And what are you going to do about it? You're just going to hope that you're out of debt; that you have resources; and, maybe that the rapture takes place before that. But there is no turning the clock back on what has happened to the American financial picture. The Socialist Party has been in control so long, and the insiders have been able to manipulate so effectively, that the fix is in. When this collapse comes, the United States is going to be so eager to be part of a larger community of nations so that it can have some kind of base of support.

Here's the role of the insiders: The power elite of the insiders, such as in the Council of Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, really run the United States government in every administration. They have the goal of world government under their economic control. These members, as I have pointed out, hold key positions in government and in the president's Cabinet. They hold key positions in the military; in business; in labor; in education; in the financial world; and, in the media. That's why everything is a unified voice. You cannot listen to nightly news or read normal publications and get the straight scoop on what is happening in the United States at any level, in any area. You have to go to outside sources of the conservative publications that give you what is really happening.

**World Government**

The insiders have actually funded and supported Soviet Russia from the very start. If it hadn't been for the insiders, Lenin and Soviet communism would have been done for in his day. But they wanted communism as a tool to unite the world eventually with the United States in a socialist world government. World government begins by increasing control over the citizens by the national government. You cannot have a world government unless you have national governments which so control the citizens, such that the citizens are so dependent upon the government, that they are willing to do whatever the government demands of them.

**National Crises**

The government has gone about achieving this control by creating crises, and then they pass a government program to solve each crisis, which only makes things worse. Among the crises that we've heard about are: hunger; homelessness; education; health care; and, environment is the current one. Please remember that after the 18th Amendment was repealed, which was the Prohibition Amendment, that all the Al Capones and all the hoods, who had been making profit off selling illegal alcoholic beverages, went into the labor unions. They all shifted into the labor unions as the base of their criminal activity. That's why you would constantly hear the head of a labor union (and the head of the Teamsters Union) constantly being sent to jail, because they were the chief crook for the criminal element of organized crime which controlled the labor movement. They got out of alcohol, and into labor.

Well, all of communism and socialism, you should understand, has moved into the environmental movement. The environmental movement is the agency by which they are seeking to bring about the same controls and denial of freedom upon every individual American. So, the environment is one of the big crises that they've created.

Crime control is another one. We now have a five-day waiting period nationally to be able to purchase a weapon, and, of course, we have no more crime now. So, government created the problem, and it gave us the solution.

The national industrial policy (the government) now wants to decide which businesses should stay in business, and which businesses should receive special favors from the government so that they can have subsidies to prosper. We have free trade; foreign aid; and, humanitarian adventures, such as in Somalia and Bosnia and Haiti, none of which is any of our business really. We have the right to privacy so that we can slaughter unborn children. We have sex education so that we can break down the morality of our young people. We have family structure with single parents and working mothers. Everything is being done to get women out of association with their children.

It is increasingly rare today to find parents who grow up with their children. The parents aren't there. The parents are only periodically in touch with their children. And suddenly, the children are grown and gone, and the parents have only had spotted contact with them, because the mothers are out working and the fathers have other interests. And we end up with single-parent homes, and now homosexual homes as families. Every government social program is ultimately a grab for power by the insiders to push the United States into a new world order. You should understand that the latest government grab for power, to take over one-seventh of the nation's economy in health care, is the latest grab for government power to create a dependency of citizens upon the government. It has nothing to do with getting health care. We have great health care. It has got nothing to do with ensuring that people who need health care get health care. Everybody in this country gets health care. You cannot be denied it at a hospital when you need it. It is a grab for power over citizens by the insiders.

This buildup of Russia has been systematic to create a united socialist world. This was begun actually in World War II, where the insiders were able to manipulate the decision-making at the highest level of the military, and of the governments which were making these decisions. One of the decisions that was made was that the Eastern European nations should be placed under Russia's control, and that Berlin was to be placed deep inside of Russian territory. Berlin was not to be made a central point from which the four major powers would have their areas of control, with all of them in contact with Berlin. Instead, Russia's position was given Berlin in the heart of its territory, so that Russia had to be dealt with. That was the point. Russia, which was tottering on its last legs after the war, had to be dealt with.

