



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Zechariah 5:5-11

“The Woman in the Ephah”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] This morning for our Scripture reading, I'm asking you first if you will, to turn with me to the first book of the Bible, the Book of Genesis chapter 10, where we will read three verses and then chapter 11 where we shall read a few more before we read in Zechariah. Genesis chapter 10 verses 8 through 10. Now you will remember that in Genesis chapter 10, Moses gives us a genealogical table of the nations. And in the midst of it there is this very interesting reference to Babylon,

“And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”

Particularly, I wish that you would notice that the term that is given here for the area of Babylonia is the term, Shinar. Now will you turn to the 11th chapter, and we read beginning with the 1st verse,

“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 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. (By the way, in case you are wondering where Shinar is, it is in the present day land of Iraq. As a matter of fact, the Sheikdom of Kuwait or Kuwait, where we have so much oil, that too, is in ancient Babylonia.) And they said one to another, come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 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. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people are one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be withheld from them, which they have imagined to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they ceased building the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from there did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.”

Now let's turn to the prophecy of Zechariah, and we read Zechariah chapter 5 verse 5 through 11. Zechariah chapter 5 versed 5 through 11,

“Then the angel who talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, what is it? And he said, this is an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, this is their resemblance through all the earth. And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, this (that is pointing to the woman) this is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth of it. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women,

and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Where (or whither as your text has it) Where do these bear the ephah? And he said to me, to build for it a house (Now notice these words) in the land of Shinar: for it shall be established, and set there upon its own base.

Now, if I may this morning, I want to turn to one final passage for just a few verses. It is in the last book of the Bible, Revelation chapter 18 and verse 1. Revelation chapter 18 and verse 1. For those of you who were here when we looked at the book of Revelation over a period of one winter, you will remember that when we came to the 17th chapter of the book of Revelation, we spent five mornings on the subject of Babylon. We looked particularly at the 17th chapter, in which we have that vision of John of the scarlet colored, of the woman who sits upon the scarlet colored beast. And we discussed the things that the 17th chapter set before us. And when we came to the 18th chapter you will remember that we discussed the history and also the future of the city of Babylon. Now the first few verses of the eighteenth chapter describe for us the fall of the future city of Babylon,

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was made bright with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are grown rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

May God bless this reading of his inspired word, let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Our gracious God and heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the great truths that are found written in thy word. We thank Thee for these chapters which are devoted to the great enemy of the city of God, the city of Babylon. And we thank Thee for the clear warnings which Thou has given to us of its abominations, its idolatries and the iniquities that have flown from it's rebellion against Thee. And we thank Thee too Lord, that Thou has warned us in Thy word, that thought Babylon the city is no longer with us, Babylon, the system is. And we pray O God, that as we seek to follow Thee, through the teaching of the word, that we may not have anything to do with the abominations of that city.

We thank Thee for the day in which we live, and for the thrill of seeing some evidence of the consummation of the ages. And in these difficult and critical days, give us wisdom and guidance to direct our steps in accordance with Thy word. We know Lord, it is not in man to direct his steps, we need the counsel of divine wisdom in the word of God. And so Lord we look to Thee for Thy guidance upon us. We pray for this assembly of Christians, and we ask O God that Thou would direct us in a way that will mean fruitfulness for the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for Caleb, the man of God who said to Joshua, with regard to the place of Hebron, “Give me this mountain,” and Thou didst give him that mountain.

And Lord we pray for this church, that Thou will give it a place of witness and testimony in the day in which we live. We thank Thee for the past, we give Thee praise and thanksgiving for it, and we pray Lord, for a greater and brighter future. We pray particularly that Thou would direct us in these very critical months that lie just before us. Enable us to walk closely to Thee. We thank Thee for everyone present and we pray Thy blessing upon them as the ministry of the word is undertaken. Minister to us, Lord in a

personal way, and meet all of our needs. For we make our prayer in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

