



2023 2Q Three Cosmic Messages—Lesson 9 A City Called Confusion

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Read first three paragraphs:

The great controversy theme is summarized in Revelation with the symbolism of two women: one clothed with the sun, in Revelation 12, and one dressed in scarlet, in Revelation 17.

The striking symbol of the woman clothed with the sun, in the dazzling glory of Christ, is found in Revelation 12. She is faithful to her true Lover, Jesus. She is not defiled with the corruption of false doctrines. Throughout the Bible, a pure woman symbolizes the bride of Jesus, or the true church. In Jeremiah 6:2, the prophet says, “ ‘I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman’ ” (NKJV). The prophet uses the expression “daughter of Zion” or a faithful woman to describe God’s people. (See also Eph. 5:25–32 and Hos. 2:20.)

In contrast, the Bible likens apostasy to harlotry or adultery (James 4:4). Speaking of Israel’s rebellion and unfaithfulness, Ezekiel laments, “ ‘You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband’ ” (Ezek. 16:32, NKJV). (Adult SS Guide Second Quarter 2023, Three Cosmic Messages p.72)

Why if the lesson is entitled a City Called Confusion do we start out talking about two women?

Because the Bible has many ways of describing, revealing, and symbolizing the war between Christ and His followers, and Satan and his followers. The two women are descriptions of the two sides; we will explore this in detail in a moment, but before we do, can you think of other ways the Bible describes or symbolizes the two sides in this war?

- Two cities—Babylon and Jerusalem
- Two nations—Egypt and Israel
- Wheat and weeds
- Fruitful vine/tree and withered vine/tree
- Saved and lost
- Faithful and wicked
- Righteous and unrighteous
- Good and evil
- Light and darkness
- Life and death or living and dead
- Healthy and diseased
- Lamps with oil and lamps without oil



- Wise and foolish
- Two types of rulers—one who rises over and One who sacrifices self
- Two laws—design or imposed
- Two temples
- Two spirits—the Holy Spirit and false spirits
- Two paths
- Two gates

Why does the Bible use a city, Babylon, whose name means confusion, as a symbol for Satan's rebellious system?

Make every effort to keep the **unity** of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is **one body and one Spirit**—just as you were called to **one hope** when you were called—**one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all**, who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:3-6 NIV84).

God is the Creator and there is only One God, who built the universe to operate in harmony with His one eternal design law of love, and all creation is connected to Him and is sustained through and by Him:

For by him [Jesus] **all things were created**: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; **all things were created by him** and for him. He is before all things, and in him **all things hold together**. . . For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to **reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven**, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Colossians 1:16-17 & 19-20 NIV84).

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, **sustaining all things by his powerful word** (Hebrews 1:3 NIV84).

In light of these Bible verses, consider this Bible commentary by one of the founders of the SDA church. Do you agree with these insights? Do you believe they are in harmony with Scripture?

Upon **all created things** is seen the impress of the Deity. Nature testifies of God. The susceptible mind, brought in contact with the miracle and mystery of the universe, cannot but recognize the working of infinite power. **Not by its own inherent energy** does the earth produce its bounties, and year by year continue its motion around the sun. An **unseen hand** guides the planets in their circuit of the heavens. A **mysterious life pervades all nature—a life that sustains the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity**, that lives in the insect atom which floats in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit. (Homeward Bound 182).



The same power that upholds nature, is working also in us. **The same great laws** that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. **The laws that govern the heart's action,** regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, **are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him** can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same—a **life sustained by receiving the life of God**, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. **To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin.** (Homeward Bound 182).

There is One God who created all things and through Him all things hold together. There is one design law that emanates from God and holds together or sustains all things—it is the law of love. All God's distinct and various physical laws are manifestations of His law of love.

God dispenses, disperses, diffuses His own eternal energy to create and then sustain all reality. Only by being united with God, having His Spirit dwell within us, being conformed to harmony with Him do we have life. There is no life disconnected from God who is the source of life.

Sin is lawlessness, it is breaking the bonds of love and trust, severing the link with God who is the source of life, deviating from the design protocols that life is constructed to operate upon.

There are only two paths—

- Life and death
- Harmony with God or disharmony
- Unity or disunity
- Oneness or fragmentation

Once a person leaves the path of truth, of life, of oneness with God, and enters the path of satanic delusion, the path of lies, how many different lies, delusions, falsehoods, idols, errors are there? An infinite amount and that is why Satan's system is Babylon, the city of confusion, because lies always confuse, disconnect from reality, and result in ever increasing fragmentation and division.