When I traveled a few years ago in Eastern Europe, city after city I would come to, and I would see these great monuments, and on them were written praises to the glorious soldiers of Russia who had liberated these countries. And they left behind their monuments of liberation. This was deliberately done to put Russia in the power position of those Eastern European nations, which have now finally broken away from that horrible system of communism.

**The World Needed another Superpower**

Russia was an ally of Hitler, and when Hitler double-crossed Stalin, instead of some wise heads in the United States saying, "Let the two kill each other off, and let them finish each other off," the United States, under our socialist president, Franklin Roosevelt, said, "No, we must help Russia." So, we gave enormous amount of military supplies and other things so that Russia could survive, and we asked nothing in return. What was the reason for this? We needed another superpower. The insiders had to have a balanced position to match the power that the United States would have.

The American army was restrained from going up the Italian peninsula once they had broken free. The landing had been made. Churchill said, "Let's go through the soft underbelly of Eastern Europe, up through the Mediterranean. Let's go up to Italy, and we'll be right into Eastern Europe. We'll be right at Berlin, and the war will soon be at an end."

However, Churchill was finally outvoted completely by Roosevelt and Stalin, and the decision was made to make the landings at Normandy. General Mark Clark, who was the operating commander in the Italian theater, said it was a great mistake to pull the American forces down and to stop them, and to bring them to a halt, instead of letting them go up into the peninsula, right into the heart of the German-controlled territory of Eastern Europe. General Eisenhower restrained the American army from reaching Berlin when they could easily have done it. They were well on their way. This was a great frustration to George Patton. Churchill wanted to go right in, but Eisenhower told him to stay out: "You let the Russians take Berlin, and it will be deep in their territory. Russia was being set up to be a powerful figure that could not be ignored. General George Patton was on the verge of taking Prague, and he was told to stop so that the Russians could have it.

The insiders did all of this, in one way or another, setting up a structure of power in the world. For what? Ultimately to bring down the national sovereignty of the United States, and to make it compatible to a new world order.

General George Marshall produced the plan, which was approved by President Roosevelt, for the appeasement of Russia after the war, so as to not arouse her hostilities, and the supposed threat of war. Russia was no power and no threat to the American people, which now possessed the atom bomb.

This arrangement, again by the insiders, was executed by providing billions of dollars to Russia in various forms, which she in turn spent on buying things from the corporations that the insiders possessed and controlled. So, the American taxpayers were making these financial giants enormously wealthy. The insiders, of course, controlled Russia and the Soviet Union without American loans, or communism would long since have collapsed since World War II. So, the insiders controlled Russia, and they also took care to see that Russia was so backward that she could not develop her natural resources, so that she could become prosperous and not need their beneficence.

When the insiders were ready for the next move toward world government and a new world order, they set in motion forces that brought about the disintegration of the Soviet empire. This couldn't happen just because people got fed up. People were fed up for a long time. You could not make a move under that police state. It was finally brought about by movements of the insider power structure. So suddenly, the Soviet Union disintegrated, and now the United States is faced with being the only invincible power in the world. It will be the final agent of Babylon. It is the United States now which is on the docket for being brought to its knees.

Babylon here, in Revelation 18:7, confidently declares that her royal position and power are such that she is not a poor, helpless widow type. Babylon sees herself as the mistress of a world government. She says that she will never have occasion to have sorrow, and the world today is moving toward an aristocracy of unlimited wealth which controls all nations and their leaders. And their confidence indeed is as unlimited as the harlot declares in verse 7.

This little bit of background is just very brief and very shallow. But I want you to know that Satan is not some nincompoop. He's not some incompetent. He is in control of his world. And he has brought about, through men who are willing to be manipulated for the personal gain, and who are men who are part of human viewpoints, kingdom-of-the-world thinking. He is using them to bring about his ultimate goal of the world empire under the antichrist.

