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BABYLON IS FALLEN

“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Rev. 18:2

The word “Babylon” means *confusion*. It is here used symbolically, since the literal city by that name was at the time of this writing “a mass of ruins.” The literal city was doubtless a figure or type of the symbolic city, and much of the threatening of Isa. 21, and Jer. 50, and 51, is unquestionably of two-fold application and fulfillment: first, upon literal Babylon, the type and more fully upon symbolic Babylon, the antitype. Both are called “Babylon the Great.” Both rule over the kings of the earth. The literal was built upon the river *Euphrates* and derived wealth and splendor from this source. “O thou that dwellest upon many waters.” Jer. 51:13. The symbolic is said to be “seated upon many waters—peoples, nations &c.,” from which it derives its support.

The fall of the literal was by the turning aside of the waters, and the drying up of the Euphrates. And the symbolic river Euphrates is said, in connection “with the fall of symbolic Babylon, to be dried up.” Rev. 16:12.

Each is compared to a *stone cast into the water*. “Thus shall Babylon sink and shall not rise.” Jer. 51:64. “Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down.” Rev. 18:21.

Now let us inquire what is represented by the symbol. As originally planted by Jesus and his apostles the church was a “chaste virgin espoused to one husband, even Christ.” For some time she maintained her purity and suffered persecution of the world, but gradually became enamored of the world and the prospects it offered, and finally united with it, constituting the *system* of Papacy. This *system church*, living in union with the world constitutes “the abomination”—“the harlot,” and the name Babylon, meaning *confusion* is applicable because the world is called a *beast* and the church a *woman*. This then was the union of the woman and the beast which is expressly forbidden in type. (Lev. 18:23. “It is confusion.”) We feel sure that we have the name Babylon properly applied since in Rev. 17 we see the church seated on the beast—i.e. supported by and controlling the world. “And in her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abomination of the earth.” Rev. 17:5.

The following verse shows that in her apostate condition she was *Anti*— (against) *Christ*, for she

was drunken with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus. Mark me—I do not say that all the members of the Catholic church became abominations to the Lord, but that the *Papacy as a SYSTEM*—church-state organization is here pictured. And we must go further and implicate, (not the individual members, but the church systems) other churches united to the Empires of earth. Every church claiming to be a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, but in reality united to and supported by the world (beast) we must condemn as being in scripture language a *harlot church*. To illustrate: The Episcopal is the established church of England—the Greek church, of Russia—the Presbyterian church, of Scotland—the Lutheran, of Norway, &c. The true church composed of all who love the Lord Jesus in truth and sincerity whether in or out of these organizations, who wait for the coming Bridegroom, he recognizes; but she that is joined to another he calls an abomination—a harlot. These are off-shoots from the Papacy. She was a harlot and the *mother of harlots* and we mean no disrespect to fellow christians when we term their church systems the daughters, and therefore parts of the system of confusion—*Babylon*.

But you will say—Our churches in this country particularly, are not parts of the Babylon, because they are not church-state organizations. Wait a moment; Let us inquire: Is our church—Baptist, Methodist or which ever, is it a *chaste virgin* or not? Does she live with the world, or separate from the world? We believe that every true church member loyal to the coming Bridegroom, feels with shame and pain that the *nominal church* is unfaithful to her espousal and is locked in the embrace of the world.

She still bears the name of Christ and claims to be his. She claims to be desirous of knowing and doing what would please the Lord, but actually studies and does what will please the world. She has a form of Godliness but really is far from God-like-ness. Who studies as carefully, or obeys more implicitly the world's dictates as to propriety of dress and etiquette than professors of Christianity? Everything is done with an eye to the world's approval. The sermon must be such as will please and entertain carnally minded men of the world, for they give tone and character and backing to the organization. These must be trustees and stewards and be made to feel an interest in her and give largely of their wealth. No matter how obtained, wealth she wants and wealth she must have. She has commenced the adaptation of herself to the ideas of the world, and cannot go back. She felt that she must erect a grand church building with the tallest spire, and that every inch she added to the spire and every dollar added to the cost of building would help draw to her bosom some of the world's children with bags of gold. She lives luxuriously with the world, and is supported by the world. Her homage to the world becomes almost a necessity when it is remembered that he really built the *temple of fashion* in which she professes to worship God but really bows to mammon. The world though caressing and flattering, wants the interest on the church mortgage, and if the church cannot think of a way to get it scripturally, he has plans for festivals, grab games and church theatricals. She hesitates for a moment only, to thus disgrace

