

Zechariah 5:5-11

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[0:00] Praise God. We are still in the book of Zechariah. You're getting a break from me next week because Malcolm's preaching on the book of Philemon, which is an amazing book.

So we've been working our way through the book of Zechariah. Zechariah is by reputation one of the most difficult books in the whole Bible to study. It's got all sorts of imagery in it that needs to be interpreted. And when something needs to be interpreted, you come across people who do the wackiest and most imaginative interpretations without reference to Scripture.

We are working our way through it, allowing the Bible to interpret itself as far as we can. We studied, we said that this book breaks down into four parts.

And part one was chapter one, verses one to six, which is simply God exhorting his people to turn back to him. They've been 70 years in captivity in Babylon, and we're going to be learning a lot about Babylon today.

But they've been 70 years in captivity in Babylon. And having come out of that captivity, God was saying to them, he had already said, rebuild the temple.

[1:30] But he was also saying to them, don't do what your fathers did, turn back to me. And he promised various blessings if they did. We then move into part two, and that's the part we're in.

And the next time I speak, we'll come to the end of part two, where Zechariah had eight visions, seemingly in a single night. And as I often say, it must have been a very restless night on the 24th day of Shabbat, the 11th month.

So the Bible is very precise about these things. It doesn't just, I don't know if any of you have ever listened to some of the prophecies of Mary Baker Eddy or Nostradamus. And they're all very ethereal, and they don't commit themselves to anything really.

Talk about vagaries, and then claim that various things that happen fulfill those vagaries. This happened on the 24th day of Shabbat, in the year that Zechariah had this vision.

And we are coming up to number seven, I think. So the first one was the man on the red horse, a picture of Jesus ready to deal with those who have treated his people harshly.

[2:46] And that thread continues through all the visions to some extent. Then we had the vision of the horns and the craftsmen, the horns being kingdoms that would arise, and the craftsmen being other kingdoms that would arise to discipline those who had mistreated Israel.

So there is a theme of God looking after Israel. Then we had this man with the measuring line, measuring up Jerusalem as God's or Yahweh's city of choice.

So this was a futuristic view of Jerusalem as a protected city, given at a time when Jerusalem was actually pretty much in ruins. So God was indicating that he had his measuring line on Jerusalem and that it would not stay in ruins.

Then the fourth vision was one of Joshua, the high priest, and we saw him as a type, both of Christ and of Israel. Personally, I think that's a fascinating study.

It's online. You can get it. Then we had the vision of the golden lampstand, which was a representation of Messiah himself, fulfilling the two roles of both priest and king.

[4:02] It was not legal for kings to be priests or priests to be king. There were two exceptions in scripture. One was Melchizedek in the Old Testament, and Jesus was forecast as being a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

So that was what we saw in that vision. Then the sixth. Now, the sixth and the seventh visions do go hand in hand. And the sixth vision that we talked about last time changed the emphasis from comfort for Israel to the promise of judgment for those who were harsh against Israel and for those who did not turn to God.

So there was a whole change of attitude where God spoke and gave a clear determination that he was going to judge those who rebelled against him.

And last time we discussed that it became clear that the time frame for this eradication of sin, because that's what it spoke of, the vision of the flying scroll, was the word of God going forth throughout the world to bring sin under judgment, starting with Israel.

And the scripture says judgment begins at the household of God. So starting with Israel, but nevertheless involving the whole world, God was going to judge sin in preparation for his 1,000 year reign on the earth, which is yet to come and at times feels so close.

[5 : 34] So that takes us to the seventh vision. So if we turn to Zechariah, chapter five, starting in verse five, verse five, then the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, lift up now your eyes and see what is going forth.

I said, what is it? And he said, this is the ephah going forth. And some of your versions will say basket. This is the basket going forth. Again, he said, this is their appearance in all the land.

And behold, a lead cover was lifted up. And this is a woman sitting inside the ephah. Then he said, this is wickedness. And he threw her down in the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening.

Then I lifted up my eyes and looked and there were two women. Sorry. Then I lifted up my eyes and looked and there two women were coming out with their, with the wind in their wings.

And they had wings like the wings of a stalk. And they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. I said to the angel who was speaking with me, where are they taking the ephah?