[Message] Today our subject, as we continue our exposition of the book of Zechariah in the light of current events, is the woman in the Ephah, the vision that we read in our Scripture reading. We touch today, too upon one of the most important, one of the most astonishing and yet most neglected subjects in the Bible, the subject of Babylon, its origin, its persistence and its ultimate, cataclysmic destruction under the hand of God at the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now as we have been looking at the 5th chapter of the book of Zechariah, I made the comment last time, that God has two methods of dealing with sin. The first method is the method of grace. That is God deals with us in grace in the gift of his son, our Lord Jesus Christ. If we wish grace, that is if we wish to be dealt with in that way, God does that for us, because he has given his son to die for us, and our sins have been taken by him and through him we may be justified. Now it is wonderful, of course, to know the fact that God deals with us in grace, and we as Christians, we attempt to extol the Lord and to exalt his name, because of that fact. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God not of works, lest any man should boast.” But we also pointed out that God has another way of dealing with sin, and that is the way of judgment. If we do not respond to the grace of God in Jesus Christ, the word of God tells us that we then must face the judgment of God. And there is a great deal in the Bible about the judgment of God. Now in the earlier chapters in the Book of Zechariah, as we have been looking at the visions that he has been given, the stress had been upon the grace of God, because he was outlining the glorious future of the nation of Israel. In the 5th chapter, he has turned to the other side of the coin, and has stressed the fact of judgment. He has in the first vision of Zechariah chapter 5 in the vision of the flying roll, or scroll, symbolized the removal of sinners from the land. You’ll remember the vision of the roll, upon which was

one of the commandments, upon the other side of which was the other commandment, the two of them samples of the entire code of the Ten Commandments, which was God's method of dealing with men, bringing them to judgment. And so the vision of the roll was designed to show that theft and perjury, the two sins which were typical, theft and perjury would someday together with all of the other sins of the broken commandment would be rooted out of the land of Israel in order that that land might ultimately be what so many call it today, which it is not, the holy land.

Now in this vision that we are looking at today, the woman in the ephah, we have symbolized in this vision, not the removal of sinners from the land, but the removal of sin itself from the land, in order that that land might be the holy land. Now you noticed that as we read through the Scripture in Zechariah 5, I called attention to the fact that the statement is made in the 11th verse, that the ephah was to be taken from the land, and that there was to be built for it a house in the land of Shinar, that is, in Babylon. “There it shall be established, and set there upon its own base.” Now I do not think that we can understand this vision of the 5th chapter of the book of Zechariah unless we have very plainly in our minds the teaching of Genesis chapter 10 and 11 on the subject of the city of Babylon as well as the teaching of chapter 17 and 18 of the book of Revelation, on the teaching of Babylon.

So today, in order to gather together the entire subject of the city Babylon and its use in Scripture and its importance, I want to very briefly, look at all of the phases of it which we find, and relate this passage today to the whole picture of the subject of Babylon. So let's take our Bibles first of all and turn back to Genesis chapter 10 and chapter 11 in which we have the origin and nature of Babyloniaism. Now the father of the city of Babylon and the father of the system which grew up in that city, the great hero of the Hamitic civilization, was a man whose name was Nimrod. Now we are approaching the fall, and every man in this room who is a hunter has at one time or another heard the word nimrod. In fact, you probably have

heard someone call you Nimrod. Now you may not have realized it, but that was a terrible malediction to refer to anyone by. For Nimrod, it turns out from the standpoint of the word of God, is the father of this Hamitic civilization which is characterized by rebellion against God. The statement is made in the 8th verse of the 10th chapter, “And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD.” The word Nimrod comes from the Hebrew word marev which means to rebel and so Nimrod is the rebel. And as a matter of fact, in order to confirm this as the chief characteristic of the man, the Targum Jonathan which is a Aramaic paraphrase of the Old Testament, used by the Jews, in the exposition and the reading of Scripture, the Targum Jonathan translates the ninth verse not, “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord,” but “he was a mighty rebel before the Lord.” Now the story of Babylon is simply this, that the city of Babylon is the source of organized rebellion against God. It was here that there was first originated the idolatrous church state institutional embodiment of the society of Satan. Now let’s look at the 11th chapter and see exactly what characterized this early city. We read in the first verse,

“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 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. And they said one to another, come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. (Now of course, this is artificial material, and many have made a point over the fact that this city was constructed out of artificial material. One does not know how far to carry some of these things that you discover in the word of God, and so I just mention that for your consideration. The important thing for us is the 4th verse,) And they said, come, let’s 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.”

Now in order to understand this 4th verse, we must remember that God had given the early inhabitants a revelation of his plans and purposes for them at this time. And he

had distinctly said to them, and you will remember it from your reading of the word of God, that they were to spread out over the whole of the earth, they were to be fruitful and multiply, and in a sense to possess the land which God had given to them. The idea of “lest be we scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” then is diametrically opposed to the command of God. He had told them to spread out. And so now as they move toward the east, they gather around the city of Babylon under the leadership of the rebel, Nimrod. And they say first of all, “Let’s build us a city and a tower, let’s make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad.” In other words the purpose manifested in this ungodly conspiracy was unity.

