

## Articles and Sermons :: Two Different Streams by Zac Poonen

**Two Different Streams by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2012/8/17 19:02**

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.

In Revelation 21:2,10,11(Living) 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"

Before seeing this vision of the Bride of Christ, John was given a vision of the Harlot - the spiritual adulteress, who claimed to love God but actually loved this world (Jas. 4:4). This is spurious Christianity, having a form of godliness (correctness of doctrine), but no power (no divine life) (2 Tim. 3:5).

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).

The contrast is striking. Whereas the Bride comes through the judgment fire, "glowing like a precious gem," the Harlot is reduced to ashes completely, her smoke ascending to the skies, because she was made of perishable stuff.

Jerusalem the Bride, and Babylon the Harlot are two systems - one from God and the other "earthly, soulish and demonic" (Jas. 3:15 margin).

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 vein: "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 WORK 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 endowed 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.

As we compare the opening pages of Scriptures with its closing pages, we find that the two trees (the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil) have produced two systems, by the end of time - Jerusalem and Babylon. That which is truly born of the Spirit - from God, through God and to God - remains for ever; whereas that which was born of the flesh - from man, through man and to man - perishes. Today, we are living between the pages of Genesis and Revelation. And whether we realise it or not, we are being caught up in one of these two systems - one determined to exalt and glorify God, and the other out to glorify and exalt man; one following Christ and the other following Adam; one living in the Spirit and the other living in the flesh and the soul.

Both Jesus and Adam heard the voice of God - the difference was only in the fact that one obeyed and the other disobeyed. So too, Jesus said, it would be with those who hear His voice - one would obey and build on the rock, unshakable for eternity, while another would hear but not obey and thus build on the sand, ultimately to perish (Mt. 7:24-27).

These two houses that Jesus spoke of are Jerusalem and Babylon.