[6 : 52] And he said to me to build a temple for her in the land of Shinar. Or I think it should be pronounced Shinar. And when it is prepared, she will set there, she will be set there on her own pedestal.

And some of your versions will say on her own base. So that's easy, isn't it? What does this all mean? And why do we need to know about it?

Now, a lot of what we've been saying about this is that it speaks of a time yet to come. This is not, if you think about it, Babylon is now in the past.

It, it got overrun at the time that they, Jews were released from Babylon. And then they were told by Cyrus, they could go and they could rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and they could return to their homeland.

And so Babylon's gone. Babylon. And what we're going to see is that this vision speaks about Babylon as being not yet over with.

[7 : 59] I don't know why it's encoded the way it is, but it will become apparent to us that this is Babylon that's being spoken of.

Now, the versions of the Bible that say the woman in the basket, it's not just a basket. It's an ephah. And an ephah, the reason for the distinction, if I could have the picture up, please. The reason for the distinction is the ephah, which you see pictured here, that's actually an omer.

But the ephah is a receptacle in our language, approximately 22 liters. But it was a very precise measure of grain.

So if you were getting an ephah, you knew exactly what you were getting or you should. Now, what this, when it, when the passage describes the woman in the ephah, whatever she turns out to be, God has the measure of her.

[9 : 06] And so the, the purpose of her being in the ephah is that she is clearly measured. And she's not a surprise to God. Now, it's quite important for us to know that there was a longstanding problem in Israel with dishonest trading.

Just turn with me to Amos chapter eight. Now, Amos was around a roughly the same sort of time of history. And if we look at verses four to eight, this is the word of God to Israel at the time.

Hear this, you who trample the needy to do away with the humble of the land, saying, when will the new moon be over? So that we may sell grain and the Sabbath that we may open the wheat market to make the bushel smaller.

And some of your versions will say to make the ephah smaller and the shekel bigger. And to cheat with dishonest scales so as to buy the helpless for money and needy for a pair of sandals.

And that we may sell the refuse of the wheat. The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob. Indeed, I will never forget any of their deeds because of this.

[10 : 29] Will not the land quake and everyone who dwells in it mourn? Indeed, all of it will rise up like the Nile and will be tossed about and subside like the Nile of Egypt.

The point here is that there was dishonest trading going on and this, sorry, have I lost you? Sorry, Amos 8 and it was verses 4 to 8.

Yes, Israel had become a place of dishonest trade. And it was particularly true of the religious Jews. It was true of lots of traders, but the religious Jews who were the ones who God would have expected to behave better and to know better were the ones who were right in the thick of it. And they were making the ephah smaller. In other words, you didn't get your full 22 liters. And they were making the shekel bigger. So, I think we call that inflation, don't we?

So, they were making the money by less and they were giving less for the money. So, it was a double, a double fraud. And this kind of dishonest trading, historically, was particularly a problem in Babylon, where the Jews had spent the last 70 years.

[11 : 50] So, they picked up some of the Babylonian traits. And they brought them into the kingdom. And so, what the leadership of the Jews did was they forced people to purchase sacrificial animals at the temple for inflated prices.

And when the farmer turned up with one of his own lambs for sacrifice, they would find a reason to reject it because it was imperfect. So, they were using the opportunity for the celebration of God's feast to rip off the people.

So, that's what was going on in the background. So, this picture of an ephah kind of impinges upon this dishonest trade that's going on and how that is the hallmark of the people that he is going to judge, which we'll see in a moment.

But what we do read in 1 Timothy 6 verse 10 is that the love of money is the root of all evil. And you'll often hear people, and you've probably heard it a lot over the so-called COVID crisis and all of that, where people have said, just follow the money.

And if you follow the money, you'll find out where the problems lie. And that is so true. A lot of the time, it is so true. The love of money is the root of all evil. So, it's also one of the reasons that Jesus in his ministry drove the traders out of the temple.

[13 : 15] If that had been honest trading going on, I don't think he would have been bothered. But they had set up places to rip off the people who'd come to worship God.

And so, he drove them out. So, this very precise measure. And what we know from this fact that it's 22 litres or thereabouts, you'll get some people who say it was about 19 or 20.