Furthermore, the program which they devised was a program of united effort, and finally the principle that dominated them was human glory. May I say that again? The purpose was unity, the program was united effort, and the principle was human effort. Not divine glory, “Let’s make us a name.” In a sense, what we have at Babel then is one of the first attempts to bring a kingdom of God upon the earth. So it is a counterfeit kingdom, it is a kingdom in which man is at the center in stead of God. “Let us build us a city.” Now a city was a place of fellowship, what they wished was not a civilization that spread out over the earth, but a civilization that gathered together in one spot. One world, united in one faith.

Now I’m going to have to say something about this because that’s not so obvious, but you see every city in ancient times had its own faith. It had its own pantheon; it had its own system of gods. Often times the gods were gathered were arranged and organized under presbyteries, if I may put it that way. Because there was one great system and then each city had its own particular presbytery under the general assembly of that particular god. Now Mr. Blum is sitting in the audience this morning and of course he looked up and smiled at me very kindly, as you know some of you he’s the pastor of the Bethel Independent Presbyterian Church, in Huston, and I want to say I have nothing personal Ed, it just so happens that that’s my background too, and this organizational set

up is most suited, and actually most apt to explain the organization of the gods in these early days.

So what we have then, in Babylon, is a one world order united in faith, one faith. This faith would be directed toward the step pyramid the tower of Babel which would be erected in that city and whose god would be worshipped on the top of the step pyramid or the ziggurat. So we have then, a city which was the fellowship. And you'll notice they say, “Come let us build us a city whose tower may reach unto Heaven and let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the earth.” Five times in this one verse, there is a great stress upon man. Now instead of having the hope of a city whose foundations have been constructed by God as Abraham and the patriarchs have, their hope rests in a city which exists here upon the earth, and a city which is designed to be the expression of the fellowship in the worship of a false god.

The second thing that they want to construct is a tower. Now this is the relationship, for you see, the step pyramid or the ziggurat, of ancient Babylon, and by the way we have uncovered many of these in the east, and some have even thought that they have uncovered the ziggurat which was originally the tower of Babel which was later rebuilt. At any rate, it was a common thing in the east to see the step pyramid, and you have seen pictures of them. They were constructed generally speaking as squares, and then each as the pyramid ascended higher, each particular story was smaller than the other until finally the top was reached which was flat. And ordinarily on the top, there was an altar to the god that was worshipped in that place. So the tower expresses a relationship. It expresses the relationship of the continuity of Heaven and earth. It was their way of expressing the fact that earth and Heaven are one. Or philosophically, it was an expression of the great continuity of being, that is that man and God are essentially one.

The Hebrew text of verse 4 says, “Let us build us a tower whose top shall be with Heaven.” Again, I'm not sure how far I should take that, because it may be simply an

idiom. But nevertheless, the expression of the tower was the expression of a unity with Heaven. Now, of course, again, that is diametrically opposed to the revelation of the word of God. For you see in the earlier chapters of the earlier chapters of the book of Genesis, specifically the 3rd, it had been pointed out, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that since the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden there was a discontinuity between Heaven and Earth. Man is under sin, man is under judgment, and man is not looking for a city of God upon the earth constructed by men, but a city of God constructed by God which he shall bring to pass upon the earth. So the relationship expressed by the tower is a relationship of rebellion.

Then they say, “Let’s make us a name.” Now this expresses the worship. In the early days men called on the name of Jehovah, we read in the 4th chapter in the book of Genesis that that was their worship; they called upon the God who had created them, whom they had known by revelation. But now they want to make for themselves a name that is they want to have themselves as the ultimate source of definition, and source of meaning. Now let me just for a moment, point out exactly what this really means, this means let us be our own savior, let us have our own messiah, let us have our own god, we have forgotten about the God Jehovah. Now we want to make our own name. And the name or the Shem was the source of definition.