and prostitute herself. The money must be raised. It would be useless to ask the Lord for it since she disregarded his wishes by contracting the debt. Necessity knows no law, and though the pure ones rich in faith, protest and weep for her condition, yet *they* are the poor of this world, and the poor of the worldly church seldom occupy a church office of any influence, and their protests and entreaties are drowned by the exultant songs and shouts of the gay company who “glory in their shame.” Enjoying the world’s smile they exclaim: “We are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, knowing not that they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.” Rev. 3:17.

“O that thou hadst known even in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.”

Yes we believe the nominal church of to-day to be the Babylon of our text, which falls. It commenced to be a condition of confusion with the mother and it continues to the end of the age. The church, anxious for numbers and money, has offered every inducement to get members, particularly those of wealth. Socials are arranged at which the wives and daughters are expected (even though followers of Jesus) to so dress and act as to decoy and captivate worldly and carnally minded men. Soon such a one is called brother and urged to join the church. At first he feels shocked at being asked to become a church member. He has heard of people being converted, having a change of heart &c., but soon settles down to the thought that he is as good as others, that morality is the needed thing, and finding it to be a passport to the best society and an aid to business he does not long refuse. Now he is a member of church in good and regular standing; perhaps begins to like and feel interested in church affairs; becomes an officer in the Sunday school. Now he is looked upon as one of the principal

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members, a bell sheep, a representative of the flower of the flock. Who shall measure the baneful influence of this wolf in sheep’s clothing upon the true sheep and lambs, supplanting truths with errors, ignoring true faith and trust and fostering and encouraging pride and worldliness, to say nothing of the effects upon the world when, it may be after having been years with the flock, this influential member is discovered to be a thief, who for years has systematically stolen from his employers, who had the utmost confidence in him because of his church connections? So the whole flock becomes suspected of being hypocrites, until now very few business men consider it any recommendation to an employee, to know that he is a christian. Nor should this be wondered at when we reflect that if any large defalcation or financial irregularity occurs you will find yourself as well as the infidel inquiring—Of what church is he a prominent member?

In this way the church—“Babylon”—has become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul

spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird,” as shown in our text.

Jesus prophesied of this in parable when he said—“The kingdom of heaven (church) is like to a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field, which, when grown, is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” Matt. 13:31. Verses 4 and 19 show us that the birds represent the devil. The church had a small beginning but afterwards spread out into many branches, and the representatives of the devil—hypocrites—wolves in sheep’s clothing—came and lodged among the branches. But our text says: “Babylon is fallen.” What is the fall and when will it occur? The fall we believe, will be from her exalted position of control and respect with the world, to one of ignominy and contempt. The fall we expect will not be instantaneous; it will have a beginning and will gather momentum as it falls until it is dashed to pieces. As to when her fall is due, we can perhaps learn something by examining the parallels between the Jewish and the Gospel church. As has been shown heretofore, the Law was a shadow of the Gospel, and the Jewish

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church under the law, a pattern of the christian church under the gospel; the one on the fleshly, the other on the spiritual plane, each called Israel.

We know how their age ended with the advent of Christ in the flesh, so he is to be present in the end of this age, a spiritual body. We know that he called the end of that age a “harvest” to the fleshly house and that He also says: “The harvest is the end of this world” (age). You will recollect that their age from the death of Jacob (Israel) to Christ’s baptism—the beginning of their harvest—was 1841-1/2 years, and that the parallels show that the harvest of this age and Christ’s presence (a spiritual body) was due to commence in the fall of 1874, or 1841-1/2 years, from the spring of A.D. 33

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when Jesus (*our Israel*) died.

As the proclamation of Jesus as the present king and bridegroom was made to fleshly Israel for three and one-half years from his baptism to his crucifixion but heeded by but few of that church, so we believe a similar work was done in the midst of the Gospel church with similar results. As had been foretold by the prophet: “He shall be a stone of stumbling to *both houses* of Israel. Both stumbled at the *manner* of his coming. The Jew expected splendor and majesty, overlooking the fact that he must first be the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and by the grace of God taste death for every man.