Some will go as high as 25. But it's roughly the size. If you think of a domestic bucket, well, it's twice the size of that. All right. A bucket normally contains about 10 litres or two gallons.

And so, roughly double the size of a bucket is the size of this receptacle. And it's got a woman in it. Which tells us that this is picture language. You know, it wasn't a ministry to the pygmies or anything like that.

It's picture language. And what it says is that this woman, whoever she is, is no great big thing to God. As far as God's concerned, he can get her inside an ephah. We'll also become aware that the woman is a representation of a culture.

[14 : 31] Not just a woman. But her, the type of woman that she is, represents an anti-God and an anti-Christ culture.

But in God's eyes, he can simply confine that to an ephah. Which just demonstrates how minuscule it is in the great plan of God. Now, the other odd feature, as we read down, was the ephah had a lead cover or a lead lid.

And this is a heavy, dense cover designed to ensure that the contents cannot escape. Now, I've never seen an ephah with a lead cover, apart from in this scripture.

But its purpose was to keep the contents within. And as we read through the passage, the lid was lifted, and it seems like the woman was trying to get out. But he thrust her back down into the ephah and put the lid back on.

Which again demonstrates his control over this woman. Ordinarily, the contents would be grain and therefore wouldn't need this level of incarceration. But the lid is lifted to show Zechariah what's in there.

[15 : 50] And then immediately she shoved back down and the lid goes back on. And then in verse 8, the woman says, or sorry, the angel says to Zechariah, this is wickedness.

So this woman is named as wickedness. So that's her name. But wickedness is a societal trait, isn't it?

It's not, I don't know, I'm trying to think of a suitable analogy, but I think you get my drift. This woman is wickedness. So the woman is a representation of wickedness, or we would use the word sin, because all sin is wickedness.

But we're going to learn a bit more about this woman and what her expression of wickedness was about. But the wickedness in question has been cast down into this divine measure and a heavy impenetrable lid placed on top.

She's under divine control. And in verse 9, we're then introduced to two new characters in the form of two women who are flying towards the ephah, having the wings of a stork.

[17:05] So who are these other two women? And the Bible, in fairness, is not precise on this matter. So what I'm about to say is my opinion, taken from scripture, but I'm not dogmatic about it because I could be wrong.

Most writers agree that these are angelic beings. Now that immediately gives some of us a problem because angels in the scripture are always referred to as men.

But, there could be a simple explanation for that. Whether it's the right explanation, I'm not actually sure. But, these women come with the wings of storks and the noun stork in scripture is only ever feminine.

So, suddenly the question of whether it's a male or a female angel doesn't come into it. It's because of the association with the stork that they're referred to as women.

And then there's further debate among scholars. Some suggest that these must be holy angels because they're carrying out the will of God.

[18:28] And there's another whole load that say they must be fallen angels because they're preserving and enhancing wickedness. I personally believe the latter.

Mainly because of the association with the stork. So, what's the thing about the stork? Well, if you turn to turn to Deuteronomy 14.

So, these women that are coming to grab this ephah are, they have the wings of storks. And in Leviticus, sorry, in Deuteronomy 14 verse 18, you have a list of unclean animals.

These are animals that they're not allowed to eat for various reasons. And in verse 18, I mean, you can start with verse 17, the pelican, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, the stork, and the heron in their kinds, and the hoopoe and the bat.

These are all birds that are deemed unclean and you're not allowed to eat them. So, the stork is actually a bird of prey, although not, I mean, we tend to think of birds of prey as being like eagles and so on.

[19:42] But, the stork is a bird of prey that is a forbidden food. So, this woman, or these women who are coming to collect the ephah are associated with the unclean bird.

They're coming in some way that's recognisable as being unclean. And it's for that reason that I think this refers to fallen angels, not holy angels.

But there's a debate to be had there if you want it. In Jeremiah 8, verse 7, the stork is used as an example of the wayward nature of God's people when they get into sin.

And he says, even the stork, even this unclean bird, the stork, knows her season, but my people do not. And as I've said, the noun stork is always a feminine noun in scripture.

And so, can refer to male or female. It's a bit like the word for mankind which is masculine. It's men. But it includes male men and female men, if you see what I mean.

