

The 2nd Angel's Message - Part 2

<< This is the fifth in a series of studies on the 3 Angels Messages, the second/last part of the 2nd Angel's message. Here is covered the meaning of the fallen Babylon, the segment of Babylon most-recently fallen, and why the saints must be called out... -Sid >>

Revelation 14:8 And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

<< **What is meant by the declaration that Babylon is fallen?** -- by Uriah Smith >>

The fall of Babylon will next claim attention. Having now learned what constitutes Babylon, it will not be difficult to decide **what is meant by the declaration that Babylon is fallen**. As Babylon is not a literal city, the fall cannot be a literal overthrow. We have already seen what an absurdity this would involve. And besides, between the fall and the destruction of Babylon, the clearest distinction is maintained by the prophecy itself. Babylon “falls” before it is with violence “thrown down,” as a millstone cast into the sea, and “utterly burned with fire.” **The fall is therefore a moral fall; for after the fall, the voice is addressed to the people of God who are still in her connection, “Come out of her, my people;” and the reason is immediately given, — “that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Babylon therefore still exists to sin, and her plagues are still future, after the fall.** [DAR 607.2](#)

<< **Is it the loss of civil power by the papal church?** >>

Those who make Babylon apply exclusively to the papacy, claim that the fall of Babylon is the loss of civil power by the papal church. But such a view would be inconsistent with the prophecy in several particulars: — [DAR 607.3](#)

1. Babylon falls because she makes all nations drink of her wine, or instils among them her false doctrines. But this by no means caused the loss of the pope’s temporal power; on the contrary, it was the very means by which he so long maintained his supremacy. [DAR 608.1](#)

2. Because of the fall of Babylon, she becomes the hold of foul spirits and hateful birds; but such is not at all the result to Rome of the loss of civil power. [DAR 608.2](#)

3. The people of God are called out of Babylon on account of her increasing sinfulness resulting from the fall; but the loss of the temporal power of the papacy constitutes no additional reason why the people of God should leave that church. [DAR 608.3](#)

<< **Babylon's moral fall is due to false doctrines -- pleasing fables** >>

The reason given why Babylon meets with this moral fall is “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath [not anger, but intense passion] of her fornication.” There is but one thing to which this can refer, and that is false doctrines. She has corrupted the pure truths of God’s word, and made the nations drunken with pleasing fables. Among the doctrines she teaches contrary to the word of God, may be mentioned the following: — [DAR 608.4](#)

1. The **doctrine of a temporal millennium**, or a thousand years of peace and prosperity and righteousness all over the earth before the second coming of Christ. This doctrine is especially calculated to shut the ears of the people against the evidences of the second advent near, and will probably lull as many souls into a state of carnal security which will lead to their final ruin as any heresy which has ever been devised by the great enemy of truth. [DAR 608.5](#)

2. **Sprinkling instead of immersion**, which is the only Scriptural mode of baptism, and a fitting memorial of the burial and resurrection of our Lord, for which purpose it was designed. Having corrupted this ordinance, and destroyed it as a memorial of the resurrection of Christ, the way was prepared for the substitution of something else for this purpose, which she attempted in — DAR 608.6

3. The **change of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment**, the seventh day, into the festival of Sunday, as the rest-day of the Lord and a memorial of his resurrection, which has never been commanded, and can by no possible means appropriately commemorate that event. Fathered by heathenism as “the wild solar holiday of all pagan times,” Sunday was led to the font by the pope, and christened as an institution of the gospel church. Thus an attempt was made to destroy a memorial which the great God had set up of his own magnificent creative work, and erect another in its stead to commemorate the resurrection of Christ, for which there was no occasion, as the Lord himself had already provided a memorial for that purpose. DAR 609.1

4. The **doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul**. This also was derived from the pagan world. As distinguished converts from heathenism entered the ranks of Christians, they soon became “Fathers of the church,” and foster-fathers of this pernicious doctrine as a part of divine truth. This error nullifies the two great Scripture doctrines of the resurrection and the general Judgment, and furnishes a well-laid track for the car of modern Spiritualism with its load of pollution. From it have sprung such other evil doctrines as the conscious state of the dead, saint-worship, Mariolatry, purgatory, reward at death, prayers and baptisms for the dead, eternal torment, and Universalism. DAR 609.2