The Gospel church expected to see him coming in all his glory, whereas scriptures teach that when he appears in glory *we* will be with him and *appear* with him; that “The Lord my God shall come and *all thy saints* with thee.” They overlooked the fact that he taught that he would first harvest the earth and separate wheat from tares—true children from hypocrites—before he would cause them to “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Many have stumbled, only a few recognize that we are living “in the days of the son of man.” (Luke 17:26.)

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As at the end of his three-and-one-half year’s ministry, Jesus wept over that church, gave them up and said: “Your house is left unto you desolate,” so we believe that at the parallel point of time—the spring of 1878, the nominal gospel church was given up and their house left desolate. Until the harvest of their age, all outward Jews—“wheat and chaff” were spoken to and of as Israel but Jesus did a separating work—“His fan is in his hand” to winnow the chaff from among the wheat and when the work of separation is accomplished the wheat only is recognized. So here true and false grow side by side in the church and together they are nominally “The kingdom of Heaven”—“Let both grow together until the harvest”—but in the harvest of this age “He will gather *out of his kingdom* all things that offend,” &c. Matt. 13:30,41. But since the spring of 1878 we believe that the *nominal* church is cast off and now only the wheat—“the little flock”—is to be considered the church and we believe this to be the date of the beginning of the fall of *Babylon church*, the parallel to the date of the fall of the church of the Scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites, who encompassed sea and land to make one proselyte.” Their fall was gradual, so is Babylon’s.

This rejection of the nominal—Babylon church—by the Lord seems to be illustrated in the picture of the church in its seven stages. Rev. 3:16. The seventh or last boasting of her being rich, increased in goods, &c., is pronounced by the Lord poor, naked, miserable, wretched and blind, and is spewed from his mouth. Once she was the mouth-piece of God; he spoke and taught through her, but now she is spewed out, “*Babylon is fallen.*” Who cannot recognize that *Babylon is now falling* in the esteem of the world, which points to its children as more honorable, honest and faithful than the many Pastors and great ones in the church, of whose fall into great sins we hear almost daily.

The public press now takes every advantage to sneer at, and compare the lives and acts of christians with infidels—thus saying—“How is the mighty fallen?”

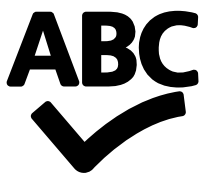
There was much wheat in the Jewish church, when given up, so too there is much wheat among the chaff and tares of the Babylon church. As God cared for and separated every true grain of wheat in that given up church (among them was Paul) and called them out into the true Gospel church, so now in this harvest he cares for every grain and now calls to them by his word—Rev.

18:4. "COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Do you advise us to disconnect ourselves from the church? I advise you to be separate from the world. If the church with which you are connected, lives in adulterous union with the world, you must, if you would keep your garments white, leave her, "hating even the garments spotted by the flesh." Jude 23. With her condition, you can have no fellowship nor communion and the words of Paul 2 Cor. 6:15,18, would apply to you: "What concord hath Christ with belial? What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God." ... "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the *unclean thing*, and I will receive you." If on the contrary you associate with a company who live separate from, and endeavor to keep themselves unspotted from the world and bearing the fruits of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, Godliness, brotherly-kindness &c., be assured it is no part of Babylon. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching," but, "building up yourselves in the most holy faith ... keep yourselves in the love of God." But we have a standing as individuals aside from our church standing. As individuals we have become joined to Christ and recognize him as our head and director. We have professed to have died to the world and to have become alive toward God through Jesus. Is our life conduct in harmony with our covenant with Christ? Are we entirely his? Is it our meat and drink to do his will? The profession is vain unless it is true. "His servants you are, to whom you render service." Our day is one of peculiar temptation from the world. If in business, it seems to require every moment and every energy, and we are in danger of being swallowed up by the cares of this life which press upon us every moment. Remember Jesus' words: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."—"Be not overcharged with the cares of this life." Living in the world be not of it.

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— November, 1879 —



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