[20:49] You're not excluded because you're female. You're a part of mankind. And so, these two women lift up the ephah and they carry it away to the land of Shinar.

Or Shinar. And it's as we consider that, that this whole passage reveals itself as an end time scenario. How God, you see, God is, if you think of the basket contains a woman whose name is wickedness, and what we're about to unfold is God's way of dealing with all wickedness for all time. Now, for me, the world can still be a pretty wicked place. So, he hasn't finished that job yet. But what this vision is saying is he will finish this.

And the example that he uses to embellish and set in front of everybody the whole concept of sin, the imagery that he uses is this woman in the basket.

And what we're going to see is that one of the main drivers for sin is money. And God's judgment is going to deal with that as a primary way of dealing with sin.

[22:12] So, go back to Zechariah and we'll read a bit more of it. Or re-read a bit more of it. In verse 11, he said to me, he's just been asked the question in verse 10, where are they taking the ephah?

These unclean women who've collected the ephah and taking it away, where are they taking it? And the angel replies, to build a temple in the land of Shinar.

It says, in the land of Shinar, when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal. So, the purpose that's being fulfilled here is to take this woman to a particular place that is set aside, being prepared for her to be put on a pedestal to be worshipped.

And if you think of worship, what we actually do, in gatherings like this, we worship the Lord Jesus Christ. In many gatherings in this country, they're worshipping something else entirely, or they are committing acts of worship with their lifestyles that worship materialism in some way.

For example, there are millions, literally millions, of children aborted because they get in the way of making money.

[23:42] Now, that's a national sin. And the people that are doing it are worshipping materialism. They're not worshipping in the Lord Jesus Christ. So, let's just look at where Babylon starts.

If you turn to Genesis chapter 10. Genesis chapter 10. We're going to read verses 8 to 12. Now, this is a genealogy.

And in verse 8, it says, Now Cush became the father of Nimrod. He became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.

Therefore, it is said, like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Achad and Kelnech in the land of Shinar.

So, the land of Shinar was a place where this chap Nimrod built cities, one of which was Babel or Babel, famous for the Tower of Babel.

[24:46] The Tower of Babel was built as an act of rebellion against God because God had said to the people, scatter yourself throughout the earth. It was Nimrod that said, let's not do that.

Let's all dwell in cities and stay local and at some point, let's build this tower that will reach into heaven and we can just be like God and if God sends another flood, we'll have an escape route.

If you look at the building materials for the tower and we'll do that another day, but these were fired bricks with tar with asphalt for mortar. So, the tower that was built was proofed against floods.

Soon after, God had redeemed the world from a flood and ignoring the fact that God had said, I will never send another worldwide flood. So, this, now of course there's a small amount of confusion here because when you read this about Nimrod verse 9, he was a mighty hunter before the Lord.

Therefore, it is said, like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord. People say, well, if he was a mighty hunter before the Lord, surely that meant the Lord was in favor of him. No, not quite.

[26:05] When you look a little bit further into the language, first of all, it can just as easily be translated, he was a mighty hunter against the Lord, or he was a mighty hunter in the sight of the Lord.

In other words, the Lord appreciated what he was without actually favoring what he was doing. A bit like the woman in the Ephah, the Lord had the measure of him.

So, hopefully, that undoes any confusion there. And Nimrod couldn't have been in favor with the Lord because he was the one who persuaded the people to disobey his commandment to spread themselves through the earth.

And he established these cities, one of which was Babel, which was famous for its rebellion against God. And Babel was the forerunner of Babylon.

And you can read that in any kind of history book. Now, there are several prophecies against Babylon in the Bible. Now, we are looking at this now through the eyes of Zechariah after the Babylonian captivity is finished and therefore after the city has been left destitute.

[27:26] Now, how long it took to become destitute, we don't know. But if you turn to Jeremiah 50, and we're going to, I dropped that last week, didn't I?

I shall have to get a new one. Jeremiah chapter 50. Now, in chapters 50 and 51, and this was written somewhere during the century before they got cast out of captivity, in chapter 50, what you have, if we go to, yeah, starting at the beginning, what you have, and this is written while the Babylonian captivity is still going on as far as I can ascertain, the word which the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet, declare and proclaim among the nations, proclaim it and lift up a standard, do not conceal it, but say Babylon

has been captured.

