

Mediterranean and Egypt with Persia. Its scribes and priests spread its cultural heritage throughout the known world. The arts of divination, astronomy, astrology, accounting, and private commercial law all sprang from Babylon” (Caballero, *Rebuilding Babylon*, quoted by Charles Dyer, in *The Rise of Babylon*).

Remember her beginning. Built by the rebel Nimrod, she has always been a GODLESS city. God used her to punish other nations. He gave her Egypt as her wages for doing this (Ezek. 29:18, 19). Babylon was the head of gold on Daniel’s image of a man, which represented the kingdoms of finite and godless men. They will, when Christ comes, be overturned by the establishment of the Kingdom of God over earth.

Two main cities are mentioned in the Bible in detail. One is Jerusalem, the city that God has chosen (2 Chron. 33:7), and the other is Babylon, which represents the ungodliness and rebellion of mankind (Rev. 18:4, 5). In other words, City Babylon signifies the sinfulness of the whole world. Notice Zechariah’s prophecy about the woman in the ephah.

Zechariah’s Amazing Prediction

Zechariah 5:5-11

Here is a picture of an ephah (basket) with a woman sitting inside representing “**Wickedness.**” A lead cover closed over the woman to make sure she did not escape. The vision continues: two women with wings lifted up this ephah (basket) and flew off with it. Zechariah said to the angel,

“Where are they taking the ephah?” The answer came: “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal” (base). City Babylon will be “Home Base” for the Antichrist. This is “where he comes from.” (See my first book, *Prophecies of the End of the Age.*)

The tower of Babel was built in the plain of Shinar, where men rebelled against God (Gen. 11:1-9). Just so will Wickedness be concentrated in this rebuilt end-time city of Babylon, as we have seen in Revelation 18:4-5: “her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”

The gist of Zechariah’s vision is that wickedness will be set up in a temple in Shinar (Babylon). Not only will this end-time city be full of immorality and sorcery (18:3, 23), but “in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on earth” (v. 24). This is exceptionally serious. To be lewd and immoral is one thing, but to deliberately kill God’s people is a far greater matter. The lifting of the curses on earth during the reign of Jesus will not include restoring “Babylon.”

In this sobering passage, Revelation 18:24, we immediately remember that killing God’s people is something the Beast and False Prophet of Revelation 13 will do, and the Little Horn of Daniel 7; 8; 11:33; and 12:8. This Great Tribulation shall be so fierce toward God’s people that Jesus said if God didn’t intervene, “no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:22).

But we take comfort in God’s Word. He shows that some Christians will still be alive when Jesus comes (1 Thess. 4:15, “we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord”). Even though we may suffer death for our Lord, after men kill us, they have no more that they can do. But God can destroy both life and body in Gehenna, while giving **eternal life** to His Own (Matt. 10:28; Dan. 12:2).

Our name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life is the important thing (Rev. 13:8) along with refusing to worship the statue of the Beast (14:9-12). “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on,” says the Spirit (v. 13). Perhaps the guillotine will be reinstated, for many will be beheaded for their faith (20:4). Better be “slain for the word of the Lord” (6:9) than perish with the Beast and False Prophet (19:20). Those martyred for the Lord will rise again, to never-ending perfect life in the Kingdom of God. There they shall be Kings and Priests on earth with Jesus, rulers forever in righteousness and peace (20:6; 5:10; 2 Peter 3:13).

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Remember, the Beast and wicked Babylon are inseparable (Rev. 14:7-12). When Babylon falls, the Beast falls. The whole system will be destroyed together. God will pay her “double” (18:6-8) according to her deeds. The standard on which God judges Babylon is compared to the way she lived – “sensuously.” “To the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.’ For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned with fire; for the Lord (Christ) who judges her is strong.”

Babylon’s destruction will be swift: “in one day.” (Notice the similarity of the overturning of Babylon by Cyrus the Persian around 538 B.C.: “in that night” (Dan. 5:30), the same night the handwriting on the wall appeared.) She will be burned up like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa. 13:19), after she has suffered pestilence, mourning, and famine. Her hardheaded willful sinning will not be tolerated by the Almighty. In God’s Plan, it is necessary to remove sinners before His righteousness can shine forth over earth forever.

