

Where Is The Beast? (Part 12)

The Conclusion: Babylon's End

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This sermon is going to be the last one of this series that began with a search for the Beast, not the Great Harlot of Revelation 17 and 18. I was looking for the Beast because it neither was very evident at that time, nor is it at **this** time, that Europe is forming into the Beast as we expected.

In the first two sermons of this series, but especially the first, I gave quotes from a great number of then current news releases from both American and European journalists as things then stood, that a United Europe was an impossibility. They have been forming now for almost fifty years, and they still are not together. There are simply too many individual national interests to satisfy for unity to be produced at this time. I made the statement that for a resolution of these difficulties to occur in *my* lifetime, it is going to take some miraculous events to force them to drop their fears, and come together.

Today the outlook is even more muddled. At a meeting in the past month, those framing of a proposed constitution rejected the demand by some members that there be an acknowledgment within the constitution's wording of Europe's Catholic Church heritage. This is important to this sermon. Europe has been deemed to be Catholic in religious matters for over 1500 years. With the rejection of any official acknowledgment of that long expanse of time, it is clear to this point that the movers and shakers over there are declaring that the "**new**" Europe is to be officially secular.

The euobserver.com web site, from November 28, 2003, had this to say in an article titled "*Christianity debate divides as much as ever*" :

The question about whether to include a reference to Europe's Christian heritage in the Constitution has left member states as divided as ever.

A little later in this article it said:

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini defended the idea by saying that there is "no contradiction between the two". [The idea being one that is joined *with* Europe being declared as being Catholic. The Italians are on the side of **including** a reference to Europe's Catholic heritage, but at the moment, the draft Constitution text speaks about drawing inspiration from

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the cultural religious and humanist heritage of Europe.]

France and Belgium have traditionally objected most strongly to any reference to Christian heritage; they were joined on Friday by Denmark, Finland, and Greece.

Again another quote, this time from CNSNEWS.COM from July 16, 2003, which was quite a bit earlier.

According to recent findings by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, sponsored by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 59 percent of Americans identified religion as an important part of their lives. In contrast, 11 percent of the French, 14 percent of Russians and 33 percent of Britons said religion was important to them.

I want to draw your attention to how low the figures are when compared against the United States.

Picking up a little bit later in this article is a conclusion.

"Europe is decidedly a post-Christian society," said Dr. Richard Lessner, executive director of the Family Research Council's American Renewal Project. "Faith is far less important in the daily lives of Europeans. Their institutions are not rooted in a particular faith point-of-view. They are thoroughly secular societies, with a very different national history from the national history of America."

So, ?with these things hitting the newspapers, ?**where is the False Prophet?** Not only is the political figure known as the Beast not arising, neither is there any sign of the religious figure to support him. Now if the Catholic Church is the great false church and the "great harlot" of Revelation 17 and 18, and the pope is its leader, where are they? Where are the miracles the false prophet is prophesied to perform in the sight of the Beast? How are they working together to bring about a political union? The answer is, at this time, they are not.

During even a more recent summit meeting, the acrimony over other portions of the proposed constitution, cobbled together by Jacques Chirac, grew to such intensity that

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some are now predicting that though the notion of a united Europe has not been officially dropped, the practical reality is that it appears to be splitting into two groups unofficially labelled as "fast track Europe" and "slow track Europe."

Now "fast track Europe," headed by Germany and France, will lead that grouping which moves ahead aggressively, pulling things together amongst themselves ever more tightly. "Slow track Europe," while still seeking unity, will do so more slowly as they consider the pluses and minuses of their options.

I am going to give another series of quotes. The first one comes from the euobserver.com on December 16, 2003.

A two-speed Europe could spell the 'beginning of the end' for a united Europe.

This is the warning from Austrian agriculture commissioner Franz Fischler, speaking yesterday in Vienna.

After the collapse of talks over the *European Constitution*, French President Jacques Chirac proposed that "pioneering groups" could be established, which could then move ahead at a faster pace than the rest.

But Mr. Fischler warned that such a system could break up into several smaller groups, all acting in their own national interest.