In Revelation 18:8, "For this reason, in one day, her plagues will come." On account of this, referring to the harlot's blatant arrogance in verse 7, God deals with us always on the basis of how we act, for blessing or for discipline, for the degree of punishment and hell, or for the amount of reward in heaven. He deals with us on the basis of what we have done. So, here He deals with Babylon, the source of the two great evils of idolatry and of government tyranny. For this reason, in one day, her plagues are going to come upon her. This phrase "in one day" stands first in the Greek sentence. When you do that in the Greek, that's for emphasis.

What this is telling us is that the end of the world order that is now being built by the insiders, and which will come to ultimate fruition under the antichrist, is going to come to rapid destruction in a short period of time – perhaps literally in one day. ... A day will dawn when the antichrist and his worshipers will get up, and they'll begin what they think is just another happy day of domination and power. They'll begin that final and fateful day with their usual arrogance of self-confidence that they are invincible. They'll have no thought that, by sunset, that city of Babylon on the Euphrates, with its idolatry and religious system, and its political economic structure, will be a pile of ashes. It's hard even for us to imagine that. Can you imagine the city of Dallas, within a matter of space of a few hours, being a fireball that turns into a pile of ashes as everything crumbles?

**Belshazzar**

This indeed is reminiscent of the destruction of the ancient empire of Babylon at Belshazzar's feast. God has given a preview of that in what he did at Belshazzar's feast. I think it's appropriate that we remind ourselves of that, and review that in Daniel 5. Belshazzar, who has followed Nebuchadnezzar as king of the Babylonian Empire. It was an empire which was sure that it could not be shaken. It was an empire which was devoted to every abomination; every wickedness; and, all of the things that are happening in the world today.

Daniel 5:1: "Belshazzar the king held a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the 1,000. When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, in order that the king and his nobles; his wives; and, his concubines might drink from them." They're in the banquet hall. They're having a wild, drunken orgy. And it comes to Belshazzar's mind: "Hey, bring all of those gold and silver chalices and vessels and all that stuff that my father took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought here to Babylon before he burned to ashes the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple.

"Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem. And the king and his nobles; his wives; and, his concubines drank from them. They drank the wine, and praised the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone."

This is unmitigated arrogance. These vessels have been used in the holy service of the almighty Creator God. Here, they used them to practice their Babylon religion of idolatry, and they drank toasts to praise their idol gods. These people aren't afraid of anything. They are sure that all that religious stuff is a bunch of bunko.

Verse 5: "In the midst of the hilarity of the room, suddenly, the fingers of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lamp stand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace. And the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing. Then the king's face grew pale, and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack, and his knees began knocking together. The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans, and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon: 'Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me, shall be clothed with purple, and have a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom,' for they could not read (they could not understand) the words that were written on the wall." Here, suddenly, this hand had come, and very slowly had inscribed on the plaster of the banquet hall these words.

"Then all the king's wise men came in, and they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king. Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed. His face grew even paler, and his nobles were perplexed. The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles. The queen spoke and said, 'O king, live forever.'" (Is that ever going to be a failure of good wishes?) "'Do not let your thoughts alarm you, or your face be pale. There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, illumination, insight, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans, and diviners. This was because an extraordinary, superior knowledge and insight; interpretation of dreams; explanation of enigmas; and, solving difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king name Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned, and he will declare the interpretation.'"

So, here again, as with the case of young Joseph, previously, in another era, somebody says, "I know someone who has a contact with a real source of divine power, and who can interpret what is written on the wall.

"Then Daniel was in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, 'Are you that Daniel who was one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? Now I've heard about you, that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight, and extraordinary wisdom has been found in you. Just now, the wise men and the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription, and make its interpretation known to me. But they could not declare the interpretation of the message. But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you're able to read the inscription, and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple, and wear a necklace of gold around your neck, and you'll have authority body as a third ruler in the kingdom.'

"And Daniel answered and said before the king, 'Keep your gifts for yourself, or give your rewards to someone else. However, I will read the inscription to the king, and make the interpretation known to him.'" This was not a very nice way for Daniel to talk to the ruler of the world empire of the day. But Daniel had had it up to his craw with the world system, and he was an old man now. Therefore, he was no longer trying to be very diplomatic. So, he told Belshazzar what he could do with his gifts. But he said, "I'll tell you what it says:

"O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory, and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. Because of the grandeur which he bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations, and men of every language feared and trembled before him. Whomever he wished, he killed. Whomever he wished, he spared alive. And whomever he wished, he elevated; and, whomever he wished, he humbled."

