



2019 Q1 The Book of Revelation - Lesson 12 Judgment on Babylon

By Linda Ojala

SABBATH

Read Revelation 17, 18

Memory Text - "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.'" Rev. 18:4,5

Two weeks ago, I gave the view that the multiple Christian beliefs stem from a vital truth/s being found, out of all the error in the previous beliefs, and the joy of this discovery, followed by the creation of a new denomination, as being like hot lava. This enthusiasm cools down over time, as lava does, and the believers stay right where they are, holding tight to this/these new belief/s.

Another new truth is found, and the same thing happens. Then another and another and another.

We have to ask ourselves, "Could this be true of our church as well? Could we be so content with the truth we have, that we are not open to any other truth God may reveal, and so become like cold lava...hardened and unyielding?"

I recommend reading Councils to Writers and Editors, by E.G. White, Pages 34-41 for her position on new light that should be coming even until the end of time. A few examples of what you will find there:

"A spirit of pharisaism has been coming in upon the people who claim to believe the truth for these last days. They are self-satisfied. They have said, 'We have the truth. There is no more light for the people of God.' **But we are not safe when we take a position that we will not accept anything else than that upon which we have settled as truth.** We should take the Bible, and investigate it closely for ourselves. We should dig in the mine of God's word for truth. 'Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.' Some have asked me if I thought there was any more light for the people of God. Our minds have become so narrow that we do not seem to understand that the Lord has a mighty work to do for us. Increasing light is to shine upon us; for 'the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'" Page 34

"**New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness.** Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to



shine forth from the work of God. **Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God.**” Page 35

“There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.” Page 35

Great Controversy, by E.G. White, page 651 says

“...through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind.”

So, what is Babylon?

According to abarim-publications.com, Babel means a “confused” mix of voices and other sounds, from Babhel (Hebrew) “Gate of the deity” or “Gate of God.” When a tower was being made to reach up to God and prevent death from another flood.

- Then, it came to mean “confusion” when the multiple languages were created and distributed by God.
- How is something adulterated – it is made impure by mixing something else in.

The Great Controversy, by E.G. White, pg. 382, 383,

“Says the Apostle James: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”.....“It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation. Babylon is said to be 'the mother of harlots.' By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the *fall* of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days.....in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon.”

Speaking about the people of Israel in slavery in Egypt prior to their exodus, Patriarchs and Prophets, by E.G. White, pg 260, says, **“Many were content to remain in bondage rather than leave Egypt.”** We understand this as, 'Better the evil you know, than the evil you don't'. The plagues encouraged them to look to God and want to follow Him out into the great unknown.



In Sabbath's lesson, first paragraph,

“The sixth plague causes the symbolic drying up of the Euphrates, as the disillusioned people of the world withdraw their popular support from end-time Babylon.”

In Sabbath's lesson, second paragraph,

“At the outset of the final battle, a great earthquake occurs as part of the seventh plague. **The earthquake shatters the unity of Babylon and splits it into three parts** (Rev. 16:18,19). End-time Babylon is portrayed as a city, signifying the short-term union of the political and religious powers of the world in opposition to God's people. **This unity is shattered, causing the breakup of end-time Babylon.**”

The shake up of what appears to be solid ground.

SUNDAY

The Harlot Babylon

Sunday's lesson, first paragraph says,

“A woman in the Bible is a symbol for God's people (church). In Revelation, **God's true church is portrayed as a pure woman** (Rev. 12:1, 22:17). **A harlot thus represents a false apostate church.** In Revelation 17:5, this harlot is identified as **Babylon the Great**. Just as ancient Babylon depended on the Euphrates River for its existence, so will end-time Babylon rely on the support of the masses to enforce her plans.”

- **Revelation 14:8**, “**Babylon the Great**, which **made all nations drink** of the maddening wine of her adulteries.”
- **Revelation 17:2**, “**Great prostitute**, who sits on many waters. With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.”
- **Revelation 18:2,3**, “Fallen, Fallen is **Babylon the Great!** She has become **a home for demons** and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. **The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.**”

What two groups of people are specified as being involved in an illicit relationship with, and being seduced by, end-time Babylon?

