

Babylon Is Fallen, Part Three
By Bob Vincent

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Trinity Presbyterian Church
2623 N Robison Road
Texarkana, TX 75501

Website: www.rbvincent.com
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/rbvincent

Revelation chapter 14 beginning on page 1928, verse 6.

Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. 7 He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” 8 A second angel followed and said, “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.” 9 A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, 10 he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. (Revelation 14:6–10)

The word of the Lord. [“Thanks be to God.”]

Let’s pray.

Heavenly Father, please help me. I’m an old man with an aging brain. Please help me not to get confused, forget what I’ve written out, Please help me to deliver a message to the people here and who watch on the internet that all who hear may be drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ. Help me, Lord, to lift up the Lord Jesus Christ and him crucified, that we may know him and love him. For Jesus’ sake, amen.

Now, I mentioned last week that I suspended my series on the book of Revelation because I wanted to restudy the book, and that's why I spent 13 months preaching on other things, including Bible characters, which was a series that I had left from my previous church, and so I did that concluding with the Prophet Elisha part 10. I want to share with you one area in particular where I've changed my mind. And even though I'm an old dog, I'm an old man; I'm not an old dog. And so therefore I can learn some new tricks.

Who Is Babylon in the Book of Revelation?

I want to talk to you today about who is Babylon in the book of Revelation. Who is Babylon in the book of Revelation? It isn't the historic city of Babylon. That's very plain. But Babylon is a symbol of great wickedness, and we see that if we turn over, for example, to chapter 17, where we find these words which are right striking. And he says here, you see it in page 1931, in big bold letters:

This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON
THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF
THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. (Revelation 17:5)

Babylon Is Connected to the Tower of Babel and Adam's Raised Hand.

Mystery, Babylon. So, what is the mystery of Babylon? The mystery of Babylon is, if you go back in the foundation of the city, after the Genesis Flood, you discover that the mythologies that have corrupted the nations of the earth all have their roots in that historic city. And that's where, of course, God confused the nations, where they built a tower. They built a ziggurat in order to reach heaven.

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.
2 As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and
settled there. 3 They said to each other, "Come, let's make
bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of
stone, and tar for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build
ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so
that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered
over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:1-4)

Think about what that is. You remember Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? They reached up to take the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had forbidden them that.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. (Genesis 3:6)

And what I want us to see is that at the Tower of Babel, mankind has determined to unite with its knowledge and its technology and to reach up a defiant fist to God. That's what that ziggurat; that's what that Tower of Babel means.

And God did something to the Tower of Babel: he sent confusion on human languages, and so people are there building. Whatever they're speaking—I don't know the language they spoke, but suddenly someone says “Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz,” and another guy says “Kuka-wanga-dingo,” and they don't understand each other. Their brains were rewired by Almighty God in a moment of time.

Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” 8 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth. (Genesis 11:7-9)

And so what that led to was a destruction of the united technologies of all the peoples of the earth, “to be as god” to reach up to heaven a fist of defiance, and God separated the nations of the earth there—seventy great nations, and he assigned them under various angelic powers (Genesis 11:1-9; Daniel 10:12-13; Deuteronomy 32:8-9).

The Greek Septuagint gives the following about subordinate spirits who dominate nations, ages and cultures: “When the Most High divided the nations, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number

of the angels of God. And his people Jacob became the portion of the LORD, Israel was the line of his inheritance” (Dt 32:8-9).

The Septuagint replaces “the sons of Israel” (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) with “the angels of God” (ἁγγέλων θεοῦ). This has found support in the Dead Sea Scrolls (the reading could be either בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים or בְּנֵי לַאֲלֵהִים). Patrick W. Skehan sheds light:

Mention should first be made to another Qumran fragment . . . Deuteronomy 32:8 is unquestionably the source . . . The result is our first evidence in an ancient Hebrew manuscript for the reading of *lemispar bene El*, regularly inferred from the LXX form of this verse and surely original. . . . (Skehan 1954, 12-15)

Gerhard von Rod comments: “He subordinated one nation to each of the heavenly beings who had to take care of it like a guardian angel” (von Rod 1962, 196). Von Rod’s comments are supported by the Apocryphal book of Sirach: “He appointed a ruler for every nation, but Israel is the Lord’s own portion” (ἐκάστῳ ἔθνει κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον, καὶ μερὶς κυρίου Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν, Sir 17:17, Revised Standard Version) (Robert Benn Vincent, Sr. (2010) *Christian and Muslim Dialogue with a Gospel Focus*, (Jackson, MS: Reformed Theological Seminary), p. 62).