Now, at the point that this is said, Babylon was capturing everybody else. Babylon has been captured, Bel has been put to shame, Marduk has been shattered, her images have been put to shame, her idols have been shattered, for a nation has come up against her out of the north, it will make her land an object of horror, there will be no inhabitant in it, both man and beast have wandered off and they have gone astray.

In those days and at that time declares the Lord, the sons of Israel will come, both they and the sons of Judah as well, and they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the Lord their God they will seek.

So you've kind of got a double-edged prophetic word here that says Babylon is going to be shattered and eventually they're going to be seeking after the Jews to seek after their God.

[29 : 28] Now at the time it was written Babylon was a long way from this. I'm not going to spend too long in Jeremiah, but turn to chapter 51, so one chapter to the right.

Thus says the Lord, behold I'm going to arouse against Babylon and against the inhabitants of Lebkamai, the spirit of a destroyer. I will dispatch foreigners to Babylon that they may winnow her. Now winnowing is where you take the wheat and you drag the threshing sled over the wheat so that it releases the chaff and then you blow the chaff away.

So that's winnowing and what he's saying is Babylon is going to become like winnowing. Carrying on and may devastate her land for on every side they will be opposed to her in the day of her calamity.

Verse 4, they will fall down slain in the land of the Shaldeans and pierce through in their streets.

Verse 6, flee from the midst of Babylon and each of you to save his life do not be destroyed in her punishment for this is the Lord's time of vengeance he is going to render recompense to her.

[30 : 46] Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine therefore the nations are going mad. Suddenly Babylon is fallen and been broken.

wail over her bring balm for her pain perhaps she may be healed. It goes on in like vain. So the forecast for Babylon is complete destruction.

However that has not yet happened. Just to briefly fill you in on a little bit of Babylonian history. What happened with Babylon was that a man called Cyrus the Great who was the one who released the Jews to go back to their land.

He decided he wanted to take Babylon. Babylon was impenetrable mainly because it had this massive wall around it that you couldn't get through. And the river Euphrates flowed through it and as the river flowed through it what they did was they secured a massive set of lock gates at the upstream end and the downstream end.

And so within the city they captured water. And so what you had is a bit like you get here in certain places. All the rich people of Babylon had riverside apartments.

[32 : 03] It was nice to dip your toes in the river to let your kids paddle in the river and all the expensive dwellings were on the riverside and this river went through and the weight of the water held the gates shut so you couldn't get the gates open.

The only weakness that would let you into Babylon were these gates and you couldn't get them open because of the weight of the river. Well, Cyrus discovered that there had in the past been a plan and this plan had resulted in excavating an area so that the river could be diverted into this area and having discovered it that's exactly what he did.

So the river was diverted into this area so at Babylon itself the river dried up. this happened in Daniel chapter 5 when Belshazzar was having a great party and they're all drunk and they're all believe that they're absolutely safe.

Nobody can possibly invade but what happened was they drained the river, opened the gates and snuck in unopposed and there was not a single blow struck.

they just captured the city without a battle and you can read about that in Daniel chapter 5. So Babylon has been dwelling as though it's secure and it's full of rich merchants and that was its hallmark.

[33 : 35] The stamp on Babylon was it was full of rich merchants but it was never totally destroyed. What happened was that once the city was revealed as not being secure anymore, people lost interest and moved away and after a period of many, many years, centuries, it just fell into ruin and eventually had sand blown all over it and ostriches moved in there and jekylls and it fulfilled a

prophecy in itself.

But it hasn't been destroyed yet. So what we're about to read is the destiny of Babylon in our future because it's still not finished.

There are lots of people who believe that what we're about to read is a sort of spiritualisation of it. What Babylon stood for is being destroyed rather than Babylon itself.

But for me that leaves an unfulfilled prophecy and therefore in my own view we are going to see the demise of Babylon which is not difficult at the moment because it's a load of ruins.

But it won't remain a load of ruins. Now you may or may not know this but one of the ambitions of Saddam Hussein as Babylon was in modern day Iraq. One of the ambitions of Saddam Hussein was to rebuild Babylon.