5. The **doctrine that the saints, as unclothed, immaterialized spirits**, find their eternal inheritance in far-away, indefinable regions, “beyond the bounds of time and space.” Thus multitudes have been turned away from the Scriptural view that this present earth is to be destroyed by fire at the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men, and that from its ashes the voice of Omnipotence will evoke a new earth, which will be the future everlasting kingdom of glory, and which the saints will possess as their eternal inheritance. DAR 609.3

6. That **the coming of Christ is a spiritual, not a literal event**, and was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, or is fulfilled in conversion, in death, in Spiritualism, etc. How many minds have by such teaching been forever closed against the Scriptural view that the second coming of Christ is a future, definite event, literal, personal, visible, resulting in destruction to all his foes, and everlasting life to all his people! DAR 609.4

7. Trailing the standard of godliness into the very dust. **Men are made to believe that a form of godliness is all-sufficient**, and that the words, “Lord, Lord,” though repeated as an empty formula, will be a safe passport to the kingdom of heaven. If any one doubts this statement, let him listen to the next funeral discourse, or visit the cemetery, and mark what the tombstones say. DAR 610.1

The world has gone almost stark mad in the pursuit of riches and honor; but in these things the church takes the lead, and thus openly sanctions what the Lord strictly forbade. If the churches were united as they should be, what a stumbling-block would be taken out of the way of sinners! And **if it were not for the false doctrines which she has instilled into the minds of all men, how the plain truths of the Bible would move the world! But people are held by these, as under the stupefying influence of the most powerful intoxicant.** DAR 610.2

<< **What institution could fall further -- Paganism, Catholicism, or Protestantism?** >>

To come now more particularly to the application of the prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, let us see how the religious world stood with reference to the possibility of such a change, when the time came for the proclamation of this message, in connection with the first message, about the year 1844. **Paganism was only apostasy and corruption in the beginning**, and is so still; and no moral fall is possible there. **Catholicism has been for centuries about as low in the scale as it is possible** for a church to sink. No room for a moral fall in

that church. Two great branches of Babylon were, therefore, when the second message became due, in so low a condition morally that **a further declension with them was scarcely possible**. Not so, however, with the Protestant branch of this great city. These churches, which commenced the great work of reformation from papal corruption, had done some noble work. They had run well for a season. They reached a moral plane vastly higher than that of the other divisions named. They were, in a word, in such a position that with them a moral fall was possible. **The conclusion is therefore inevitable that the message announcing the fall had reference almost wholly to the Protestant churches.** DAR 610.3

The question may then be asked why this announcement was not made sooner, if so large a portion of Babylon, the pagan and papal divisions, had been so long fallen. And the answer is at hand: **Babylon, as a whole, could not be said to be fallen so long as one division of it remained unfallen.** It could not be announced, therefore, till a change for the worse came over the Protestant world, and the truth, through which alone the path of progress lay, had been deliberately discarded. But when this took place, and a moral fall was experienced in this last division, then the announcement concerning Babylon as a whole could be made, as it could not have been made before, — “Babylon is fallen.” DAR 611.1

It may be proper to inquire further how the reason assigned for the fall of Babylon, namely, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, would apply to the Protestant churches at the time in question. And the answer is, It would apply most pertinently. The fault with Babylon lies in her confusion and false doctrines. Because she industriously propagates these, clinging to them when light and truth which would correct them is offered, she falls. With the Protestant churches, the time had come for an advance to higher religious ground. They could accept the proffered light and truth, and reach the higher attainment, or they could reject it, and lose their spirituality and favor with God, or, in other words, experience a moral fall. The truth which God saw fit to use as an instrument in this work was the first message. The hour of God’s Judgment come, and the approximate second advent of Christ, was the doctrine preached. After listening long enough to see the blessing that attended the doctrine, and the good results that flowed from it, the churches, as a whole, rejected it with scorn and scoffing. They were thereby tested; for they then plainly betrayed the fact that their hearts were with the world, not with the Lord, and that they preferred to have it so. But the message would have healed the evils then existing in the religions world. The prophet exclaims, perhaps with reference to this very time, “We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.” [Jeremiah 51:9](#). Do you ask how we know this would have been the effect of receiving the message? We answer, Because this was the effect with all who did receive it. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were leveled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned; false views of the second advent were corrected; pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship; and love and joy reigned supreme. If the doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, *it would have done the same for all, if all had received it.* DAR 611.2