So, you had a spirit of this and a spirit of that over those principalities and powers. And that’s very interesting if you look at Genesis 11 in that regard.

Babylon Is the Fountainhead of Corrupt Worship.

But Babylon is the foundation, and there are myths that come out of Babylon. And so that’s one reason why the book of Revelation cites it. It also cites Babylon because if you look at the prophet Jeremiah, he cites Babylon over and over again as the great enemy of God’s people.

Babylon will be a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn, a place where no one lives. (Jeremiah 51:37)

Babylon must fall because of Israel's slain, just as the slain in all the earth have fallen because of Babylon. (Jeremiah 51:49)

But the Babylonian army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, 9 and he was captured. He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him. 10 There at Riblah the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah. 11 Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon, where he put him in prison till the day of his death. 12 On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 13 **He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down.** 14 The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 52:8–14)

So, who is Babylon as we look at the New Testament? And we discover there that it is a city that in chapter 18, turning over to the right, it is a city that, terrified in verse 10:

Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: "Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power! (Revelation 18:10)

And so, God destroys this Babylon, but who is this Babylon?

I Changed my Mind About the Beast.

Where I've changed my mind goes back to chapter 13, and it has to do with the identity of the beast, because the beast is connected to Babylon. Turn with me, if you will, back to chapter 13, and let's look there for a moment. And that's page 1927, 13:1.

And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. (Revelation 13:1)

Now the dragon there is very plainly Satan. That's who he is. And he corresponds in his mimicry to God the Father. Satan is the dragon. And then we see in the second sentence of verse one.

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. (Revelation 13:1)

So here is a beast coming up out of the sea and then the beast is described in verse two in imagery taken from the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel.

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream. 2 Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. 3 Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea. 4 "The first was like a **lion**, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it. 5 "And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a **bear**. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!' 6 "After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a **leopard**. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. 7 "After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a **fourth beast**—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. (Daniel 7:1-7)

Revelation 13:2

The beast I saw resembled a **leopard** but had feet like those of a **bear** and a mouth like that of a **lion**. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

So, let's think about that for a moment. I want you to think about the city of Rome because that's what I think is clearly in view.

When Roman soldiers came to the parts of their empire that were located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, they generally came by ship so what you have is for example Caesarea by the Sea was headquarters. That's where Paul was kept as a prisoner for a period of time. That's where the soldiers would come when they were coming to Palestine, and they would land there by sea.

But what is really intriguing here is this if we read on.

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. 4 Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" 5 The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. (Revelation 13:3-5)

And you know this theme, 42 months is three and a half years—time, times, and a half a time—1,260 days.

It corresponds to the last half of the last week of Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks.

And so, we read further in verse seven:

He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. 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. (Revelation 13:7-8)

Now, going down further to the very end of that page and flipping over in verse 16 on page 1928:

He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, 17 so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666. (Revelation 13:16-18)

I Believe that Nero Is the Initial Fulfillment of the Beast.

Now here's where I've really changed my mind. I now believe that the beast is Nero, Nero of the first century. Caligula was nuts, as you may recall, "Little Boots," he was the emperor Gaius.

But Nero is the one who begins to persecute Christians in an unprecedented way. And why is he called a beast?

Do you know that the emperor Nero, who was incredibly cruel, who did set fire to the city of Rome because he fashioned himself to be God, and he used to go into the Temple of Jupiter, who was the chief god of the Roman pantheon, corresponding to the Greek pantheon, Zeus.

He used to go into Jupiter's temple because he himself believed he was equal to Jupiter, equal to Zeus. He was God. And he forced people to worship him. (I was wrong. This is what the emperor Gaius did, called Caius by Josephus).