Do you see as the truth about God has been pushed further and further out of the hearts and minds of people that the world is becoming more divided, the human condition is becoming more debased, and the level of fantasy, delusion, and crazy thinking has increased?

From our [Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 & 17 Magazine](#):

“BABYLON THE GREAT” refers to the imposed-law system, the false system of methods that all earthly governments wield and that all false religions teach about God. Of all the nations in the Bible that Satan used to war against Israel, it was Babylon that created the first codified legal system (the code of Hammurabi). By embracing the lie of imposed law, the church teaches that God is like Satan in character and practices the beastly methods of coercion, resulting in Satan's character being reproduced in their hearts and minds. Thus, this



system is an abomination—as it destroys the image of God in people and places a beastly character where God’s should be.

And that is why Christianity is currently divided into over 41,000 different groups arguing among themselves—because they have accepted the wine of Babylon, which is the idea that God’s law functions like human law, imposed rules, and that lie results in massive confusion and division as people argue over the meaning of this or that.

Further, that lie led Dark Ages Christianity to become a beastly—it made up its own rules, then used the power of the state to fine, imprison, torture, and kill, those who refused to obey its edicts. It prosecuted crusades, it promoted all kinds of propaganda, it obstructed truth, locked the Bibles away from people, persecuted honest of heart people who had questions and were seeking truth, such as Galileo, Tyndale, Luther.

And the evolutionists have accepted the wine of Babylon, they believe the lie that the God of the Bible is this evil, satanic, abusive, coercive beast who is unworthy of our love, trust, and worship and therefore they have rejected the Bible and the true God and advanced their own false theories. And Satan has two false sides fighting back and forth, those claiming they believe in the God of the Bible, but present Him as a dictator who uses power to kill the disobedient, and the godless who claim all life originated on its own.

When we return to design law, it always leads to unity. People of different religions, or no religion at all, never argue over whether they will fall or float if they jump off a building, whether they will live or die if they tie a plastic bag over their head. They argue when they think of God’s law as imposed—

- What is the legal (authorized, right) way to be baptized
- Who has the legal authority to baptize? A priest, ordained pastor, men women?
- Who has the legal right to conduct a communion ceremony or offer the Eucharist, only individuals ordained to the pastorate or priesthood by a denominational church system?
- What is the legal day to attend church?
- What is the right way to observe Sabbath?
- Or in the world today all the human laws passed and repealed by this group or that group all claiming that they are merely pursuing justice.

And on and on it goes...

So understand to the degree any religion, church, or organization teaches that God’s law functions like human law, they are advancing Babylon and obstructing the unity that is inherent in our faith.

And that leads us to a sentence right in the middle of our quote from the lesson, the true people of God, the pure woman, the true church the lesson says “is not defiled with the corruption of false doctrines.”



Certainly the wine of Babylon contains falsehoods, but is having the pure wine simply about having the right doctrinal list? Or is the pure wine symbolic of the pure life of Christ and thus the pure wine includes pure hearts and right spirits, godly motives and methods and principles in our practices, with unwavering loyalty to God in all we do?

The Jews who killed Christ had the right doctrinal list, but they were not pure in heart.

Salvation is not found in cognitive correctness of Bible facts or doctrines, it is found in purity of motive, principle, practice—purity of heart.

Lies believed break the circle of love and trust, so to the degree we believe lies about God then our ability to trust Him is undermined and fear and selfishness is inflamed. So, we must know the truth and the truth will set us free, but understand, it is the truth about God, not the truth about the Sabbath—people can have the right Bible Sabbath but the wrong god and murder the Lord of the Sabbath.

SUNDAY

Two Contrasting Systems—what do you understand these two systems to be?

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and **have the testimony of Jesus Christ.** (Revelation 12:17 NKJV).

Who are these faithful people, the end-time children of the faithful woman, God's true people at the end of time?

They have two defining characteristics—they obey God's commandments and have the testimony of Jesus. What does this mean? Is it describing a denomination, so that one becomes a part of this end-time people simply by officially joining the right denomination? Or is it describing a group of people who have some qualities that set them apart from the enemies of God regardless of denomination?

What is the testimony of Jesus?

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10 NKJV).

What does that mean? Some in the SDA church have argued it means that the end-time true church will be identified by having a prophet, someone who has the Biblical gift of prophecy. These same faithful and well-meaning Adventists then identify EG White as fitting that role. So they argue that the SDA church fits the description of these end-time faithful people, because the organized church teaches people to keep all ten commandment and EGW had the gift of prophecy.