And finally, they say, “Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth.” The peril is no longer apostasy, and that always is really the peril, the peril for this civilization that existed in Babylon was disunity. Let me say that again, because it’s important. The peril in their mind was not apostasy, not disobedience to the word of God, the peril was disunity. Today you know we hear the shriek of the politicians and the ecclesiastics, I can still hear the tones of the voice of one outstanding politician who constantly said during the last campaign, “Let there be no division.” Now this is the same thing that the ecclesiastics are mouthing too, for the one thing that man wants is a unity,

but not unity in the revelation of God, a unity in mankind, because he does not see any higher good than the dignity of man.

And so the politicians shriek about unity, and the ecclesiastics talk about unity, and now we are erecting a great union of churches not only Protestant churches, but Protestant and Roman Catholic, and not only Protestant and Roman Catholic and now there overtures toward Judaism and ultimately, the Bible says, that there shall be comprehended within this great unity all the religions of the earth, as man constructs a new Babylon, a new Babylon of unity in mankind. Now ecumenicity which of course we're all familiar with for it's all over the pages of our newspapers, seeks no real union in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. I must say this for the World Council of Churches; at least they have a doctrinal statement that says we believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, and they mean by that that Jesus Christ is God.

But the National Council of Churches in their doctrinal statement, do not even make that clear. In other words, it is possible for churches to unite, and unite under a banner which does not clearly state the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. How is it possible for us to have a Christian organization if we do not acknowledge the deity of the Lord Jesus? For if he is not God, there is no such thing as a trinity of deity in unity, and our Lord Jesus does not belong in the trinity, and if we do not have a trinity, we surely do not have anything Christian. And so the National Council of Churches with its desire to unite, but not in the revelation of God, is opposing the truth of God, and what we have is no real union in Christ, but a union in mankind. No union in the revelation of God, but a union in human opinion.

Two years ago I was in the city of Miami, and they were having an interfaith seminar in the city. Some of the Roman Catholics with some of the Protestants were getting together with some of the Jewish leaders. And in this seminar, the Jews were given an opportunity to express their views, and then the Roman Catholics and the Protestants were given an opportunity to reply. And Rabbi Brickner of Judaism first spoke

and he said that there were six things that Jews could never accept concerning the Lord Jesus. Among them were such things as that Jesus was the Son of God, that atonement was through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead, that the Lord Jesus was the mediator between God and men, that he was the true messiah of the Old Testament. Now it seems obvious that there can be no biblical uniting with those who proclaim doctrines such as these. And yet, at the conclusion of the meeting, many said that they now felt a great deal closer to Judaism. Some qualified it by saying, at least intellectually, as a result of the interfaith seminar. But you see those things are designed to surrender the basic fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Now here in Babylon we have the first organized attempt to rebel against God, so that Babylon in the word of God is the symbol of human autonomy, human independence, it is the symbol of idolatrous defiance of God. It is the mystery of iniquity which is at work in the world. And so Babylonianism which had its beginning in the city of Babel, is not dead at all, but Babylonianism as the whole of the word of God testifies to, is very very much alive today though the city itself does not exist. Now this is very important, but now we're going to move on to the history and mystery of Babylonianism. Jerusalem had been the choice of God from the earliest times to be the home of the truth, and I guess you have noticed that as you have read the word.

As early as the 14th chapter of the book of Genesis, there came this strange man by the name of Melchizedek to bless Abraham. Melchizedek, whose name means the king of righteousness, was the king of a city by the name of Salem. Now Salem is the old name for the city of Jerusalem, and he was a priest of the God most high. In other words, God began as early as the times of Melchizedek to institute in the city of Jerusalem, ancient Salem, a worship of the true God. Now we know that as we read through the Bible and God chose Abraham and ultimately established the children of Israel in the city of Jerusalem, and set up the worship of God there that Jerusalem was the place that God

had chosen. And furthermore as we read on through the word of God, we discover that there is to be a New Jerusalem, a heavenly Jerusalem.