"This would be the beginning of the end of a united Europe," he said, according to Austrian paper *Der Standard*.

"The idea of a united Europe could be sacrificed on the altar of national interest," he added.

"I am concerned that Schroeder and Chirac want to create their own Europe."

Mr. Fischler also said that his country—Austria—would be unlikely to participate in a "pioneering" group.

Although Vienna would have no problems with such a group in the sphere of economic policy, its position on defence and justice would cause difficulties, said the commissioner.

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Furthermore, he believes that the talks on the Constitution will not be able to begin again until after the European elections in June—reflecting a growing opinion throughout the EU.

The following quote is going to be from the *News Telegraph* of the United Kingdom. It was from December 15, 2003. The article is by Ambrose Evans Pritchard in Brussels. Just a very brief extraction from here. He writes:

Efforts to revive negotiations on a new European constitution are likely to be shelved for at least a year after the collapse of the Brussels summit at the weekend led to bitter recriminations yesterday.

"There's not enough political will to find an agreement," he said.

In simple terminology, the issue seems to be over voting power. The "slow track" nations feel that they are being short-changed because their vote carries less weight than the larger population nations, and thus they believe they may be swept by the larger nations into political, economic, or military circumstances they do not believe in. Conversely, there are none of the things presently holding Europe apart that cannot be overcome given the right set of circumstances. However, as I said earlier, it is not coming together **as we thought**, especially within the time frame that we fervently hoped that it would.

I still believe that the Beast will be centered in Europe; however, its configuration may be different from what we have previously considered. It may not be confined within the boundaries that formerly enclosed the old Roman Empire. Though somewhat vague, the clay of the image of Daniel 2—especially the image's feet—**may** be an allusion to Israel, because it seems fairly certain that some Israelitish countries will be part of the Beast.

In addition, Turkey (a Muslim nation—one that was within the ancient Roman Empire) is on track of becoming a full member. And even Israel (the Jews) have publicly quoted it that they are considering membership in the EU. So the search for a clearer understanding of the Beast is somewhat on hold for me until there are further developments. In the meanwhile I will keep watching in order to be alert, and we will end this present search for Babylon the Great with some further consideration of Revelation 17:16-18.

Revelation 17:16-18 And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast;

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these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God has put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

The remainder of the sermon is actually going to be on these three verses. Some of the difficulty confronted when attempting to extract understanding from these two chapters occurs while deciding whether to interpret it literally or symbolically. Now is the Beast written of here merely a symbol of evil, or is it *literally* a group of end-time nations? Is "Mystery Babylon the Great" also merely symbolic, or is it too a literal end-time nation?

We clearly believe the Beast to be a powerful grouping of *real* end-time nations that all cooperate by giving their power to one leader. Now that the Woman and the Beast both cooperate and confront one another is evident from within the chapters. The Woman, through most of the vision, is riding the Beast, thus showing that there are times of cooperation between the two. The Beast's cooperation may be reluctant though, because it has interests of its own to consider. This is made evident when verse 16 says, "the horns on the Beast hate the woman." So everything is not peaches and cream between the two.

Recently, a woman named Ilka Schroeder, a German, who is a member of the European Union Parliament, said that the EU is secretly funding Palestinian Authority terrorism in order to counterbalance American influence in the Mid East. I want you to think about this. Is not Europe supposed to be our friend? Is not the United States of America the one that is primarily funding, assisting, and helping Israel (the Jews) during all that strife down there? And who is it this woman said is funding much of the money—the resources necessary for the Palestinian Authority (the Muslims)—to do their terrorist activities? She said Europe is—the Beast.

Quoting from crosswalk.com from January 5, 2004:

European Union support for the Palestinian Authority against Israel is part of Europe's "hidden war" against the United States to become a world superpower, a European parliamentarian said in Jerusalem this week.

The EU has backed the Palestinian Authority since the beginning of the Oslo process in 1992, becoming one of its main financial supporters and giving the PA hundreds of millions of euros (dollars) since then.

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EU parliamentarian Ilka Schroeder charged that EU backing for the PA [Palestinian Authority] goes beyond support for the Palestinian cause, and is actually part of a secret agenda to gain power in the world.