God’s Mercy for His People

In the prophecy in verse 4 of this chapter, Revelation 18, we see God, in His great mercy, calling to His people to get out of City Babylon: “Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”

This reminds us of God, in mercy, calling righteous Lot out of Sodom before her destruction (Gen. 19:12-19). Jesus, also, pleads with those of Judah when they see the Abomination placed in the Holy Place in the last days, to “flee to the mountains,” and the one on the housetop to not tarry to go into the house to save something, “for then there will be a great tribulation” (Matt. 24:15-21).

God has revealed that some of His people will be in Babylon just before her destruction. In His love for them, He will plead with them to come out of that city. Or, is this speaking to us now, to come out of earth’s evilness? Who are these people of God? Are they Jews? We know that God gave the Hebrews the ability to make money (Deut. 15:6; 28:10-13). We know Jews gravitate to cities where there is much wealth, and Babylon will be a very wealthy city. If Babylon is to be the leading city of commerce in the world, as this passage indicates, we can be sure there will be Jews there. Or is it speaking of some of the Church people who are living in Babylon? (Now, or then?) What God’s people are doing in Babylon without having the mark of the beast is hard to comprehend. Could it be they are Israelites who have not yet recognized Christ, and would repent if they had the opportunity? (See Zech. 12:10-13:9). Or could this be a warning to Christians before then, to forsake evil?

We know Christ is coming to execute God’s wrath (Rev. 19:15), but He will save His people first, when He comes (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

This call of God to His people in end-time Babylon demands that they “not participate in her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues.” God is warning them of the consequences if they do participate in the sins of Babylon. They would be judged accordingly, for “whatsoever a man sows, this he will also reap” (Gal. 6:7).

This invitation of God is given to all who will heed God’s call to come out of sin and follow the righteousness in Christ. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17, 18).

This is typical of God. If a person will repent He will forgive his sin and remove His judgment. The mercy of God is now available to all: “Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). In every age, God has received those who will repent of sin and seek His mercy through His Son, our Savior, Jesus. The people before Jesus’ first coming were justified by faith, and we who live after it are also justified by faith (Gal. 3:8; Heb. 10:38).

Only those who seek the Almighty and His Son will escape the Judgment (John 5:24). In fact, the sins of Christians are blotted out now in this age, “going before to judgment” (2 Tim. 5:24). All they will need when He comes is the “reward” He gives them (Matt. 16:27), which is “life in the age to come.”

Then, Rejoicing in Heaven

The closing scene of this picture of the complete destruction of the Babylonian system, both religiously and commercially, is how the angels in heaven react to this.

Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God;
 Because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her.”
 “And a second time they said, ‘Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever.’
 “And the twenty-four elders (high order of the angels) and the four living creatures (cherubim) fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’
 “And a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.’
 “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude (hundreds of millions of angels, Rev. 5:11) and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. ‘Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’” (Rev. 19:2-7).

Contrasted to the grief and weeping by the world over the fall of Babylon is the rejoicing in heaven at her downfall. The entire heavenly host can finally rejoice because now has come the final triumph of Good over Evil, Righteousness over Wickedness, and Faithfulness over Faithlessness. This is what the heavenly angels have been longing for all these thousands of years. At the creation, the angels (sons of God, Job 38:7) “shouted for joy” at the greatness of God’s creation. But ever since the fall of man near the beginning, heaven has languished because of the terrible sinfulness that covered earth. Even God “repented that He had made man.” Yet when His salvation plan was presented, even the angels desired to look into it (1 Peter 1:12). But “unto the angels He has not put in subjection the world to come” (Heb. 2:5). Even though the salvation plan was for men, evilness on earth saddened the heavenly host. See how joyous they were when they announced Christ’s birth (Luke 2:9-15). And when evil has been removed from earth, see how happy they will be, according to the foregoing verses. They are glad to see their Almighty God in complete power and glory over earth, so they rejoice. Notice the meaning in the words they use about God. 1) Salvation (deliverance), 2) Glory (the brightness of His righteousness), and 3) Power (His mighty Authority over evil). “The Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give glory to Him.” Then this heavenly multitude announces the great theme that is the focus of The Book of Revelation: “The marriage of the Lamb is come,” and they will reign in God’s Kingdom over earth for 1000 years. This has been the hope of faithful men for thousands of years: The Second Coming of Christ, and the establishment of **God’s** Kingdom over earth.

Chapter 22

Revelation 20

The Kingdom of God – The Reign of Christ With His Saints

Here is a vision of the Great Consummation of the ages: the deposing of Satan, judgment and resurrection, the thousand-year reign of Christ and His people, the final rebellion of man, and their destruction in the lake of fire.