In fact the Bible concludes with the story of how God is going to perform his will in the establishment of a new heavens and new earth with a new city of Jerusalem upon that earth. Now if you also read through the Old Testament, you will discover that Babylon is the natural and persistent enemy of Jerusalem all through the Bible. And it is into Babylon when the children of Israel rebel against God that they go for captivity. Babylon stands throughout the word of God as the persistent enemy of the revelation of God. It stands as that which symbolizes defiance against God. Babylonianism is the system that refuses the revelation of God in the word of God. If Jerusalem is the home of the truth, Babylon is the home of apostasy. The first time that God ever said, “Babylon the great is fallen is fallen!” is in Genesis chapter 11 when he came down to confound the people and destroyed the city. The last time that God shall speak, “Babylon the great is fallen is fallen!” is when he destroys the human civilization of the antichrist in the last days before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I'm not going to say anything this morning about the political mystery of Babylon. You know its story, the city had two great peaks of influence in the ancient world, it ruled the ancient east twice. And after the fall, after it was taken in five thirty-eight or five thirty-nine B.C. Babylon survived as a city into the Christian era. In fact there are references to the city of Babylon as late as the fourth or fifth century. Today if you were to go to the place where Babylon is by the side of the Euphrates River in the country of Iraq, and you were to go along on the railroad there, you would see a little sign that says, “Babylon, Halt.” And then a few other words in English and Arabic which state that if you want to go to the little village nearby this is the place that you get off. There's just a mound there, nothing but a railroad stop.

But the religious mystery of Babylonianism is another matter, as a matter of fact, the earliest religion originated in the city of Babylon. Babylon is the home of the religion

that is anti God, and that religion which began in the city of Babylon has moved out to the east, to India it has moved over into Persia, it ultimately came to Egypt, by way of the Phoenicians perhaps and finally to Greece and to Rome by way of Pergamum. The chief characteristic of the worship of the city of Babylon was the worship of the virgin goddess and child.

Now Hislop, the book to which I referred in the series that I gave on Babylon, has written a book called *The Two Babylons*. This is a very remarkable book, and certainly do not want to say that everything in this book is true. It so happens that some of the book cannot be verified so far as I know, but in general, I think the thesis which Mr. Hislop maintains is a correct thesis. That is that the origin of the false religion which has finally spread over into the Western world now is Babylonia. Hislop makes an attempt to trace it back to Nimrod's wife and Nimrod's son. And that the worship of Semiramis and the son born of her is ultimately Babylonianism. Let's just for a moment trace what Mr. Hislop has said in his book, for I think it is generally in general true. Mr. Hislop maintains that in the earliest days, the religion of Babylonianism arose with the worship of the woman Semiramis, and the child Tammuz who was born of her. There is in this story, a great deal that is probably tradition, but essentially it is this that Semiramis became the object of worship of Babylonians and that Tammuz, her son became the object of traditions which ultimately are related to our traditions of Easter and even of Christmas.

That the worship of the virgin goddess and her child finally spread through Phoenicia where of course Semiramis was known by the term Astarte the son by Tammus instead of Tammuz, down into Egypt where we have the same thing with the worship of Isis and Horace her son. There is some confusion in some of the texts of Isis and Osiris her husband, but nevertheless in general, that is the story. This religion also spread over into Greece and the worship of Aphrodite and Eros, and finally into Rome in the worship of Venus and Cupid.

Now we know that the way by which this ultimately came to Rome was through the city of Pergamum. There was a man by the name of Attalus III who was the king of Pergamum, and he was responsible for the introduction of the Babylonian mystery religions into that city, and in fact, he himself, or by that time the high priests of the cult had been known as *Pontifex Maximus*. And finally when Attalus died, history tells us, and this can be verified very easily, Attalus willed his empire to Rome. And as a result of this, the Babylonian religion, together with some other factors we don't have time to talk to, if you remember, and I know you don't remember, many of you were not even here, but I mentioned four ways where by Babylonianism came over into Rome, that religion came ultimately to the city of Rome. It's not surprising at all that Julius Caesar took to himself the title, Pontiff X Maximus. It is not surprising, by the way that term means the greatest bridge builder, it is a token of mediatorship between men and God. And it's not surprising at all that today one of the titles of the Pope is Pontiff X Maximus.

For you see, the Babylonianism of the ancient world has made its way through Pergamum and the east, through Egypt, on over into Rome, and ultimately, at the time of Constantine, came to be identified with the Christian religion.

Now you know the story of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, the monarch of the Roman Empire died, leaving the question of succession in dispute. The leader of the forces of the West marched with his army toward the leader of the forces of the East, and near the little river in northern Italy where there was a bridge called the Milvian bridge, these armies bivouacked over against each other waiting for the battle the next day. This man Constantine, who had had some contact with Christianity, that night made a vow, he said if he won the battle, he would become a Christian. Now later tradition has added a great deal to this, some say he saw a vision of the cross in the sky, and that on this cross, of under this cross, there was the Latin inscription *in hoc signo vinces* which means, “By this sign you shall conquer.” The stark fact remains, Constantine

made a bargain with some supernatural power, to join the church organization if he won the battle.