Nay, Caius's madness came to this height, that when he had a daughter born, he carried her into the capitol, and put her upon the knees of the statue, and said that the child was common to him and to Jupiter, and determined that she had two fathers,—but which of these fathers were the greatest, he left undetermined (Flavius Josephus (1970), *Antiquities of the Jews, Complete Works*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications), Book XIX, Chapter 1).

And so inflamed did he become in his hatred, particularly of Christians, because they would not submit to him and acknowledge him to be God, that he did unbelievable things.

Let me cite a couple. Nero would take Christians and put them in the skins of animals and cover them with things such as pitch and he would crucify them, and he would sometimes ride his chariot as these Christians were set on fire on poles providing light.

NERO CLAUDIUS CAESAR. (337)

LVII. He died in the thirty-second year of his age ...

(385) The tyrant scrupled not to charge them with the act of burning Rome; and he satiated his fury against them by such outrages as are unexampled in history. They were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and torn by dogs; were crucified, and set on fire, that they might serve for lights in the night-time. Nero offered his gardens for this spectacle, and exhibited the games of the Circus by this dreadful illumination. Sometimes they were covered with wax and other combustible materials, after which a sharp stake was put under their chin, to make them stand upright, and they were burnt alive, to give light to the spectators.

(Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. *De vita Caesarum* (Latin; lit. "About the Life of the Caesars"), The Twelve Caesars or The Lives of the Twelve Caesars

(https://www.gutenberg.org/files/6400/6400-h/6400-h.htm#link2H_4_0004))

He also dressed himself in animal skins himself because he saw himself as a beast, as a violent ferocious carnivorous animal and he would attack human beings who were chained so they couldn't get free and he would eat part of their body parts while they were alive.

XXIX. He prostituted his own chastity to such a degree, that (358) after he had defiled every part of his person with some unnatural pollution, he at last invented an extraordinary kind of diversion; which was, to be let out of a den in the arena, covered with the skin of a wild beast, and then assail with violence the private parts both of men and women, while they were bound to stakes. (*ibid.*)

Did you know that? Nero was an unbelievably wicked and evil man and what happened is he wielded such power in Rome that everyone was afraid of him because he took any person's wife he wanted to take, and he

completely destroyed anyone who opposed him so that the Roman Senate became very sycophantic, and they did everything he wanted them to do.

And he fancied himself a great musician and so he would play and people would fawn over him and flattering, and isn't that something because we find that in today's world that when someone obtains real power, that person is surrounded by fawning, flattering, sycophantic people.

And so here is Nero. Imagine that. And he actually put himself in animal skins and chewed and ate body parts of living human beings. He truly was the beast.

And I used to be dismissive of the two things that you can find a cipher here with 666. If you take the number 666 and you convert it you can get two different things. One is *Lateinos*, which means Roman kingdom or Latin kingdom or man.

Alphabet	Value
L (lambda)	30
A (alpha)	1
T (tau)	300
E (epsilon)	5
I (iota)	10
N (nu)	50
O (omicron)	70
S (sigma)	200
Total	666

And the other one is this, and I was always dismissive of it. In Hebrew, you get the letters *Neron Kaisar*, which is Nero Caesar.

<i>Resh</i> (ר)	<i>Samekh</i> (ס)	<i>Qoph</i> (ק)	<i>Nun</i> (נ)	<i>Vav</i> (ו)	<i>Resh</i> (ר)	<i>Nun</i> (נ)	Sum
200	60	100	50	6	200	50	666

And so, the book of Revelation has codes in it, it has ciphers in it, because it's written to comfort people who were alive and suffering under this monster.

And so, I believe that Babylon refers to the Roman Empire and the beast refers to Nero. Nero later commits suicide when he realized that he had run out of favors and people had finally had a belly full and they were going to kill him. So, he commits suicide to keep from being tortured.