"The need for a solution only exists as long as the war continues. This is why the EU does not want the conflict to end before it gains [a] major role. And this is why the EU does not wish the PA to give up too early and why the EU is strengthening the PA," said Schroeder.

"The EU is ? stirring up conflict that it supposedly wants to see resolved by financing one side. This is inherently inhuman purpose of EU humanitarian aid in the region. The Palestinians are playing the ugly role of cannon fodder of Europe's hidden war against the U.S. [United States]," Schroeder charged.

Politics makes strange bed fellows.

Now back to the thought of the Beast yielding to the Woman. This is already being shown by political events in this world to be very interesting, to say the least.

Eventually the Beast is going to rear up, throw the Woman from off its back, and destroy her; thus there is also confrontation between the two. In fact one could go so far as to say that at this time the Woman forcefully **uses** the Beast. At the very least she powerfully influences the Beast to do her bidding. This is **one powerful Woman** that is being portrayed here; so much so that even God, who does not exaggerate, calls her "**great**" ten times in these two chapters.

Have you ever heard of a nation burning a mystical spiritual organization or a system with fire? Is the fire too just symbolic? Now much of this issue regarding interpretation here is, where does one draw the line between real (which is physical) and a purely spiritual interpretation?

There is much that leads me to believe that both the Beast and the Woman are national entities. This leads me to consider both as real entities, and not merely symbolical; not one symbolical [the Woman] and the other real [the Beast]. When I examine other prophecies connected to these two entities, I find from those prophecies, when combined with history, that they reveal the Woman and the Beast to be real entities. An example is the prophecy involving the image of Daniel 2.

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Each part of the image of Daniel 2 was a real historical nation in fulfillment, beginning at the top with the head: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and the Roman Empire. The last part—the iron mixed with clay—brings us down to the time in which we are now living. There is nothing mystical about the four beasts of Daniel 2 or Daniel 7, or the he-goat and the ram of Daniel 8. All of them fall into place as literal nations, leading to the time in which we now live.

Now why should we suddenly change our approach in the book of Revelation and say that one is a powerful nation, but that the other is not? Is it because sometimes a woman symbolically portrays a church? Now that is weak, because in the overwhelming majority of places in the Bible "Israel—the **nation**" is symbolically portrayed as a **woman** with whom God symbolically married by entering into a covenant with her. Do you see the connection? In almost every case in the Bible the woman represents a nation. Brethren, even the *church* is **forming** into a nation.

In Revelation 12, the woman in that chapter is clearly shown to be **Israel the nation** that gave birth to the male child. Now since that symbolism is already established in Revelation, why would God suddenly change the woman symbolism just a few chapters later from nation to church, or for that matter, to be merely a symbol of a system? Is there consistency with God? Yes there is.

There is no doubt that the area of the world which the Bible is mostly concerned with, which we call "the *western* world," is under the influence of the Babylonian system. It is the means through which the head of gold of Daniel 2 has influenced the world right down to our time. But that still does not mean the woman cannot represent a nation powerful enough at the end-time to influence even the powerful Beast, counterbalancing **it**, holding **it** in check, and indeed even using it to gain its own interest until God's time has come.

Several times in this series of sermons I have stated that at the end both the Woman and the Beast have unwittingly bought into the Babylonish system—unwittingly, because Satan has deceived all nations, and both are part of the Babylonish system. That the Beast is divided against itself is quite evident. I have just given you all kinds of quotes that show they cannot get their act together to become unified. They are a kingdom divided against itself. But Babylon is also a kingdom divided against itself, and Jesus clearly stated that any kingdom divided against itself will fall.

The Woman and the Beast will cooperate with each other only if their interests are both the same at the time. But at the same time they also compete against each other, as we just heard from that Ilka Schroeder, and they confront each other. In the future, the

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Woman will lose that final confrontation, become desolate, and be burned with fire.

Revelation 17:18 And the woman which you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.

Now how much clearer can God get in His description of the Woman? "Mystery Babylon" is a **great** city. We do not doubt it one bit when God calls Jerusalem a great city. Do you know that God also called Nineveh a great city? He also called ancient Babylon a great city.