But the message was rejected; and what was the result? The result upon those who rejected it will be spoken of by and by; the result upon those who received it, demands mention here. Everywhere throughout the land the cry was raised, “Babylon is fallen,” and, in anticipation of the movement brought to view in [Revelation 18:1-4](#), they added, “Come out of her, my people;” and **about fifty thousand severed their connection with the denominations where they were not allowed to hold and proclaim their views in peace.** DAR 612.1

A marked change then came over the churches in respect to their spiritual condition. On the hypothesis that the proclamation of the second coming of Christ was in the order of prophetic fulfilment, and that the message was the “present truth” for that time, the result could not have been different. **When a person refuses the light, he necessarily shuts himself in darkness;** when he rejects truth, he inevitably forges the shackles of error about his own limbs. Loss of spirituality — **a moral fall** — **must follow.** This the churches experienced. They chose to adhere to old errors, and still promulgate their false doctrines among the people. The light of truth must therefore leave them. Some of them felt and deplored the change... DAR 612.2

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Smith goes on to say, "A few testimonies from their own writers will describe their condition at that time." I have omitted those "testimonies" for brevity, but they can be found from DAR 613.1 to DAR 615.1 (<https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/12861.3056?#3204>)

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This is a sad and deplorable picture; and what has been the course of events, and the tendency in the deportment of professed Christians, since that time? There is considerable spasmodic action in some localities, and much effort put forth by sensational revivalists to excite the emotions, but no permanent good seems to be accomplished, and the standard of godliness sinks lower and lower. DAR 615.2

Some new features have been added to the facilities for church work, and have now come to be considered almost indispensable appendages to the house of worship; and one of these is nothing less than a well-appointed kitchen, where the feast can be made ready, and dainty delicacies prepared for the most perverted appetite. One instance may serve as an illustration of all in this line. When the "Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church" was erected in Chicago, the *Tribune*, of that city, in its description of the building, made particular mention of the following features: — DAR 615.3

"Beneath the vestibule and parlors is a basement, consisting of a *large dining-hall*, furnished with table accommodations for one hundred and fifty persons; a *kitchen*, with *cooking apparatus*, sinks, closets, dressing-rooms, etc. The basement, under the vestibule and parlors, secures some desirable advantages; the social gatherings can be made agreeable and pleasant without introducing the refreshments into the lecture room or parlors." DAR 615.4

Think of a *kitchen* as being considered a necessary apartment in a house of worship! What would the venerable and godly church fathers and mothers of a generation ago have thought of this? The Scriptures declare that eating and drinking and pleasure-seeking, instead of God-serving, even on the part of professed Christians, will characterize the last days as a sign of the times. [Luke 17:26-30](#); [2 Timothy 3:4, 5](#). Have we not reached the time when this is fulfilled? What indulgence is there in the whole catalogue of worldly pleasures which is not openly tolerated in the church — nay, which is not largely fostered by the church? Dancing, card-playing, theater-going, horse-racing, gambling, lotteries, festivals, fairs, and all forms of gluttony, are freely patronized in religious circles, and many of these things for so-called religious purposes. DAR 616.1

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Smith goes on to speak of entertainment, dancing, confectionery, restaurant, liquor, lotteries, "fairs, festivals, and other forms of 'pious' church gambling." All of these were closely connected with Protestant churches and includes examples and newspaper articles. This can be found from DAR 616.2 to DAR 618.5 (<https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/12861.3056?#3223>)

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The second angel's message is addressed to those organizations where the people of God are mainly to be found; for they are specially addressed as being in Babylon, and at a certain time are called out. The message applies to the present generation; and now God's people are to be looked for, certainly, in the Protestant organizations of Christendom. But as these churches depart farther and farther from God, **they at length reach such a condition that true Christians can no longer maintain a connection with them;** and then they will be called out. This we look for in the future, in fulfillment of [Revelation 18:1-4](#). We believe it will come, when, **in addition to their corruptions, the churches begin to raise against the saints the hand of oppression.** (See further under the chapter last named.) DAR 619.1

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