He drove a dagger into his throat, being assisted in the act by Epaphroditus, his secretary. A centurion bursting in just as he was half-dead, and applying his cloak to the wound, pretending that he was come to his assistance, he made no other reply but this, "'Tis too late;" and "Is this your loyalty?" Immediately after pronouncing these words, he expired, with his eyes fixed and starting out of his head, to the terror of all who beheld him. (*ibid.*)

But it was amazing. He fancied himself a great musician and so he would do performances. And just imagine having to sit there as Nero went on and on and on with his—I don't know whether his voice was nasal or not, or whether he had such vibrato that he couldn't hold a note clearly—I have no idea. But evidently, he fancied himself the greatest musician in the world and if you didn't acknowledge that you were in danger of being put to death.

XXI. At Rome also, being extremely proud of his singing, he ordered the games called Neronia to be celebrated before the time fixed for their return. All now becoming importunate to hear "his heavenly voice," he informed them, "that he would gratify those who desired it at the gardens." But the soldiers then on guard seconding the voice of the people, he promised to comply with their request immediately, and with all his heart. He instantly ordered his name to be entered upon the list of musicians who proposed to contend, and having thrown his lot into the urn among the rest, took his turn, and entered, attended

by the prefects of the pretorian cohorts bearing his harp, and followed by the military tribunes, and several of his intimate friends. After he had taken his station, and made the usual prelude, he commanded Cluvius Rufus, a man of consular rank, to proclaim in the theatre, that he intended to sing the story of Niobe. This he accordingly did, and continued it until nearly ten o'clock. (*ibid.*)

And he also instigated the thing with Christians being taken into the arena and fighting wild beasts.

So, Nero, reveled in blood, he was a violent and wicked and evil man, even though we can say, as I've said in the past, that the number of the beast is the "Number of Man." That is, man is created on the sixth day, and so 666 is kind of like man "as the measure of all things."

But as we go back here in chapter 14, We read in verse 8, page 1929:

A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries." (Revelation 14:8)

So, Rome seduced the world, and John, the Apostle who wrote the book of Revelation, is keenly aware of the suffering in particular in the Roman provinces, because in the seven churches of Asia, that's Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey, in those seven churches, emperor worship was off the charts. and people outdid themselves in honoring the Roman Emperor.

Asia Minor Was a Center of Emperor Worship.

They built temples for the Roman Emperor, and they worshipped the Roman Emperor. And if you were a person who refused to do it, whether you were a Jew or a Christian, you faced terrible, terrible persecution, and suffering. And so, you could make a token gesture by going and making a sacrifice to the emperor, burning a piece of paper in his honor, and you'd be given a stamp on there.

Now, as Polycarp was entering into the stadium, there came to him a voice from heaven, saying, "Be strong, and show thyself a man, O Polycarp!" No one saw who it was that spoke to him;

but those of our brethren who were present heard the voice. And as he was brought forward, the tumult became great when they heard that Polycarp was taken. And when he came near, the proconsul asked him whether he was Polycarp. On his confessing that he was, [the proconsul] sought to persuade him to deny [Christ], saying, "Have respect to thy old age," and other similar things, according to their custom, [such as], "Swear by the fortune of Cæsar; repent, and say. Away with the Atheists." But Polycarp, gazing with a stern countenance on all the multitude of the wicked heathen then in the stadium, and waving his hand towards them, while with groans he looked up to heaven, said, "Away with the Atheists." Then, the proconsul urging him, and saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty, reproach Christ;" Polycarp declared, **"Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"**...

The proconsul was astonished, and sent his herald to proclaim in the midst of the stadium thrice, "Polycarp has confessed that he is a Christian." **This proclamation having been made by the herald, the whole multitude both of the heathen and Jews, who dwelt at Smyrna, cried out with uncontrollable fury, and in a loud voice, "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the overthrower of our gods, he who has been teaching many not to sacrifice, or to worship the gods."** ...

This, then, was carried into effect with greater speed than it was spoken, the multitudes immediately gathering together wood and fagots out of the shops and baths; **the Jews especially, according to custom, eagerly assisting them in it.** ... And he, placing his hands behind him, and being bound like a distinguished ram [taken] out of a great flock for sacrifice, and prepared to be an acceptable burnt-offering unto God, looked up to heaven, and said, "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of Thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of the whole race of the righteous who live before thee, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast counted me worthy of this day and this hour, that I should have a part in

the number of Thy martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, through the incorruption [imparted] by the Holy Ghost. Among whom may I be accepted this day before Thee as a fat and acceptable sacrifice, according as Thou, the ever-truthful God, hast fore-ordained, hast revealed beforehand to me, and now hast fulfilled. Wherefore also I praise Thee for all things, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, along with the everlasting and heavenly Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, with whom, to Thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and to all coming ages. Amen.”

(Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, ed. (2004) *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol 1, *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers), pp. 40-42, emphases mine.)

The Book of Revelation Recapitulates its Visions.

Now I want to reflect on that with you for a moment, and that is this. The book of Revelation recapitulates its visions over and over again.

I’ve divided the book out into seven basic visions with introductions and the visions themselves. And this is the core vision, chapter 14. But what I want to submit to you is that just as we looked at Isaiah 7:14, which was a prophecy about Isaiah’s marriage to a virgin woman preacher, and that she would give birth to a to a child and would call his name Immanuel.

For example, the prophecy of the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14.

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: **The virgin** will be with child and will give birth to a son, and **will call him Immanuel**. 15 He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. 16 But **before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.** (Isaiah 7:14)

It’s very clear when you read it that that the virgin who was in view in Isaiah 7:14 is Isaiah’s second wife.

She was a woman preacher, and she was a virgin. You have to go and read that sermon or look at it. She was a woman preacher, she was a prophetess, and she was a virgin.

The LORD said to me, “Take a large scroll and write on it with an ordinary pen: Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. 2 And I will call in Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah as reliable witnesses for me.” 3 Then **I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son.** And the LORD said to me, “**Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.** 4 Before the boy knows how to say ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria.” 5 The LORD spoke to me again: 6 “Because this people has rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah and rejoices over Rezin and the son of Remaliah, 7 therefore the Lord is about to bring against them the mighty floodwaters of the River— the king of Assyria with all his pomp. It will overflow all its channels, run over all its banks 8 and sweep on into Judah, swirling over it, passing through it and reaching up to the neck. Its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land, **O Immanuel!**” (Isaiah 8:1-8)

And so, Isaiah had at least two wives, and the second wife becomes pregnant after Isaiah marries her, and she names her son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (מְהֵרָה שָׁלַל חֶשֶׁב, “quickly, [the] plunder; it hurries, [the] loot.”)

You can say it too, but you’ve got to practice. But then she goes on, and she says she names that child in Isaiah chapter 8, **Emmanuel**, (“God with us, God with us.”)

So, it is very clear that the virgin’s son is Isaiah’s second son, and his birth is related to the LORD’s destroying the two kings who threatened Judah.

Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub (שְׁאָר-יָשׁוּב, “a remnant shall return”), to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the

road to the Washerman's Field. 4 Say to him, 'Be careful, keep calm and don't be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood—because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah. 5 Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah's son have plotted your ruin, saying, 6 "Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it." 7 Yet this is **what the Sovereign LORD says: "It will not take place, it will not happen, 8 for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people. 9** The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.'" (Isaiah 7:3–9)

As is confirmed in Isaiah 8:18:

Here am I, **and the children the LORD has given me. We are signs and symbols** in Israel from the LORD Almighty, who dwells on Mount Zion. (Isaiah 8:18)

So, Emmanuel, is Isaiah's son by his second wife, a virgin, who named that boy **Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz**, and also named him **Immanuel**.

But yet that doesn't satisfy the whole thing.

This is the heart of understanding the book of Revelation. **A prophecy of the Old Testament recapitulates.** It comes over again and again and again.

Who is the virgin of Isaiah 7:14?

Ultimately, it's the Virgin Mary, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who without ceasing to be a virgin in any way, conceived a child supernaturally in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit, and she gave birth to that child, her firstborn son, and she named him Joshua.

That's how it would be pronounced, but translators like to distinguish between Joshua, the Old Testament, and Joshua, the New Testament, Jesus. And so ultimately, this is the question, **ultimately Isaiah 7:14 is about the Virgin Mary and her son, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

(<https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermons/2925183226527>)

Ultimately, it points way beyond itself to roughly the year four or five before Christ, because Christ was born four or five years before the Roman Catholic calendar was created. Christ is born 4 or 5 BC, and that's the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.