“Then shall the Assyrian (Antichrist) fall with the sword,” prophesied Isaiah (31:8), just before he said, “Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment” (32:1). What a welcome change! When Christ judges Antichrist and casts him into the lake of fire, and righteousness overturns evil, Isaiah was led to exclaim that it would be like “a refuge from the wind, a shelter from the storm,” like streams of water in a dry land, like the shade of a huge rock on a stifling hot day (32:2). These pictures from nature show the really welcome change from earth’s long dark night under sin and death.

The Prince of Darkness has been ruling the earth (John 12:31; 16:11). That reign is called the “darkness” of this age many times (John 1:5; etc.). Isaiah had said, “Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon you, and His glory will appear on you” (60:2). The verse before showed that now His people can “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen on you.”

The desolation at the end of this age is now replaced by Restoration (Dan. 9:27; Acts 3:19-21). One by one the enemies of God and Israel and the church have been annihilated. Now Satan himself is bound a thousand years before being consigned to the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). Now we see in Christ’s Reign, Righteousness, and Peace filling the whole earth (2 Pet. 3:13; Psa. 72:7; Isa. 66:2; 2:2-4; 32:17)! The Edenic joy and happiness has been so marred by the intrusion of the Serpent it is impossible to imagine the joy of the whole creation when it is released from the bondage of sin. Here we see a world with Christ, and a world without a Devil.

“And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having a key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, And threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls (persons) of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:1-6).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Mattison has been enthralled with the Word of God since his youth. He was born, raised, and educated in Oregon, Illinois, where he also attended Oregon Bible College (which has since moved to Morrow, Georgia, and has been renamed Atlanta Bible College). Graduating from Oregon Bible College in 1945, he immediately went into a pastoral ministry. For more than 40 years he pastored churches in Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, and Indiana. He also preached on the radio for 27 consecutive years.

Mattison is the grandson of S. J. Lindsay, founder of *The Restitution Herald* (a publication of the Church of God, Abrahamic Faith, General Conference). Lindsay founded churches in Tempe, Arizona, and Los Angeles, California, and was one of three founders of the Oregon, Illinois, Church of God.

As Lindsay was a devoted instructor of the Word of God, so also is his grandson. Mattison has been a prolific writer for the church at large, contributing lessons for Sunday School quarterlies for 19 years, and creating many tracts, articles, and booklets on important and difficult Bible teachings. He has been tireless in his efforts to enlighten old and young alike with the great message of salvation. For nearly twelve years he wrote a prophecy page for *The Restitution Herald*, later incorporating selections of that material into a book, *Prophecies of the End of the Age*, which, with revisions as his understanding deepened, was reprinted twice.

Mattison married Mary Helen Landry in 1945, and their union was blessed with eight children. His wife died in 1983 and he later married Martha L. Jones, widow of Elder Loie Jones. He credits his wives with adding much strength to his ministries.

Mattison's interest in prophecy led him to participate in Jesus' command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Coupling that command with the statement in Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come," one can understand Mattison's motivation to become more involved in mission work. Mission fields beckoned, and he responded in 1994.

Guided by his reliance upon God, he spearheaded work in Malawi, Africa, which had sprung up through faith and belief in the coming Kingdom of God. Mission-minded people sent him funds to help in the African work. Through generous donations, in conjunction with others, he has been able to build over 220 churches, and buy bicycles for pastors. In addition, the monies were spent to dig several water wells, provide flood relief, and donate food in times of famine. He has seen to the publishing of 100,000 native-tongue tracts on about 50 major Bible teachings. He and friend and cohort Anthony Buzzard (an author in his own right) provided the tracts to the mission fields for distribution.

Though 86 years of age (Nov. 2010), Mattison, for the past 16 years, has made eleven trips to Malawi/Mozambique, teaching, preaching, guiding, directing, praying for the people who have a thirst for God, and constantly thanking God for the opportunity of serving Him.

This book is a labor of love, of tremendous insight, of guidance by God's Holy Spirit. Herein you will find answers to many of the questions that may have been aroused by the cover display. Mattison's hope is that this book will strengthen faith, enlighten readers about prophesied terrible conditions coming upon this earth, and promote the blessed hope that the faithful will obtain eternal life in the Age to Come.