Now that's very much like so many people do today, they say, "I'm going to give a tithe, and if I give a tithe, then Lord, if you bless me, I'll keep on giving the tithe, or Lord if you bless me, I'll give the tithe." To make some kind of vow with God in order to gain some personal advantage, and that's exactly what Constantine's vow was. It was a vow to gain the Roman Empire, and he was willing to sacrifice his conscious and sacrifice everything else for it. Well succeeding events would indicate that this bargain was not made with God but rather with Satan. Because it so happens that Constantine while he was quote, converted, was not really converted. Gibbon I know was an arch foe of Christianity. But this was what Gibbon says of the first quote Christian unquote emperor, "The sublime theory of the gospel made a much favor on his heart then on his understanding." As he gradually advanced in the knowledge of truth, he proportionally declined in the practice of virtue, and the same year of the reign in which he convened the Council of Nicea was polluted by the execution or rather murder of his eldest son.

The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world and the Greeks who celebrate the festival of the imperial saint seldom mention the name Constantine without adding the title, equal to the apostles. The priests of Rome had before been paid by the Roman treasury, and all of the false religion that existed in that city, Babylonianism brought to it's climax there, had been supported by the money paid by the Romans into the treasury. But now you see when the head of the Roman Empire has become a Christian, what do the priests of Babylon do? Well they immediately hasten to their baptisms, and so they are baptized. And as a result of that, Babylonianism came into the Christian church.

Now if you think that this is something that I have dreamed up, let me also read for you the testimony of John Wesley. This is what Wesley says, "I've long been

convinced from the whole tenor of ancient history, that this very event, Constantine’s calling himself a Christian and pouring a flood of wealth and honor upon the Christian church, was productive of more evil to the Christian church than all of the ten persecutions put together. In other words, if you study ancient history, you cannot help but come to the conclusion, that one of the worst things to ever happen to Christianity was the introduction of Babylonianism into the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And it was accomplished most completely when Constantine made this vow to the god of this age who is Satan and not God, and there brought into the church all of that evil influence which so wrecked the church of God for so many years.

Now I wish I had time to talk about all of the evil that come from Babylonianism, there are at least thirty institutions in the Christian church which can be traced back to Babylonianism. For example, the doctrine of the confession, that is Babylonian, that is not Roman Catholic, that is Babylonian. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration; that is not Church of Christ that is not Lutheranism that is not Roman Catholicism that is the doctrine of Babylonianism. The doctrine of infant baptism; that is not Christian that is Babylonianism. The doctrine of purgatory, that is not Christian; the Roman Catholic Church is not responsible for purgatory, if you know anything about ancient literature, you know that purgatory is found in Plato, and as a matter of fact, we have more in Plato than we have anywhere else. We also have it in Virgil, and the Roman Catholic Church has borrowed it from Virgil and Plato who in turn derived it from the ancient East, it is Babylonianism.

The practice of kissing the toe of the pope, that is not Roman Catholic, that is Babylonian, the Druids in Brittan kissed the toe of their high priest a thousand years B.C. This goes back long before the time of the Roman Catholic Church. The incense, the practice of the use of incense in the Christian church, this is not Roman Catholic; this is Oriental, Roman, Pagan. The early fathers of the Roman Catholic Church regarded it with superstitious horror. The idea of burning incense in the Christian church, and they died

for refusing to handle it. The early church fathers did not like the use of holy water, that is pagan, that is Babylonianism, and it has come into the Christian church. And I could go right on down, the prayers for the dead, that is not Roman Catholic, that is something that was in existence far before that time. Ovid tells us that when he prayed for the soul of Antisees the custom was strange in Italy. It was in existence long before that time.

It is amazing how much has come from Babylonianism into the Christian church. We have accepted it because it is customary, we have failed to realize that it is Babylonian and represents a rebellion against God. There was a Roman Catholic in the time of King Henry VIII whose name was Lenaysur. He had not been acquainted with the Bible, but he was a very very strong Roman Catholic. Some one once gave him the Bible, he began to read it, and after he had read in it a good while, he threw it aside and he said, “either this book is not true, or else we’re not Christians.” He at least had faced the fact. Now that is the story of Babylonianism. Let’s

now turn for our last few moments to the book of Zechariah chapter 5. For here we have one of the two great passages that show the return of the system to the mother city and it shows the return of the system to the city, and the result is a vast religious and commercial political empire which shall control the world. But the Bible states that it shall be destroyed, the religious arm first, and then finally the political arm when our Lord Jesus comes at his Second Advent. The teaching of Zechariah chapter 5 versed 5 through 11 I can very quickly give for you, because this happens to be a very simple vision if we understand these other things that we have been talking about.