1. **Kings of the earth**, the governing political powers – A union of church and state.



2. **The inhabitants of the earth**, the governed masses, who are intoxicated by Babylon's false teaching and practices, deceived into thinking that she can protect them. When people are drunk, they do not think clearly and are controlled easily.

The point: The masses of the people get it wrong. What should this tell us about the dangers of following popular sentiment?

MONDAY

The Harlot Riding on the Scarlet Beast

Monday's lesson, first paragraph,

“While the harlot represents a religious entity, the beast symbolized a political power...The picture of religion riding the secular and political power...shows...that these two entities will join together at the end time. The concept of riding a beast denotes dominance....**this end-time religious system will dominate the secular and political powers.**”

Second paragraph, “The harlot is pictured as extravagantly arrayed in purple and scarlet and adorned with ornaments of gold, precious stones, and pearls; such adornments of gold, precious stones, and pearls; such adornment was a practice of harlots in antiquity to enhance their power of seduction (Jer. 4:30).”

Symbolic of her vanity and self-promotion.

- “As the **color of blood, scarlet corresponds to the oppressive character** of this religious system.”
- “The **harlot's dress counterfeits the attire of the high priest** in the old Testament, attire that included the colors purple, scarlet, and gold.(Exod. 28:5,6)”
- “The **blasphemous inscription** on the harlot's forehead also replaces the priestly inscription, 'Holiness to the Lord' on the miter of the high priest (Exod. 28:36-38)” “**Mysterious Babylon the Great**” – the confusing system of religious tradition, fable and falsehood that obscures the truth about God. “**The Mother of Prostitutes**” - the many diverse religious sects who sell their virtue for earthly advantage and seduce others into their bed of lies about God.” “**The Abomination of the Earth**”
- “The cup in her hand reminds us of the vessels of the sanctuary from which Belshazzar, king of Babylon, and his guests drank wine (Dan. 5:2-4). **The cup on the harlot's hand uses the appearance of truth to conceal the wine – the falsehoods of Satan's end-time religious system – in order to seduce the world away from God.**” Intoxicating brew of lies, distortions, and false presentation about God.
- The harlot Babylon is further described as **drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs** of Jesus who died as a result of their witness to Christ. This blood-guiltiness links



end-time Babylon to medieval apostate Christianity, which was led by the papacy and responsible for the deaths of millions of Christians who remained faithful to the gospel.”

In the green section:

“The description of the **harlot Babylon** reflects the image of Jezebel in the church of Thyatira (Rev. 2:20-23). How do the parallels between these two women elucidate the character of end-time Babylon? **Dictatorial, Destructive, Deceptive, and Demonic.**”

TUESDAY

The Identification of the Scarlet Beast

Tuesday's lesson, first paragraph,

“Though living in an age of ecumenism, Protestants would do well to remember the terrible persecution of the past, because, according to prophecy, something similar, but only worse, will happen again.”

“The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction.” Revelation 17:8

- “How does Revelation 13:3 clarify the three phases of the existence and activities of the beast?” “One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.”
- Revelation 13:8, **“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have not been written in the book of life,** belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.”

Second paragraph,

“The scarlet beast is identified as the one that was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. This tripartite phrase is, first of all, a counterfeit of the divine name, Yahweh, “who is and who was and who is to come.” (Rev. 1:4, Rev. 4:8)

It also further points to the **three phases of existence through which the beast has passed:**

1. The beast **“once was”** - It existed in the past. It's prior activities lasted for the prophetic period of 42 months, also known as 1,260 days/years (see Rev. 13:5 and Lesson 9, Sunday).
2. **“Now is not.”** With its deadly wound (see Rev. 13:3), the beast went into its “nonexistence phase, at least as a persecutor, in 1798. It vanished for some time from the world scene; yet it survived.