What do you think? Is this what Revelation means?



Hmmm...a couple of questions—what about the Seventh-day Baptists, who keep all ten commandments and believe in the Bible? Is the Bible the gift of prophecy? Why or why not? For those who believe that EG White had the gift of prophecy, today all they have are her writings, which would mean they have the writings of a dead prophet. Isn't that what the Bible is, the writings of dead prophets?

So, is that what Revelation is speaking about, a denomination of people who keep all ten commandments and have the writings of a dead prophet? Or is Revelation speaking about something more than this?

Consider Revelation 19:10 from some other versions:

- For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10 NKJV).
- For the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10 NET)
- For the truth that Jesus revealed is what inspires the prophets. (Revelation 19:10 GNT)
- Because the message about Jesus is the spirit that gives all prophecy. (Revelation 19:10 NCV).

What is the meaning of the phrase “the testimony of Jesus”? It is simple and straightforward—What testimony did Jesus give when He was here on Earth?

- “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9 NIV84).
- “You do not know me or my Father,” Jesus replied. “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” (John 8:19 NIV84).
- “I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do... I have revealed you.” (John 17: 4, 6 NIV84).

What is the testimony of Jesus? The truth about the Father, the truth about God! And that truth is the truth with which the Holy Spirit inspires all the prophets? The truth about God!

So my paraphrase of Revelation 19:10:

For the testimony Jesus gave about his Father is the same as that which inspired the prophets. (Revelation 19:10 REM).

Thus, the identifier of the end-time people of God is that they will give the same testimony about God that Jesus gave, that:

- God is the Creator
- His laws are design laws
- God is for us
- God is not the cause of pain, suffering, and death.
- God is not legally required to inflict punishment for sin
- God does not need a legal payment of a human sacrifice to propitiate His wrath
- God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish



- God is for us and not against us!

The true people of God will have the truth about God and give the testimony about God that Jesus gave, and that truth is what inspires all the prophets, or spokespersons for God.

Understand this clearly, **God does not send His Holy Spirit to empower people to lie about Him.** Thus, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and the primary truth is the truth about God and God's end-time people give the same testimony about God that Jesus gave.

Ask,

- Does your denominational church present the Father in the same light that Jesus did? Or has your denominational church been infected with a pagan view of God, a Babylonian view, that presents God as a being who makes up rules and then uses external power to inflict punishment upon rule-breakers just like Nebuchadnezzar did when he threw Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego into the furnace?
- Does your denominational church teach that God is the source of torment and death as just punishment for sin?
- Does your church teach that God needs an intercessor a mediator to plead with Him in order to prevent Him from lashing out with divine wrath to punish sinners?
- If your denomination teaches any of these ideas then it reveals that it is infected with the wine of Babylon. And taking that view of God to the world does not constitute the end-time remnant people or message of God.

So other versions of Revelation 12:17 read:

- Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and **hold to the testimony of Jesus.** (Revelation 12:17 NIV84).
- The dragon was furious with the woman and went off to fight against the rest of her descendants, all those who obey God's commandments and are **faithful to the truth revealed by Jesus.** (Revelation 12:17 GNT)
- So the dragon became enraged at the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep God's commandments and **hold to the testimony about Jesus.** (Revelation 12:17 NET)

What about keeping the commandments, this is the second indicator of who are the end-time people of God? What does that mean?

Last week we explored at length the question of the Sabbath, does this mean that the people of God are identified by their observance of the Bible Sabbath of the fourth commandment, along with the other nine?

Or does keeping the commandments of God mean more than weekly rest from employment and faithfully attending church?



Some have interpreted this is a very legal way, a rules-oriented way, a way that is through the lens of Babylon, that God's law functions like human law, and thus make a legal religion that has the right rules and if you do the right rules then you are a member of God's end-time people. Is that what it means?

I believe it is very simple and straightforward. The true people of God, know God the Father and Son for themselves, personally and intimately, and thus give the same testimony about God Jesus gave, and because they know and trust God, God's design law principles of truth, love, and freedom are written upon their hearts and they live out God's law of love in how they treat others.

