

the people of the Stone have already come to this city (Hebrews 12:18-24). We have a God-given identity. We are sons of God. We belong to the family of the "firstborn." Our representative has taken care of everything we need to succeed as God's family. We live in the midst of an invisible, but fully real, spiritual world with angels and saints. God the judge has already made his decision and given the verdict. Justice has been done. Sin is paid in full. Justice demands that those in Christ are forgiven. Those committed to the Babylonian system, both secular and religious are excluded. They don't want a God-centered universe, and they get what they want. We live in the presence of Jesus

---

We cannot afford to be casual, but we must be **intentional**. We have the **message** that defeats deception, but it must be **declared**.

---

who is the mediator of a new covenant, and his blood has already been shed and sprinkled for our full acceptance into God's city.

Now our assignment is to rename, reorient, and re-educate those who have been trained by Babylon. It is called discipleship. We are to declare that Babylon has fallen and that God's man is ruling over his creation.

The Stone has rolled down the mountain. The sacrifice has been made and accepted. Reality is not limited to what our senses perceive. We can see the kingdom of God. We can possess the land that was cursed by Babylon, but redeemed by Jesus who represents the New Jerusalem. The battle goes on but the outcome is sure. We have confident hope because our brother is our Lord. We wait to celebrate his consummation, but we do not wait for coronation. He is now ruling, and he intends to rule through us. We cannot afford to be casual, but we must be intentional. We have the message that defeats deception, but it must be declared. We have the love that defeats hate and fear, but it must be expressed. We have the hope that purifies the soul, but it must be embraced. We have the family where all mankind longs to belong, but we must tend it. We have not come to Mount Sinai where men feared to hear the revelation of God. We have come to Mount Zion where the New Jerusalem has descended and God and his people enjoy his glory.



P.O. Box 101  
Euless, TX 76039  
(817) 267-9224  
Fax: (817) 354-5522  
Email: mail@kerygmaventures.com  
KerygmaVentures.com



## DUDLEY'S MONTHLY MESSAGE

DANIEL 1-2

NOVEMBER 2013

# The Cosmic Conflict

---

*Every generation has a choice to live by the mindset of Babylon or of Jerusalem. These two cities became the biblical symbols of contrasting views of reality. If we only view current events in light of the observational, we will not understand the real battle that rages in the cosmos.*

---

Babylon: The biblical story of its origin is instructive. God created and instructed mankind to spread and subdue. He wanted his creation to be discovered and developed by his human partners as they enjoyed him in daily worship. The people decided instead to concentrate in one area, to build a tower to their own god that would make a name for themselves. With the great resources God placed within mankind, such a feat was possible. They could do incredible things working together for a common goal—even though their motivation was wrong and their project was futile. God opposed it! He confused their ability to communicate with each other. The place was called Babylon because of the babel

of their confusion and futility.

The account of this event gives us in kernel form the nature of Babylon, a city that would become the name for the forces that align themselves against the design and purpose of God. Namely, they disobeyed God's command to scatter and subdue. They concentrated for their own security. They wanted significance, so they decided they could get it by doing something that appears significant. They created a god from their own projections and tried to use it to get what they wanted. Most importantly, God was and is opposed to this approach.

Later, we see Babylon as representing the ruling force on the earth as it conquers Israel (who represents God's people, whose center

is Jerusalem). In 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar took the precious things from the temple in Jerusalem and the precious young men from the society to Babylon. Their philosophy is evident as they renamed the young men, reoriented them to Babylon's ways, and

---

According to this worldview, **truth** can only be detected by the observational senses, what can be **proven** by those senses, and what the individual **experiences**.

---

re-educated them according to Babylon's worldview. This is still the strategy of the Babylonian mentality.

First they renamed the young Hebrew men. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were given Babylonian names relating them to their god. They were to be called Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Identity determines behavior. Babylon still tries to get people to identify themselves by some distinctive other than being God's sons. When this strategy is successful, people end up defining themselves by sexual preference, color of skin, geography, nationality, tragedy, personal failures, and accomplishments.

Second, Babylon reoriented the captives by removing them from their own people and sought to teach them the "religion" of

the Babylonians. While they mocked the faith of the Israelites and claimed to be more broadminded, they sought to convince the young men that the Babylonian system would take care of them and the Babylonian god would give them the nourishment and provisions they needed to excel. They demanded that they eat from the king's fare, because that food had been consecrated to Bel-Merodach, and they believed he would bless it to be superior to regular food. In the Babylonian world, gods serve as forces to manipulate to get what you want. If one can discover what pleases or appeases the god, then he or she has found the key to success.

Third, Babylon intended to re-educate the young men. Babylonian reality was a man-centered universe with cloudy beliefs about origin and purpose. The origin of mankind was the result of some battle of the gods where human life grew out of the slime of the slain god or gods. They certainly did not see human rights as given by the gods. Humans were left to fend for themselves and superior ones would rule the inferior. The huge Babylonian central government system would take care of those who would trust it completely, and the lesser individuals would be sacrificed in necessary battles to keep the system stable. According to this worldview, truth can only be detected by the observational senses, what can be proven by those senses, and what the individual

experiences. They had no clear understanding of the spiritual realm. It is no surprise that when the king had a dream from God, the wise men of Babylon had no clue as to what it was or what it meant. They could not see the invisible, but real, kingdom of God. Daniel had eyes to see that realm and was granted the dream and the interpretation.

Speaking of that dream and its interpretation—it spoke of the demise of Babylon and the rule of a New Jerusalem (Daniel 2:17-45). The image that Nebuchadnezzar saw was a picture of the kingdoms that would rule in history until the time when God would destroy the power of Babylon and establish his kingdom on earth. Though the kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and Rome had various differences, they represented the same basic ideology as Babylon. In fact, even physical Israel and its physical city and temple became a part of the Babylonian system. The stone that rolled down the mountain and destroyed the image was Jesus—the same stone rejected by the Jewish builders that became the head of the new temple and city.

It was a long time until this dream came true. Even after the great promises of vindication by the prophets, there were 400 years of Babylonian rule in the earth through the various kingdoms. But one day, the time was fulfilled. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus who would be the Lamb that destroyed the

powers of Babylon and who would sit on the throne designed for Adam's offspring, Abraham's seed, and David's son. He built a house but not with stones and mortar. God had already told David that his building project was not like man's. David had wanted to build a house for God. God instead promised to build a house for David, but it would be made of sons who enjoyed God and partnered with him in life. So it was.

In Revelation 18, John records that part of the vision he experienced while on the Island of Patmos. "Babylon has fallen! That symbolic city that has empowered the merchants of the earth, seduced the nations, magnified itself, persecuted the real people of God, and offered a home for demons, has fallen." The stone has hit the image and it has crumbled. Chapter 21 describes the New Jerusalem that has come down to replace

---

We have a **God-given** identity. We are sons of God. We belong to the **family** of the "**firstborn**."

---

the city of man. It is the fulfillment of all that God designed in the Garden of Eden. God is with his people. The curse has been canceled. The blessing has been bestowed.

But when does that happen? Some are sure that it happens only in the future. The letter to the Hebrews says that we who are