How about Jerusalem above—the mother of us all? Is it not literal? Is it not coming down to earth? Is it not great? Does not that great city represent the Kingdom of God? Do you see the clear tie-in between a woman representing a city, and that city representing an entire nation? That is the biblical pattern. God gives us a huge clue right in that verse that the Woman—the Great Whore of Revelation 17—is a great nation; not a church, a nation. We are dealing with a **nation** here, not a church.

In these chapters, the Great Whore Babylon is shown as an economic, manufacturing commercial giant, politically powerful, renowned for its craftsmanship and shipping industry. And when it is destroyed, the businessmen of earth mourn because of fear that nobody from that city will buy their products. All of this is describing the activities of a nation of worldwide power, not a church.

Now how could God possibly call Israel Babylon? How can He justify this, and how can we truthfully interpret it this way? The answer is, in the same way He calls Jerusalem [Israel] Sodom and Egypt. It is not because Israel is *literally* Sodom, Egypt, or Babylon, but because Israel has adopted their ways, has conducted themselves according to the same manners, and has the same beliefs and attitudes about life and its meaning. Israel **embodies** Babylon's characteristics to a greater extent than any other nation on earth since the original passed from existence. The original Babylon no longer exists, as God prophesied back in Jeremiah, but its characteristics permeate the entire world, and Israel **epitomizes** them to the greatest extent of any nation at the end-time.

The word "embodies" means "to represent in material form." It means, "to put into visible or concrete form." Israel represents in material form what Babylon was spiritually. ***Israel puts into visible and concrete form what Babylon was spiritually.***

The original Babylon that was the fountainhead of much of the way of life is gone, but its spirit lives through the **nation** the Great Whore represents. Now what about the word

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"epitomize"? It is somewhat similar in meaning to "embodies." It means, "to be a typical example of." It also means, "to summarize concisely."

I want you to go back with me to a place where we have been to many times in this series, but it is so important to understand the teaching that is in it. We are going to go through verses 44 to 48 of Ezekiel 16 again, because this is what God is talking about here. He is talking about embodiment. He is talking about epitomization.

Ezekiel 16:44 Behold, every one that uses proverbs shall use this proverb against you [Judah], saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.

God is specifically speaking to Judah. He might as well say, "As was Babylon, so is Israel." Now how can I say that? Because of what we are going to see just a little bit later in this.

Ezekiel 16:45-46 You are your mother's daughter, that loathes her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, which loathed their husbands and their children: your mother. [He is saying they are all alike.] Your mother was a Hittite, and your father an Amorite. And your elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at your left hand: and your younger sister, that dwells at your right hand, is Sodom and her daughters.

He is saying they are all sisters under the skin. They are all alike. They are parallel in their activity. They all think the same way. They all act the same way, and it is not the way God wants them to be.

Ezekiel 16:47 Yet have you not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: ?[At first this seems like a compliment the way it is worded] ?but, as if that were a very little thing, you were corrupted more than they in all your ways.

God says, "You not only do the same things they do, you are **worse** than they are at doing what they do."

Ezekiel 16:48 As I live, says the Lord GOOD, Sodom your sister has not done, she nor her daughters, as you have done, you and your daughters.

The point of this charge from God is that Judah's sins were not merely similar to Samaria's and Sodom's, but rather were preeminently worse. Even though Samaria and Sodom were renown for depravity, Judah outstripped both Samaria and Sodom in its wickedness even though Judah considered herself morally superior to either of them. The question is, why cannot God, who obviously compares Jerusalem to Sodom and Egypt in Revelation, also compare it, and thus all of Israel, to Babylon, while somewhat making a kind of mystery of it? Israel's pattern of life, as recorded in the Old Testament, makes no mystery at all of how Israel **became** this way.

Listen to this instruction.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30 When the LOORD your God shall cut off the nations from before you, whither you go to possess them, and you succeed them, and dwell in their land, Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you: and that you enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise.

What we are looking at here is a frequently recurring theme throughout the Old Testament. God warns, "Do not do what they do!"