MONDAY

Read the third paragraph,

Revelation 17:2 continues its dramatic portrayal: “ ‘And the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication’ ” (NKJV). The symbolism of the pure juice of the grape is used throughout the New Testament to represent the untainted, pure blood of Christ poured out for our salvation on the cross (Matt. 26:27–29). In Luke 22:20, Jesus says, “ ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood’ ” (NKJV). When the pure, new wine of the gospel is distorted, and the teachings of the Word of God are replaced with the teachings of human religious leaders, it becomes the “wine of Babylon.” (See Matt. 15:9.) (Adult SS Guide Second Quarter 2023, Three Cosmic Messages p.74)

The idea here is correct, the wine of Babylon represents corruption of the pure by an element that degrades it into something that confuses the mind and intoxicates the soul.

But it is not talking about ethanol; Wine is a symbol—the pure wine as a symbol in the NT replaces the OT symbol of blood. Remember, Jesus said,

I tell you the truth, unless you eat the **flesh** of the Son of Man and drink his **blood**, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. **For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.** (John 6:52-55 NIV84)

And at the last supper Jesus replaced the sacrificial symbols of the flesh of the lamb and blood of the sacrifice, with bread and wine. What do these symbols mean in reality?

Jesus is the Word, the truth of God, made flesh (John 1:1, 14). And just as flesh and bread become building blocks of our physical bodies, so also the truth that Jesus brings becomes the building blocks of our beliefs, ideas, thoughts, which form our values, perspectives, worldview, ultimately leading us back to the knowledge of and trust in God.



Then when we trust God we open the heart and He pours His life giving presence of love into our hearts (Romans 5:5), and the Bible says that the life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11) which is symbolically found in the pure wine.

Thus, the symbolism is teaching we must return to the truth and love of God, the flesh/blood, bread/wine.

But the false system has a false set of values, beliefs, and life-blood. Instead of the truth of God's character of love and design law principles, it is driven by the intoxicating lies and inspiring motives of fear, selfishness, power, and control manifest in imposed law and coercive enforcement. Zealots on missions for their god using the power of the state to enforce their way.

This corrupt, pagan, imposed law system, is the system the entire world has embraced and used to advance its way and what it calls justice. The entire world is drunk on the belief that if they can just get their people into political power then they can usher in a new age of prosperity and health by passing more laws and forcing more people to do what the state says. **It is delusional...it can never happen and in fact the more government enforcement the more division, conflict, and ultimately the more destruction of the image of God in people.**

The lesson points out that the false church is called a harlot or prostitute who commits adultery. What are your thoughts on this?

I will explore a little of this from some of the material in our magazine Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation:

WEDNESDAY

Read second paragraph,

Christ is the solid foundation His church is built upon. His church is based on the teachings of His Word and guided by His Spirit. On the contrary, Babylon, as we have seen, is rooted in human-made teachings and traditions. Any religious leader who substitutes human opinions or traditions in the place of, or above, the revealed will of God in the Scriptures is simply fostering Babylonian confusion. (Adult SS Guide Second Quarter 2023, Three Cosmic Messages p.76)

This is well said, the false system is a system based upon human law rather than God's. The problem is that most of the religious world argues over which law is God's and which is human tradition, rather than the type of law itself.

Many SDA's fail to realize that one can have the right form of baptism, the right Sabbath day, the right Bible, but if one presents those truths through human imposed law, then despite having the right



doctrine, one still has the wrong law, and the wrong god, and advances Satan's kingdom—just like those who kept the right Sabbath 2000 years ago but crucified the Lord of the Sabbath.

This leads us to Thursday's lesson which is about idolatry,

THURSDAY

What is idolatry? Is it merely worshiping idols made of wood and stone? Or is Idolatry any form of false worship?

Can one worship a being they call Jesus Christ and be an idol worshiper?

Can a person worship a being they call something other than Jesus Christ and be faithful to the true God?

For instance, could a person worship a being they call El-Shaddai rather than Jesus Christ, or perhaps Joshua the Messiah, or Adonai, or Michael, or Bright and Morning Star?

Is it the word one uses when worshiping God that matters, or is who one understands God to be that matters?

When Jesus said in John 17:3 that life eternal is knowing God and the Son, does that mean knowing the right words to call them by, or does it mean knowing them?

For instance, think of your spouse, perhaps you have a nickname for your spouse—if a stranger overhears you using that nickname and learns it, and then calls your spouse by that nickname—does that mean they know your spouse or your spouse knows them?

This is what Jesus was trying to get people to understand when He said,

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not **prophesy in your name, and in your name** drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, '**I never knew you.** Away from me, you evildoers!' (Matthew 7:22-23 NIV84).

They know the words "Jesus Christ" but they do not know Him personally, they don't know His character, methods, or principles. They use the name Jesus to advance a system of religion that functions like this world, that operates upon Satan's principles of coercive enforcement, despite the fact that they set up schools, orphanages, hospitals, and carry out exorcisms.