[35:00] He wanted to rebuild it for his own glory. And look where that ended. God's timing wasn't right. But turn with me to Revelation 17.

So what we're reading from Zechariah was written in the 520s BC. Revelation was written we think in around about 96 AD.

And it's still speaking of Babylon in the future tense or the present tense. Revelation 17. And I don't know if your Bible gives it a title but in mine it says the doom of Babylon.

Babylon. And when you think what Babylon is today you think well how can you doom a city that's in ruins? Well because it's not finished yet. It'll be rebuilt and then doomed.

Then one of the seven angels had seven bowls and came and spoke with me saying come here I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality and he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast full of blasphemous names having seven heads and ten horns the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of unclean of the unclean things of her immorality and on her forehead was the name was written a mystery Babylon the great the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth and I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witness of

[36:57] Jesus when I saw her I wondered greatly and the angel said to me why do you wonder I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her which has seven heads and ten horns now I could easily go off into another one hour bible study about the beast that's got seven heads and ten horns but the the main point that we want to get from this this morning is according to the revelation given by John Babylon is still to face the music for what she has done which is to lead everybody into immorality and we all know from our past lives that sin is dangled before us as something really attractive and it's very easy to become drunk on the promise that sin gives God you'll have a great time you know sin always promises but doesn't deliver but it promises it promises amazing results and usually at the end of it you kind of feel very very let down because it doesn't satisfy and this this woman who I believe is the same woman that was in the ether this woman is being held to account but also note verse six she was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witness of Jesus drunk on the blood of the saints this really speaks of antichrist doesn't it somebody who hates the saints not just enough to give them a hard time but if it were possible would annihilate every single one of us anybody that reflects on the name of

Jesus in a positive way is pray for this woman and verse one of the passage we just read speaks of Babylon as or rather the passage speaks of Babylon as a great city in the present tense at a time when it's no more than ruins so we are going to witness the resurrection of Babylon at some point she's this great whore and the mother of harlots and every abomination we read so what we might read there is and the mother of every wickedness wouldn't we you know like the original woman was called wickedness and then there's this description of the woman riding a beast who gives her power and authority now if we had time to look at it we'd see that the beast is a type of Satan and so is a key figure in the kingdom of antichrist

I'm not even going to get into the kingdoms because it would just take me another hour but when we study revelation which I fully intend to do at some point I haven't set a date in my head but I want us to study the book of revelation because it applies so much to the!

which we live this passage if we read on speaks of what am I trying to say I'm trying to put it succinctly and I'm completely failing the passage speaks of the woman who sits on seven mountains and there's a lot of conjecture about what those seven mountains are for me because

I just want to read from verse 9 onwards and the kings of the earth who committed acts of immorality and live sensuously with her will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning now Babylon has never been burned as far as I know standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment saying whoa whoa the great city of Babylon the strong city for in one hour your judgment has come and the merchants of the earth so we're back to merchandise and merchants and money aren't we and the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour in other words trade is being messed up and they're not weeping for the loss of her they're weeping for the loss of the money they used to get from her verse 16 woe woe the great city who was linen and purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste and every ship master and every passenger and sailor and as many as make a living by the sea stood at the distance if I thought we were really close to this the last thing [42:55] I want to do is take a cruise verse 18 and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning saying what city is like the great city and they threw dust on their heads and were crying out weeping and mourning saying whoa whoa the great city in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth sorry became rich by her wealth for in one hour she has been laid waste and then curiously rejoice over her oh heaven and you saints and apostles and prophets because god has pronounced judgment for you against her so this is the woman who was drunk on the blood of the saints and she is being repaid for her stand against the saints and I'm not going to read on with revelation you can do that when you get home but I think the main point that we're supposed to take from this very enigmatic passage a mysterious passage is that there is no sin that god does not deal with now when it comes to those who are saved he has already dealt with it because he paid the price for it and that is the gospel message your sins have been paid for doesn't give you license to carry on sinning but it does give you freedom and forgiveness to those who reject him and particularly to those who carry on immoral and corrupt trade and cheat people having a thumb on the scale is another analogy that is often used people who cheat people it's not lost in you can't do these things and god doesn't notice and not only does he notice it but he captures it and it can be contained within his ephah and there will come a time when that sin will be and

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