Daniel reminds Belshazzar that anybody who is in political authority is there because of God. He reminds what a powerful man his father Nebuchadnezzar had become because of God's sovereign decision. And then he reminds Belshazzar that his father made the typical, arrogant, human mistake of thinking that he was something god-like.

"But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from the royal throne, and his glory was taken away from him. He was also given to mankind, and his heart was made like that of beasts. And his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind, and that He sets over whomsoever He wishes."

Belshazzar knew all of this. This was common, royal history. And they knew what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar, and how God had brought him back to his senses, and how Nebuchadnezzar recognized that Daniel's God was indeed the only and true God.

Verse 22: "Yet, you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart even though you knew all this." Do you want to explain why children reared in godly insights do not follow that, but drift off into the world – children who have every opportunity to know this God and what is right, and have been given caution and warning and instruction? Then eventually they exercise their volition, and they make the decision, and they go for God and their heritage, or they go against it. If they go for God, they are prospered and they are blessed because they have been given truth. If they go against their heritage and their training, and they go against God, then disaster will come upon them. Their lives will fritter away into a useless triviality.

Verse 23: "But you, though you knew all of this, have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven, and they have brought the vessel to this house before you. You and your nobles; your wives; and, your concubines have been drinking wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear, or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life breath and your ways, you have not glorified."

Revisionism always brings you to spiritual insanity. Everything is reversed. Here they're praising these dumb idols have no life, but the God that Belshazzar knew had life, as he learned from his father's experience, he has treated with contempt with the very vessels used to worship that God.

"Then the hand was sent from Him, and this inscription was written out." This is the inscription that was written out: 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.' This is the interpretation of the message: 'Mene' – God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. 'Tekel' – you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. 'Peres' – your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians."

Belshazzar must have wondered about this. He knew that the Medes and Persians were not his friends, but he was so powerful militarily that he didn't consider them a problem. What he didn't know was that they were outside of the city wall, and they were digging under the wall. They had diverted the river, and they had now constructed a passageway under the wall so that they weren't going to have to charge those city walls or the gates or anything. And that night, the Medes and Persian army came pouring under the wall of Babylon. This is what Daniel was telling them.

"Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple, and put a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him, that he now had authority as third ruler in the kingdom. That same night, Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was slain. When the Medes and Persians came in, they dispose of Belshazzar suddenly."

Now the point I'm making, in reading this extensive passage of Scripture, was that when Belshazzar woke up that morning. and looked forward to the drunken orgy party he was going to have that night, to enjoy indulging all the abominations and sins that were his lifestyle, the last thing that was in his mind was that not only he would be dead, but that his whole kingdom would no longer exist, as the Medes and Persians fully conquered the Babylonian empire.

"So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of 62."

The antichrist and his worshipers, in like manner, we're told here in Revelation, are going to wake up one morning and begin their day to have another day of evil enjoyment, not realizing what was going to come upon them by the end of that day.

**The Rich Young Fool**

Certainly, this concept is also illustrated by the sudden and unexpected demise of the rich fool of Luke 12:16-21, when God's grace of opportunity ends. This rich fool said, "I've got so much wealth, I'll have to build some more barns. I'll have to find some more banks to keep it in. I'm going to store it all up, and I'll be sure I'll have enough. And I'm going to lean back and say, 'Now, enjoy yourself. Have a happy life.'" And God says to him, "You fool, this night your life is going to be taken from you. Then whose shall these things be that you've accumulated?"

So, this same scenario of sudden and speedy divine judgment is to be played out against the antichrist near the end of the tribulation with attendant sufferings. Revelation 18:8, I remind you, is dealing with the literal city of Babylon on the Euphrates River. That city is currently being restored and rebuilt by Saddam Hussein of Iraq. This city is under God's special wrath as the source of idolatry and religion and political tyranny based on socialism.