These people, doing things in the name of Jesus Christ, are idolaters.

God prophesied through Malachi that,



“Before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, I will send you the prophet Elijah. He will bring fathers and children together again” (Malachi 4:5, 6).

Elijah was sent to confront Baal worship in ancient Israel, and Malachi prophesies that the Elijah message will be needed again before the second coming of Christ.

Who was Baal that Israel worshiped and Elijah confronted?

- Baal was the son of El (i.e., El-ohim or El-Shaddai).
- He was the god of weather and was often called “Almighty” and “Lord of the Earth.”
- Baal was the god who brought rain, thunder, lightning, who fertilized the earth, controlled the sun, and brought the harvest.
- Baal fought the great serpent leviathan
- Baal battled against Mot, the god of death.
- And most amazing of all, it was taught that Baal died in his battle with Mot and was resurrected to bring life to earth.

So what was the problem with worshiping a god who was the “husband and protector of Israel,” the son of El, who controlled the weather, who brought rain, sunshine, and fertility, who blessed with a full harvest, who warred against the great serpent and death, who died and was resurrected to bring life to the earth? What was wrong with this god? What was Elijah opposing? What made Baal worship false?

One commentary states:

“Determined to keep the people in deception, the priests of Baal continue to offer sacrifices to their gods and to call upon them night and day to refresh the earth. **With costly offerings the priests attempt to appease the anger of their gods ...**” (Prophets and Kings, p. 124)

The Bible confirms this:

“So the prophets prayed louder and cut themselves with knives and daggers, **according to their custom, until blood flowed**” (1 Kings 18:28).

Baal became:

- Zeus to the Greeks
- Jupiter to the Romans
- Thor to the Norse people
- Jesus Christ to those Christians who worship a punishing god who requires the blood of a human sacrifice to appease his anger to prevent him from using his power to destroy us.

This pagan, penal/legal system of theology, is modern day Baal worship and the message for this time, the message ordained by God is to call people out of this penal/legal pagan system back to worshiping



the Creator whose laws are design laws and who sacrificed Himself to provide the remedy to cure us from our terminal sin condition.

Consider this historical quote:

Thousands have a **false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal.** Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. (Faith I Live By 59).



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

New Administrative Director for Come and Reason Ministries:

Francesca Brewster has served as our Administrative Director since 2016. And we have all been blessed by her loving and faithful work for us over the years. God has blessed Fran and Sam with two beautiful children and she has decided, that she needs to be at home with her children. Therefore, Fran is leaving her position as our Administrative Director to be a full-time mother. We will miss Fran, and I know many of you will also. One month from now, at our June potluck, we will have a special farewell thank you for Fran. So, if you have a note, a card, or would like to express your appreciation to Fran in person, please join us Sabbath June 10.

Today, I want to introduce you to our new Administrative Director, Dessya Palit.

Dessya is well qualified to take on this position. She has a Bachelors in Business Administration Marketing & Finance, with a Minor in Accounting from Southwestern Adventist University. She has experience in marketing, management, purchasing, and accounting, and has worked for other not for profit organizations in the past.

Dessya will start this Tuesday May 16, 2023.

Please join me in welcoming Dessya to our team.

NEW MAGAZINE: Critical Race Theory: Exposing the Lies While Advancing the Gospel, is now available!

New Billboard Resource:

In response to requests from our listeners, we have developed some billboards, and will be developing and releasing new ones periodically. They will be released in sets that have the same slogan with different layouts and images. These are available for anyone who would like to download and use them in their community. Come and Reason Ministries is not, at this time, planning on purchasing billboard space, but we are making these available for those who want to put billboards up in their community.

Podcasts:

We have a weekly podcast about 13 minutes long that is available to be delivered to your device if you sign up for it.

Remedy app:

The Remedy is available as a free app and includes the New Testament, Psalms and Genesis.

Materials in Australia:

Simon and Maani Harrison have a Facebook group in Australia and have the following Come and Reason resources available in Australia:



- CIBTS
- God is Love Children's book
- The Heavenly Sanctuary for the Modern World
- The Final Message of Mercy
- The Remedy NT
- The Remedy of the Lord in Song
- First set of tracts

You can email Simon at australia@comeandreason.com

Materials in South Africa:

Jacques van den Heever has materials available in South Africa you can email him at comeandreason.sa@gmail.com

Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 & 17 Now Available in South Africa!