Look what God says in Leviticus 18:2-4.

Leviticus 18:2-4 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LOORD your God. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein you dwelt, shall you not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall you not do: neither shall you walk in their ordinances. You shall do my judgments, and keep my ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LOORD your God.

So we have warnings against Egypt, (that is, reverting back to it) and warnings against those nations that Israel was going to depose of in the Promised Land: the Canaanites, the Jebusites, the Hivites, and so forth.

Jeremiah 10:1-2 Hear you the word which the LOORD speaks unto you, O house of Israel: Thus says the LOORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven: for the heathen are dismayed at them.

The warnings are given, and given often, because Israel demonstrated an insatiable curiosity for variety, for experiencing some new thing in religion, in government and economics, entertainment, and education. Israel possesses a deep and swiftly running discontentment, combined with impatience, and always seeking to find some new thrill.

These verses give an overview of the warnings God gave through His prophets, and we only barely touched on a few of them. There must be scores and scores of this very kind of warning given through His prophets. They give us a brief insight into the areas of dangers, but they do not show what drove their apostasy from God and His way. The New Testament shows very clearly what it was. It was a lack of faith. They did not believe what God said. It was that simple. But when combined with a spirit of rebellion, and an insatiable curiosity and drive for variety, they fell into the pit time and time again.

God's way was never enough fun for them. It was not exciting enough, and it was too restrictive. They not only copied the heathen, but became worse than the heathen nations around them. Now here is what it led to. We are going to look at a number of verses in Jeremiah 2.

Jeremiah 2:9 Wherefore I will yet plead with you, says the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead.

Here the word "plead" does not mean "appeal to." It is pleading as made in a court of law. *"I am going to contend with you." "I am going to bring the charges that I have against you for what you have done to Me,"* is what He is saying.

Jeremiah 2:10 For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

This is a way of saying, "I want you to look around, Israel, and I want you to see if you can find anywhere in the world that any of the nations have done anything like you have done to Me."

Jeremiah 2:11-12 Has a Gentile [nation] changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be astonished, O you heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be you very desolate, says the LORD.

He is saying, "How dare they reject the Creator God who made them!" But they did.

Jeremiah 2:13-19 For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Is Israel a servant? Is he a homeborn slave? Why is he spoiled? The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant. Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes have broken the crown of your head. [These two cities represent Egypt.] Have you not procured this unto yourself, . . . [God is saying, "You are getting what you deserve. Your sins are coming back on your head."] . . . in that you have forsaken the LORD your God, when he led you by the way? And now what have you to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor [the Nile]? Or what have you to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river [the Euphrates]? Your own wickedness shall correct you, and your backslidings shall reprove you: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that you have forsaken the LORD your God, and that my fear is not in you, says the Lord GOD of hosts.

Please do not forget that we are talking about the Great Whore. We are simply looking at an earlier example.

Jeremiah 2:20-22 For of old time I have broken your yoke, and burst your bands: and you said, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree you wandered, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted you a noble vine, wholly a right seed: How then are you turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? For though you wash you with nitre, and take you much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before me, says the Lord GOD.

From here I want you to go back to the book of Revelation, chapter 18. In Jeremiah 2, God, with broad strokes, charges His people with sin. Israel not only forsook Him, but they gave themselves completely over to their dark side and became something different from what they were at the beginning of the relationship. We are going to tie this directly into Revelation 18:2, as God speaks about Babylon, because there is a connection between this and the principle that is there in Jeremiah 2.

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Revelation 18:2 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.

Recall what we just read in Jeremiah 2:11 that Israel **changed** their God, and then in Jeremiah 2:21, that God said He planted them as a good vine, but they **became** a degenerate vine. And Revelation 18:2 is telling us that the Babylon described here—just like Israel has become something that it was not before—is a habitation of demons.

There is absolutely no indication that the original Babylon was ever anything but a habitation of demons from its very planting as a nation. Every record of the original Babylon in the Bible is that they were pagan to the core at the time of their planting. It never changed from righteousness to evil. God is describing the cause of Israel's degeneracy. They backslid into the worship of demons when they departed from worship of the true God. "They gave themselves up for that which does not profit." Israel spiritually and morally became Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon.