Now Zechariah is told by the angel who talked with him to go forth, and he is told to lift up his eyes and to see “what is this that goeth forth. And I said, (Zechariah says) what is it? And the angel said, this is an ephah that goeth forth.” Now an ephah is an object for measuring dry goods, as a matter of fact, it is the largest Jewish measure for dry goods; it contains about eight gallons, over a bushel. It is a symbol of commerce, obviously. Now Israel when they had been in Babylon, had been a pastoral people, in

Babylon they learned what it was to become a commercial people, and they came out of Babylon, and became commercial people. The Jews today, control a great deal of the money markets of the world. If you wanted to float a big international loan, and the Jews did not wish that you should float it, you would discover very quickly, that it would be very very difficult to get that loan floated. They have a tremendous control over the international money markets, I'm not talking about the money markets in Dallas, or the United States, I'm talking about the big money markets of the world. They have been a commercial people since the days of Babylon, now there is nothing wrong with being a commercial people, there's nothing wrong with controlling the money markets of the world. As a matter of fact, just privately, I kind of wish that I controlled them myself, but I don't. I merely point this out to show you that they are a commercial people.

Now then from this however arose the sins of theft and perjury. And Amos you remember speaks about having the ephah small and the shekel great. That's the practice you know of the present day of weighing your thumb when you weigh the goods on the scale. I heard of a Christian, a man who became a Christian, he was a merchant man, in the old days you can remember, you used to go in the stores and you'd buy your whatever it was and they would take it over to the measure and measure it. Measure out a pound or two pounds or whatever it was, and he said that when he became a Christian he stopped weighing his thumb. Now these sins of theft and perjury arose, commercialism became dominant in the land, and the sins of commercialism. Now then he says this is their resemblance through all the land that is this is the story wherever you look. Literally it is this is their eye throughout the land all the land.

“And behold there was lifted up a talent of lead.” That is off the top of the ephah, a heavy talent. Now a talent to was a commercial figure, and so the talent of lead was lifted up, and, the text says there was a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. Now ladies, this is nothing personal, but in the Bible, a woman is the symbol of the system of evil religion. Now I asked my wife last night, I wasn't going to say anything without

asking her, I said, “Why do think that the woman is a symbol of evil religion?” And she gave the right answer, she said, “It’s because of Eve, no doubt.” And I think that’s why. The Lord Jesus speaks in one of his parables about a woman who took three measures of leaven. In other words, this is a symbol of evil religion it is a symbol of rebellion against God. And so the woman is in the ephah the token of the two are godless commercialism.

Now Zechariah lifts up his eyes and he sees two women and the wind was in their wings. Now I do not know for certain the identity of the two women. One of my commentator friends has said the identification of the two is apostate Christianity represented by one and apostate Judaism represented by the other. Perhaps, we don’t have time to deal with the details of why that might be a logical interpretation, but they had wings like the wings of a stork. Now we think of a stork as the animal that brings babies, but there is something else that is more characteristic of a stork. I am told, and I am not an expert on storks mind you, but I am told that there is one thing characteristic of this migratory bird, which all who have studied it know. And that is its characteristic to go back to its old nest which it had before. It likes to return to its own nest, Pliny for example writes about this characteristic many hundreds of years ago. And so the women have the wings of a stork. And they lift up the ephah between earth and heaven, and Zechariah is puzzled by this and he says, “Where are they taking this godless commercialism?” This symbol of evil religion identified with commercialism. And the answer comes, “To build for it a house in the land of Shinar and it shall be established and set there upon its base.” In other words, godless commercialism so characteristic of the last days, so characterized by rebellion against God, not that commercialism is wrong, but that commercialism today is often carried on apart from any recognition what so ever of God, and thus is in rebellion against him. It is to be carried back to Nimrod’s city and there to be set upon its base and established at that place.