Nero and Rome Do not Exhaust the Prophecies About the Beast.

So, what we have here in Revelation chapter 14 about the Man of Sin, the Beast, of the Roman Empire—fast forward, it doesn't exhaust itself in the first century. When Babylon falls, ultimately it's the death of Nero, and the civil war that ensued in the empire is almost destroyed, and then the man who was the commanding general, who was commissioned by the emperor Nero to destroy the city of Jerusalem, a general by the name of Vespasian, whose son's name was Titus, not our biblical Titus—suddenly, he learns that Rome is imploding, that civil war has ensued, and so he leaves the siege of Jerusalem in the hands of his son Titus, and he travels with his army over the land to get back to Rome, where he seizes power and becomes the Roman emperor after the civil war is put down.

Again, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon” is a reference to the destruction of Rome and of Nero, but that ultimately does not completely fulfill it.

Turn with me, if you would, back to 2 Thessalonians, turning back to the left, 2 Thessalonians chapter two. So, Nero is the beast of the book of Revelation, very clearly. But if we go back to 2 Thessalonians on page 1843, we read these words, beginning at verse one of chapter two.

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, 2 not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2)

So, you know, in our day, there are all kinds of false teachers. All you have to do is turn on your television, because people who can buy TV time like that nationwide are going to keep an audience up, and how do you keep an audience up? You keep people in suspense. It's like when I was a kid, you'd go to the picture show on Saturday, and you'd watch these serials, and you'd—to be continued next week—what you want to come back to save your save your nickels and dimes, and you can go back and watch what happens next week. And so, those that keep an audience on TV often do it by sensationalism or by offering people things that they think they can't get anywhere else.

But in that day, in St. Paul's day, page 1843, there were false teachers who were making reports and said, "Look, the Lord has already returned. The Lord has already returned." And Paul writes and says, "I don't want you to get upset. I don't want you to believe this." He says in verse 3:

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

I want to think about that with you. I think there's an initial reference there to two Roman emperors, the emperor Gaius "Caligula," who commanded that his image would be put in the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and at the last minute that order was countermanded because the Praetorian Guard assassinated Caligula. I think it also has a reference to Nero.

The Lord Jesus Christ Has not Yet Returned.

But Christ has not yet returned. And anyone who tells you that Christ has already returned is a false teacher. Look at what he says.

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. 5 Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? 6 And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-6)

Verse 7:

For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8)

I want to reflect on that for a moment. This has an initial reference to the first century of the Christian Era, but that doesn't fulfill it completely. Look at what he says in verse 9.

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10)

Verse 11:

For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

I want to reflect with you on this for a moment. In our day, how would we apply that? As I've said, biblical prophecies recapitulate over and over and over again. I think there's every danger in our time of worshipping political leaders.

America in 2025 Is in Great Danger.

In particular, I'll just say, I think there's every danger, and we pray for President Trump, but there's a great danger that he'd be worshipped because you'll find people who attribute to him God-like attributes. A while I may appreciate many of the things he's bringing about—I would love to have some of that money that has been given away through an arm of the CIA called USAID. That's an arm of the CIA. Wouldn't you like to have a

\$5,000 check? Really, I just wish we'd pay down this debt that's going to destroy us.

But the point I'm making is there's a danger in our day that we worship someone and think this person's the answer to all our problems. I think that he is an answer to many of our problems, but I want to say to attribute to him that kind of blasphemy is an evil and dangerous thing, and people get caught up in that so that the person that they admire can do no wrong.

And I'm always struck with this because I think that Donald Trump is in great danger of going to hell. Why would I say that?

Because he's said repeatedly, "I've never asked anyone's forgiveness."

I'm going to tell you on the day of judgment, if he hasn't asked God's forgiveness for his sins, he's going to go to hell. And we should not worship him as if he's the solution to all our problems.

And I see among some of his followers that kind of worship. You know, I think about the beast had a mark that he was wounded in the head and was healed. I remember I was in the motel here in Texarkana on a Saturday, taking a nap, which we often will do after we've driven up, before we went out to eat. And when I woke up, Sandy said to me, "President Trump has been shot."