We know, as a result of what Jeremiah preached, that Israel and Judah went into captivity, but Revelation 17:16 reveals again in broad generality what is going to happen to them at the end, because they have resurfaced once again, as God's plan unfolds. It says there:

Revelation 17:16 And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast; these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

The Whore is going to be burned with fire.

I want you to go back with me to Leviticus 20:14 where it states in the Holiness Code:

Leviticus 20:14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

Now even more pointed is chapter 21, and verse 9.

Leviticus 21:9 And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by

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playing the whore, she profanes her father: **she shall be burnt with fire.**

I want you to consider who Israel was married to. That Being is far greater than a priest, and what is the penalty for a child of God who departs from the covenant? He is to be burned with fire—the lake of fire. Here in Revelation 17 and 18 we are not talking about converted Israel. We are talking about unconverted Israel, **but the penalty is the same!** God is going to follow through with the penalties against whoredom—the whoredom Babylon [Israel] commits against Him by playing the whore in their marriage. They are going to be burnt with fire.

Fire is one of those symbols used negatively as an image of destruction, and used positively as an image of purification. Fire is frequently used as a symbol of war, but there is also the imagery of a refiner's fire that burns away the dross of a metal's impurities. This fire that He speaks of here in Revelation 17 is going to work to accomplish both. This fire will be devastating. It will be the devastating end of Israel as a nation as we know it today, but it will also work to bring those people who endure its destruction to the purification of repentance so that Israel can begin its rise to the glorious nation that God intends.

Hosea 5:5-7 And the pride of Israel does testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity: Judah also shall fall **with** them. They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LOORD; but they shall not find him; he has withdrawn himself from them. They have dealt treacherously against the LOORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a month devour them with their portions.

I draw your attention to this because it cannot apply to ancient Israel and Judah, because Israel and Judah fell 120 years apart. They did not fall together. They did not fall on the same month. We are reading here about something that lies just ahead of us, and shows that at the very end time the Jews are going to be in their land, re-gathered there. They are there! And Israel does not know yet who they are, but we know who they are.

The Ten Northern Tribes exist at the end, and Judah and Levi and Benjamin exist at the end, and they are going to fall together when the Beast rears up and throws the Woman off its back and frees itself from the domination of the Great Whore. So here we are looking at a prophecy with dual application. It applies to our time, and when the destruction occurs it will be over in a brief amount of time because we have been

prepared to fall.

I Thessalonians 5:1-3 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

There is a historically accurate principle here. Thieves do not come when they are most expected, but rather when they are least expected. The same is true when one nation attacks another. The attacking nation almost invariably attempts to blind-side the one attacked in order to gain the greatest tactical advantage, and so I expect an attack like Pearl Harbor, or like the 9-11 attack, featuring firing nuclear weapons of devastating power, because God does say "fire," and He means it—breaking the will of any who might remain and resist.

Ezekiel 5:1-13 And you, son of man, take you a sharp knife, take you a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon your head and upon your beard: then take you balances to weigh, and divide the hair. You shall burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and you shall take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part you shall scatter in the wind: and I will draw out a sword after them. You shall also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in your skirts. Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire: for thereof shall a fire come forth into **all** the house of Israel. [Notice that He says "all"—meaning both Israel and Judah.] Thus says the Lord GOOD: This is Jerusalem: [There is the connection between the city and the nation.] I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her. And she has changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them. Therefore thus says the Lord GOOD; Because you multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you: Therefore thus says the Lord GOOD; Behold, I, even I, am against you, and will execute judgments in the midst of you in the sight of the nations. And I will do in you that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do anymore the like, because of all your abominations. Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of

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you, and the sons shall eat their fathers [cannibalism]: and I will execute judgment in you, and the whole remnant of you will I scatter into all the winds. Wherefore, as I live, says the Lord GOOD; surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things, and with all your abominations, therefore will I also diminish you: neither shall my eye spare, neither will I have any pity. A third part of you shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of you: and a third part shall fall by the sword, round about you; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall my anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

This chapter breaks down the human devastation into more easily-handled figures. Using today's population figures, Israel's worldwide population is approximately 550 million. That means somewhere above 180 million will be killed in warfare; 180 million will die from disease, and another 180 million will become slaves of the nations attacking them.