Now when we turn to the book of Revelation, we discover that the city of Babylon shall exist, and that the city of Babylon shall be the home and capital city of the beast, the

antichrist, and there, from that place he shall carry on his activities. The teaching of Revelation chapter 17 and 18 confirms this, because there we have the final overthrow of human rebellion, Religious rebellion first, political identified with it, second, in the home of Babylon, there in the last days. Now I do not have time to talk about the greatness of Babylon and the greatest of the trade and commerce which shall be carried on there. And I do not have time too, to speak about the relation of commerce and evil. We have had a statement, we have had a saying for a long time that, “corporations have no souls.” I do not necessarily agree with that, there is nothing wrong in having a corporation, there is nothing wrong, as far as I can tell, in a corporation getting bigger and bigger. John Kenneth Galbraith notwithstanding.

But still the facts remain that often the kinds of activities carried on by our giant corporations do not have any relationship whatsoever to the teaching of God’s word. And perhaps you do not realize how much the life of this country is controlled by the giant corporation and as a matter of fact, the things that you hear over radio, and the things that you see on television, generally speaking are determined by that which our giant corporations desire that you hear and see. You know that of course, you do not have the opportunity to hear other things, because our civilization and our society is governed, may I put it directly, it is governed by greed. Of which we all partake.

Now the Christian of course must learn to look at these things in the light of the word, he must recognize that there is nothing wrong in commerce, there is nothing evil in carrying on business, but he must realize that the theory that the only thing the world lacks is the correct economic system and the free trade of nations, that is not going to cure the heart of man. That may make life much better for all of us, and we surely are grateful in the United States for the standard of living which we have. But we know of course, that men’s heart can not be touched by economics, that basically man’s need is spiritual and not economic. And so then the Bible teaches that ultimately Babylon shall

be rebuilt, the kingdom of the beast established there, godless commercialism a part of it, rebellion against God shall reach its climax in the future.

I know that someone says there is no city in Babylon today. That’s true. Some archeologists believe that the little village of Hillah is Babylon; it may be located at one of the hills of ancient Babylon. I personally am persuaded that it is, but I can not prove it. But it really doesn’t make a whole lot of difference; do you know anything about the area where Babylon was located? Well last week I went over to delta in Mississippi, I was amazed; I looked at cotton such as I have not seen in years. I looked at soybeans such as I’d never seen, being a city boy. At least I guess I’d seen them and not paid any attention to them. But the land over there is tremendously productive, and the farmers are enjoying the fruits of the land which God has given them in that part of the state of Mississippi.

Did you know that the land of Babylonia is one giant delta? Did you also know that in Kuwait at the head of the Persian Gulf, we have one of the greatest concentrations of oil that we have in the world? Did you know that right around the Persian Gulf the top of the Persian Gulf which was in ancient Babylonia that we have forty percent of the world’s supply of oil? Did you know that in Iraq, there were three great fields? One of them is by the border of Persia, one of them is in the headwaters of the Tigris River, and the other is on the Euphrates River. Did you know that Arnold Toynbee, in his book, *Civilization on Trial*, said that from his study of history, he had become convinced that the civilization of the future would be built up in the vicinity of ancient Babylon?

Now of course as I say, Babylon is not built today. But as far as I can tell, the word of God states that that part of the world is going to have a tremendous future. And if you read tomorrow in the paper, that a little community has been established in the vicinity of ancient Babylon, or perhaps if you read that the Gulf American Oil Company or the Shell Petroleum Company has now decided to build a refinery and a few other things near the site of ancient Babylon, you can know that perhaps God is laying the foundation

for the fulfillment of prophecy. But the spiritual thing is the important thing I want to leave with you. Babylonianism represents a system of rebellion and defiance against God, you can never really know what it is until you read God's word, and become acquainted with the teaching of God's word.

But God says very definitely to every believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, “come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” For as John the apostle puts it in his little book, The first Epistle, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols” or keep yourself from Babylonianism, keep yourself from human religion, and keep yourself in the revelation of God, who gave his Son our Lord Jesus Christ to be our Savior to save us from our sins and to give us everlasting life. May God speak to your hearts, May you receive Christ as your Savior and flee from Babylonianism for ultimately it shall be judged by God. May we stand for the benediction?

[Prayer] Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father who gave him as a sweet smelling sacrifice for our sins, the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit be and abide with all who know him in sincerity. And O Father we pray that Thou would deliver us from Babylon and Babylonianism, and enable us to with a true heart, resting upon the doctrines of holy Scripture look for the city that hath foundations, the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the city whose builder and maker is God. Go with us this week with Thy blessing. For Jesus' sake. Amen.