As the serpent was used by Satan, and Eden was brought under the curse of God, so, in a similar way, this city, which has been used by Satan to bring idolatry and government tyranny into the human race, will be destroyed by God as a statement against her. For this reason, in one day, in suddenness, her plagues will come. This refers to the seven bowl judgments that we have read about in Revelation 16. These have been poured out on mankind in the final weeks of the tribulation era, and Babylon has been belted by the plagues like all the rest of the nations have: malignant sores; saltwater turned into blood; freshwater turned into blood; intensified heat from the sun; total darkness; the Euphrates River dried up; and, devastating earthquakes with huge 100-pound hailstones. Those are the plagues that God has brought against this city.

**Pestilence**

There is also pestilence. The word "pestilence" is the Greek word "thanatos." That actually is the word for death. It's translated "pestilence" because the death here is particularly produced by disease. That's what pestilence is. You can probably understand the drying up of the Euphrates River under the sixth bowl will cut off Babylon's water supply. That in itself will bring death to many. The parched vegetation will die. It will decay. The dead fish in the dried up river will rot, and they will cause disease. Shortages of drinking water and of food will become widespread. So, pestilence (disease) will become rampant, and the people of Babylon and the surrounding areas will die from that.

**Mourning**

Then he said that there will be mourning. This is suffering which is caused by the plagues and the diseases. This causes emotional trauma. That's what mourning is. People are gripped with fear. There is no help coming from the government. There is no help from outside areas, because outsiders are afraid of what they see happening to Babylon. They're not going to come near. So, here these people are now in an intense emotional trauma: "Who's going to help us?"

It's like during the political campaign at one of the debates between the presidential candidates. This gentleman from the east with a ponytail on his head got up and said to the candidates, "We Americans are your children. What are you going to do about us?" And I said, "First, we're going to cut off your ponytail, buster, and stuff it someplace appropriately on your being." Here was somebody saying, "Government, please take care of us." And Americans are sitting there listening to this is an example of American thinking.

Now, here's Babylon, who has been supplying everything, and people are dependent on her, not only in Babylon itself, but around the world. Now there is great sorrow, and there is mourning. There is nothing for them to fall back upon.

**Famine**

Then the last plague is famine. People are starving for lack of food; with the lack of water to grow crops; with the loss of fish life; and, being cut off from outside supplies. Famine is going to spread like wildfire. The loss of river traffic will cut off even supplies by that means. Pretty soon, people are going to be in the desperation of not having enough food to eat. Will they start eating each other? The Jews did, in 70 A.D., when they were surrounded by the armies of Titus and the Roman Empire, before they finally broke through. The Jews Did started eating their children. The Jews started eating each other. They turned into cannibals. People who have nothing to eat become very desperate, and who knows what will take place.

Here is Babylon, who took such pride in her luxurious lifestyle. Now she's grubbing in the dirt for any sustenance that she can find. Is God making a statement? What a statement this will be! What a bringing down of the arrogance of this horrible nation of the antichrist's world government (the structure of the antichrist), and of this city which has been the source of such evil upon the human race.

Do you know what's crazy about this? There are people in positions of authority today that believe that idolatry is the way to go. Most of the human race still worships idols with those demons behind them. What is crazy about this is that political powers still believe that it is the role of government to provide for the care of people, and to create social programs, and that government can do things better than people can do for themselves. God says, "No, that's not true. It's not My way." But the forces of our world thumb their nose at the government, and they pass another social program. They just pass that off as some crazy, bigoted notion. No, it's not. This is what God is going to bring against Babylon because she is guilty of idolatry and governmental tyranny.

For this reason (her arrogance that she will never come to morning; that she will never be a poor, helpless widow; and, that she will be royalty in charge), in one day, the plagues will hit her; the disease will become rampant; and, there will be great emotional trauma. In a few days' time, she will suffer famine. This is something that will take place over a period of time (a short period, but over a period of time), and it will get worse and worse.

However, that's not all. God has not finished making His final dramatic statement against Babylon, and we should look at that as our next session.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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