These figures are quite general. There are other figures given in prophecies that indicate that the devastation might be even worse. Turn with me to Amos 5. I think the book of Amos is a book that we Josephites might do well to pay particular attention to, because it seems to be aimed directly at the Josephite tribes.

Amos 5:1-3 Hear you this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel. The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up. For thus says the Lord GOOD; The city that went out by a thousand ?[These are the captives still able to stand, still able to walk] ?shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.

God is going to tithe His people. This means that of the 180 million that go into captivity, 120 million are going to die there. This is sobering. Do you think that the killing of the Jews was bad during the holocaust? This is going to make the holocaust look like a garden party by comparison.

I think that most of you know from your own experiences and reading the news that there is no Israelite tribe both envied and hated more by the nations of the world than

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Britain and America. Even Joseph's flesh-and-blood brothers envied, feared, and hated their brother Joseph, and sold him into slavery. This is why I feel sure there are going to be Israelite tribes that are part of the Beast, because we are going to see a repeat of that occur again. So if the brothers would do that to their own brother, how much more the Gentiles?

Amos 8:1 Thus has the Lord God shown unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit.

This is an indication that Israel is *ripe* for the plucking.

Amos 8:2-9 And he said, Amos, what see you? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel: I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, says the Lord GOD; there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence. Hear this, O you that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail. ?[This is God's charge against Joseph primarily, about how we take advantage of the weak, of the poor. We do virtually anything to make a buck to get the edge on people.] ? Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? [Joseph is filled with deceitful business practices, taking advantage, and producing poor products and getting the top price for it.] That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yes, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The LORD has sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwells therein? And it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.

I read that last verse because this verse makes sure that we are reading of something that takes place in the end-time. That last verse was never fulfilled. That lies ahead of us.

Here we see a little bit of a turn in the prophecy.

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Jeremiah 30:4-11 And these are the words that the LOORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus says the LOORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask you now, and see whether a man does travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? [Because of pain and fear. That is why.] Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; **but he shall be saved out of it.** For it shall come to pass in that day, says the LOORD of hosts, that I will break his [the Beast's] yoke from off your neck, and will burst your bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the LOORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. [We are talking about the end-time. David is going to be resurrected.] Therefore fear you not, O my servant Jacob, says the LOORD: neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with you, says the LOORD, to save you: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered you, yet will I not make a full end of you: but I will correct you in measure, and will not leave you altogether unpunished.

In Revelation 17:12-14 we see prophesied Jesus Christ and us fighting the Beast. That is where the deliverance is going to come from.

Revelation 17:12-14 And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Jeremiah 31:1-14 At the same time, says the LOORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. [That is not the way it is now. We are looking into the future.] Thus says the LOORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The LOORD has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin of Israel: you shall again be adorned with your tabrets, and shall go forth in the dances of them that make merry. You shall yet plant vines upon the

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mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things. For there shall be a day that the watchman upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise you, and let us go up to Zion unto the LOORD our God. For thus says the LOORD: Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish you, praise you, and say, O LOORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together: a great company shall return thither. [Maybe 60 million people.] They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: [Notice the attitude change.] I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim [the Joseph tribe] is my firstborn. Hear the word of the LOORD, O you nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock. For the LOORD has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LOORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden: and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, says the LOORD.

Brethren, I believe that the real Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18 stands revealed as embodied, exemplified, and epitomized in the nation Israel. It is already riding the Beast, meaning that the Beast is risen, but not yet to full power. Israel is still influencing it powerfully, but the Beast's day is coming when God puts it into the kings' minds to cooperate and focus their power for a brief period in order to throw off the Great Whore's dominance.

Brethren, we know that this is coming as surely as tomorrow's sun, and so let us make every effort to not wait for our opportunity to be prepared.