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**Jerusalem And Babylon Contrasted**

*by Zac Poonen*

In the closing pages of Scripture, we find the result of the Holy Spirit's work - the Bride of Christ. We also see there the result of Satan's counterfeit work - the Harlot church. John says, "I saw the HOLY CITY, THE NEW JERUSALEM, beautiful as a BRIDE, descending from God. It was FILLED WITH THE GLORY OF GOD and glowed like a precious gem, crystal clear like jasper" (Rev. 21:2,10,11-Living). Before seeing this vision of the Bride of Christ, John was given a vision of the Harlot .. John says, "I saw a woman, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, and a voice saying "Babylon the great is fallen. See THE SMOKE OF HER BURNING. Her smoke rose up forever and ever" (Rev. 17:3,5; 18:2,9; 19:3).

Let us look at Babylon first. Babylon originated with the tower of Babel, which was built according to man's plan, in man's strength and for man's glory. "They said to one another (FROM MAN), 'Let us build for ourselves a city (THROUGH MAN) and make for ourselves a name (TO MAN)" (Gen. 11:3,4). Years later, King Nebuchadnezzar, having built the great city of Babylon, capital of his great world empire, looked out one day over the city and spoke in the same way: "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built (FROM MAN)..... by the might of my power (THROUGH MAN)..... for the glory of my majesty (TO MAN)" (Dan. 4:30). The tower of Babel ended in judgment. Nebuchadnezzar's boast also brought down on him the immediate judgment of God (Dan. 4:31-33). The final end of all that has been produced by human wisdom and human power for man's glory will also be judgment by God. That which is done through human soul-power will perish, even if it is called 'Christian work'. "The wide walls of Babylon shall be leveled to the ground and her high gates shall be burned; THE BUILDERS ('Christian' workers?) FROM MANY LANDS HAVE WORKED IN VAIN - THEIR WORKS SHALL BE DESTROYED BY FIRE" (Jer. 51:58-Living).

Jerusalem, on the other hand, is the City of God (Heb. 12:22). In the Old Testament this was where the Temple of God was. Jerusalem, God's dwelling place, had her origin in the Tabernacle, built by Moses (Exod. 25:8). The Tabernacle was built exactly according to God's plan: ".....according to all that the Lord commanded" (Exod. 40:16) (FROM GOD). It was built by men endued with the power of God: "Bezalel...I have filled him with the Spirit of God..." (Exod. 31:1-5) (THROUGH GOD). It was built for the glory of God: "The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. 40:34) (TO GOD). That which originates in God and is done through Divine power for the glory of God alone will remain forever. It will come through the fire, glowing like a gem, because it is built of gold, silver and jewels.

The distinctive feature of Jerusalem is holiness. It is called "the HOLY City" (Rev. 21:2). Babylon however, stands out for its greatness. It is called "the GREAT city" (Rev. 18:10). It is called "great", eleven times in Revelation. Those who live in true holiness, in obedience to God and have partaken of the nature of Christ by grace through faith, are built together into Jerusalem; whereas those who are looking for greatness here on earth (the testimony and the honour of men) are built into Babylon. For nineteen hundred years, the call has been coming to God's people, "Come out of her (Babylon) MY PEOPLE; do not take part in her sins, or you will be punished with her" (Rev. 18:4-Living).

The call is even more urgent today, as we approach the end of the age. It is truly unfortunate that even God's people can be mixed up with Babylon and thus share her punishment - if they do not take heed to this call of God which is so clear. Having held on to an evangelical doctrine, or having made a 'decision for Christ' will not help anyone in that day, if they have not lived a life that corresponds to the true doctrine, or brought forth works of obedience that are the identifying marks of a genuine faith.

How intense was God's desire when He made man in His own image that man should partake of the divine nature and manifest His glory. And when man fell, how great a price God was willing to pay, "sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemning sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3), so that a Way might be made whereby man might be restored and brought back to the place where he could once again fulfil the divine purpose. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all together involved in this work of redeeming man and transforming him. And although, many men and women in their foolishness will not respond to God, yet the divine purpose will be fulfilled in a remnant (the few who find the narrow way to life), who submit to God, like Jesus did, and through whom the glory of God will be manifested, not

only here in time, but also in the ages of eternity, when God will show forth through them, the surpassing riches of His grace that they were made partakers of through Christ Jesus.

**Re: Jerusalem And Babylon Contrasted -poonen - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/14 17:45**

thank you for posting this brother. the contrast of the 2 cities is something for me to continue to meditate on. thanks.