3. Finally, with the healing of the deadly wound, the beast will regain its power **“Will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction”** and exert it in full satanic rage. Once again there will be a short-lived union of religion and politics as it existed during the Middle Ages, and persecution again will take place.

“Let opposition arise, **let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the halfhearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith;** but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in the days of prosperity.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, P. 602

WEDNESDAY

The Seven Heads of the Beast

Wednesday's lesson, first paragraph,

“The angel explains that **the seven heads are seven mountains.** Some translators think that these mountains allude to the **seven hills upon which the city of Rome is situated**, and for this reason, they translate the Greek word *oroi* (“mountains”) as “hills.”

“There are **seven kings, too, who are symbolized by the seven mountains.** Also, these mountains are **successive, not simultaneous.**”

Second paragraph,

“These mountains do not symbolize individual kings, because Revelation does not deal with individual persons, but with systems.”

- In the Bible, **mountains often symbolize world powers or empires** (Jer. 51:25; Ezek. 35:2,3)
- In biblical prophecy, **“Kings” represent kingdoms** (Dan. 2:37-39, Dan. 7:17)
- Thus, the **seven mountains symbolize seven great successive empires that dominated the world** throughout history, through which Satan opposed God and harmed God's people.
- **From John's time perspective**, five of these empires have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.
- While no single view has been agreed upon by all Adventist interpreters, **many hold that the five that have fallen are the great kingdoms that in Old Testament times dominated and (on occasion) harmed God's people: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece.**
- The **“one is” kingdom was the Roman Empire of John's time.**
- These kingdoms **sound like the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream** predicting the current and subsequent kingdoms (Dan. 2,3)
- The seventh kingdom that “Has not yet come” is the sea beast of Revelation 13 – **the Papacy, which dominated and harmed God's people.** History has powerfully attested to the truth of this prophecy, written many centuries before the events unfolded.



- John is further told that **the scarlet beast is an eighth world power, although it is one of the seven heads (world powers). Because these heads are sequential in time, the eighth must be the seventh head that received the deadly wound....**Today, we live at the time of the healing of the deadly wound. This eighth world power will appear on the scene right before the end and will go to perdition.

Another point of view is that the seven heads represent seven false theories, or theological systems, that fill the minds of human beings, and are represented as seven mountains, or high places of worship, on which the woman sits.

They are also represented as seven false kings who try to usurp the place of Jesus, the true King.

THURSDAY

The Judgment of Babylon

Thursday's lesson, first paragraph,

“Different interpretations have been offered regarding the identities of **the ten kings....we can derive from the text is that they are a short-lived political confederacy appearing right before the end and supporting the harlot.**

- Their number signifies that **the world powers will render total, unwavering allegiance** to the beast.
- ****Could it be the ten toes of the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw?**

Second paragraph, Revelation 17:3,4 reiterates the battle of Armageddon – introduced in Rev. 16:12-16.

“...the battle of Armageddon is **not a military battle in the Middle East but the final conflict of the Second Coming** in which Satan and his confederacy fight against Christ and His angelic host.

Third paragraph,

“Filled with hatred, **the ten horns, which are the successor powers to the divided nations of Europe, suddenly turn against the harlot Babylon** (the end-time manifestation of the papacy), making her desolate and naked; they symbolically will eat her flesh and burn her with fire....Burning by fire was the punishment for a priest's daughter who was involved in sexual immorality (Lev 21:9). **The deceived political powers have become disillusioned because of the inability of Babylon to protect them from the plagues. They feel deceived and, in hostility, attack her. This end-time apostate religious system, together with all those who choose to identify themselves with it, experiences the fullness of divine judgment.**”



***Could what is being described be experiencing the release of God's protections? They think it is God's divine judgment, but in fact, God is letting them go, giving them up to their own choices.