I said, "What?" And we turned on the television, and when I saw that clip, I said, "He just won the election."

Win, the Beast? No, he's not the Beast. That's his car that was the pace car for, NASCAR.

When he was wounded, and the blood's there, and he's in shock, and he raises his fist, and says, "Fight! Fight! Fight!" I said to Sandy, "That just won Donald Trump the election." I really do believe that did, and so, but the danger is to attribute divine attributes to mere human beings.

He's a mortal human being. He's no different than Joe Biden in that regard except Mister Biden obviously had the beginnings of dementia, and Donald Trump runs—I don't know how he does what he does—I could call it mania.

He rarely sleeps. He has enormous energy. The man's actually older than I am which makes him really old—not much older than I am—but the energy the man possesses to do this and do that and what a negotiator! Wow!

So, I look at all that, and I think there's every danger that people would think of him just like people thought about Nero.

I think that, could Donald Trump be the Antichrist? I don't believe so.

I'm more inclined to think it's the computer. I'm more inclined to think it's Artificial Intelligence. I don't know.

Jesus Is the Only Hero in History.

But the one thing I do know is this. Never have a hero but Jesus. That's what I believe. I only have one hero, the Lord Jesus Christ. And why is Jesus my hero? Because he died for my sins, because he suffered in my place. He who was the spotless lamb of God, he who is the eternal son of the eternal God, without ceasing to be God in any way whatsoever, came to this earth and was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary while she is a virgin by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit.

He lived a sinless life. And then he went to the cross willingly. He suffered in your place and in my place. With his stripes we're healed. We're set free by what he's done. He's the only hero. If you examine history, you'll discover that everyone, including every one of American's heroes, including George Washington, including Robert E. Lee, including Abraham Lincoln. Everyone has fatal flaws. I have fatal flaws. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

So, as we live in an era of crisis very similar to the first Christian Century, when the crisis was the terrible persecution coming out of the city of Rome and personified radically and significantly in the person of the Roman emperor Nero, *Neron Caesar*, *Lateinos*, the Roman kingdom, personified that way.

As we are in a time of crisis in the world and to be sure we really are, we need to be ready and what does that mean? It means, Stay prayed up. Stay in the book because we're in a time of great deception and pray for people

because neither you nor I can ever reason another human being into faith in Christ.

Faith in Christ is a gift of the Holy Spirit. And he gives that faith in response to people interceding. I have loved ones whom I love dearly, whom I'm concerned about. Will they make it to heaven?

And so, I pray for them. Now is the time to pray. As we think about "Babylon Has Fallen," the city of Rome fell briefly, but the Roman system still continues today because when the empire the Roman Empire in the West ceased, what happened? The Bishop of Rome took over the role of the Roman Emperor and took to himself the title of the Roman Emperor. Roman Emperors' titles were "Pontifex Maximus."

And so today, as everyone's waiting for our first Jesuit Pope finally to die—he's in bad shape—we refer to him as the Pontiff. That means he's the Roman Emperor. The Roman Empire in the West became the Roman Catholic Church.

So again, not attacking the Roman Catholic Church as such. I'm just saying, know history. And if you want to know first century history, there's no better source than Flavius Josephus, the Jewish general who surrendered to the Roman armies because he knew it was hopeless to fight against them.

May we pray.

Lord, grant that we, who are living in a time of world crisis, When China is a great threat, when Russia is a threat, when the nations of Europe are a threat, when, Lord, within our own country there are various factions and there's so much hatred and violence and anger, Lord, we pray for the safety of our political leaders in the executive branch, in the legislative branch, and in the judicial branch. We pray for wisdom. Lord, you can take a man who is not a Christian, who has never bowed his knees and asked you to forgive him. You can take that man and do good things through him. Please guide our president. Please keep him from absurd things. And please protect him. And Lord, we pray that also for the leaders in the Senate and the House and our judiciary. Lord, have mercy on our country, and particularly we pray for the church, because the church is your instrument to spread the gospel. May this church in particular be faithful to spread the gospel, and

how, Lord, today I miss seeing Stacy and the children she's brought. Lord, have mercy on us, bless us, and pity us in Jesus' name. Amen.