“They [the ten horns] will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings – and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.” Revelation 17:14,

Spend so much time learning about God and communing with Him through prayer and His work, that we know, love and trust Him. So that we “know His voice” and follow His directions.

“Pay her double from her own cup. Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself.” Revelation 18:6,7

NOTE: What a surprising thing to say!

**Who would think that self-centeredness was the core issue that is the problem with Babylon!

**What does this say about the “Prosperity Gospel” so popular now?

“It will be just like this [Referencing Noah/The flood and Lot/destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah] on the day the Son of Man is revealed.” Luke 17:20-37

By their own choices their fate was “Sealed.”

**Judgment vs punishment – same event, different point of view?

“**When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.** Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil and regard not the majesty of the Lord.” Isaiah 26:9-11

“...They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but **they refused to repent and glorify Him.....Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.**” Revelation 16:9-11

Doesn't this remind you of Pharaoh with the plagues of Egypt in Exodus 7-12?

The Great Controversy, by E.G. White, pg. 639, 640

“**That holy law, God's Righteousness, that amid thunder and flames was proclaimed from Sinai as the guide of life, is now revealed to men as the rule of judgment. ...God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth...The Lord have them His law; they might have compared their**



characters with it and learned their defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; but in order to secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. They have endeavored to compel God's people to profane His Sabbath. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse. The chose whom they would serve and worship.....The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among, them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God.”

Whose “sign” do we believe in and support? Whose “wedding ring” do we wear? Whose “flag” do we fight under? THIS is our God!!

The Great Controversy, by E.G. White, pg. 638,

“Through a rift in the clouds there beams a star whose brilliancy is increased fourfold in contrast with the darkness. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law.”

NOTE: The same events are seen differently by the two groups.

FRIDAY

Further Thought

Friday's lesson, Discussion Questions:

***How should we treat others that hold different beliefs than we do?

Evangelism, by E. G. White, pg. 575 says,

“This message must be given, but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have no the light that we have....Those who have had great privileges and opportunities, and who have failed to improve their physical, mental, and moral powers....are in greater danger and in greater condemnation before God than those who are in error upon doctrinal points yet who seek to live to do good to others.”

When Elijah thought he was the only Godly man left, God assured him he had 7,000 who have not bowed to Bael. 1 Kings 19:14-18, Romans 11:2-5

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judges, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye.' when all the time there is a



plank in your own eye? **You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” Matthew 7:1-5**

How easy is it for us to think the error is all “Out there”?

Remember the story of David, Bathsheba, and the prophet Nathan in 2 Samuel 11 and 12. “You are the man!” By condemning the man who took his neighbor's pet lamb, David condemned himself

“In one day” and “in one hour” - Notice the speed of Babylon's downfall which is emphasized in Revelation 18:8, 10, 17, 19. In prophetic time (a day = a year), “one hour” in prophetic time would translate to around two weeks.

Testimonies for the Church, by E. G. White, Volume 6, pg 408, says,

“The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession. Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but **when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there shall be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.”**

Testimonies for the Church, by E. G. White, Volume 69 pg 11, says,

“The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and **the final movements will be rapid ones.”**

Christ's Object Lessons, by E.G. White, pg 415, 416 says,

“The last message of mercy to be given to the world is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.”

“Therefore the Lord, the Lord Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: **‘Ah, I will vent my wrath on my foes and avenge myself on my enemies. I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities’.**” Isaiah 1:24, 25



“Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, **‘Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.’**” Isaiah 35:3,4

What is the best retribution for a person who has been killed, diseased, deceived, etc? **Healing and restoration – Salvation!

****Read Revelation 17 and 18 in the Remedy Bible

“When I think of the wisdom and scope of God's plan, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth, I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will give you mighty inner strength through His Holy Spirit. And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in Him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now glory be to God! **By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask of hope.**” Ephesians 3:14-20

“Lord, you establish peace for us; **all that we have accomplished you have done for us.**”
Isaiah 26:12