

Messages from Revelation 7 of 16

The Wine of Babylon

#0468

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 15, 1973

Let us turn to the last book of the Bible, Revelation 14. We've been studying the wonderful threefold message, God's last message to this world, it's going out to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, the sixth verse says. The angel announces the present judgment, and calls all to fear God and give glory to Him and worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea and fountains of waters.

The eighth verse says:

“...Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” Revelation 14:8.

Then follows a third angel, and that's the last. Then Jesus comes, the 14th verse, seated on the cloud with the trumpet, with the sickle to reap the harvest of the earth. This is harvest time, friends—it's the *end* time.

Now this evening, I'd like to study with you especially this eighth verse:

“...Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” Revelation 14:8.

Babylon is the name of the first city built in this world of prominence after the flood. It's the great golden city of antiquity. In the Bible, it stands in antagonism to Zion, the city of God. Babylon is Satan's effort to enthrone himself as the king of this world. God's dwelling place is in Zion. Through the ages, there has been warfare between these two. So in the book of Revelation, God takes these two cities—Zion, the city of God, Babylon the city of pride, the city of sin—and uses them as symbols of the two great systems of worship.

The true worship centers in the Creator, as the seventh verse shows:

“...worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” Revelation 14:7.

But Babylon seeks to turn the attention of men from Creator worship to creature worship. It exalts that which is made above the One that made all things. This is well represented in the two great Sabbaths, or rest days of these two great

systems. God's Sabbath, which He made at creation, is the seventh day. It comes at the end of the week. Its worship exalts the Creator. But for centuries, the false Sabbath, the first day of the week, has been first in paganism and then in the great papal apostasy. It stood as the opposite, the opposing side, as we shall see in future studies in this book of Revelation. It is on this point that the great controversy reaches its climax.

In a battle, the warfare centers around the flag. The standard of this army stands for loyalty to and co-operation with this nation, whereas on the other side the enemy has his standard

Babylon, the name, means confusion. If you go back in the study of the book of Genesis, you'll find that Babylon, Babel, was the place where Satan made an endeavor to centralize everything in government and religion. God had told His people to scatter over the earth. But when man in defiance of God sought to build that city and that great tower, God came down and confused their language. So the name of it was called Babel, Babylon, confusion.

In the verses that we're studying tonight, we note that the influence of Babylon has extended over all the earth. That's what this says—that great city made all nations drink of her wine. Her wine, of course, represents her doctrine, her teachings. She holds this golden cup to the lips of men. We are told:

“...the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.” Jeremiah 51:7.

That is, insane, crazy. Just as alcohol has a physical effect upon the brain, causing the person who imbibes to think crooked, so the influence of the teachings of Babylon is to cause people to think crooked.

In Jeremiah 51:9, we're told that God tried to heal Babylon. All down through the ages, God has held out His hands of loving entreaty to Babylon. But Babylon would not take the cure. You know there's only one way to help an alcoholic, friends. Somewhere along the line, he has to lay the bottle aside. Am I correct? That's right. And Babylon's problem is that she's not been willing to give up this wine, this false teaching.

I wonder, could there be anybody here tonight that has been affected with the wine of Babylon? Could there be anyone here tonight that thinks something is so when it isn't so? This is the effect of alcohol. Many a man feels rich when he's poor, feels warm when he's cold, feels wise when he is giving evidence of ignorance and foolishness simply because he's drunk. And what literal alcohol does to the brain, so the teachings of Babylon do to the minds of all who embrace them.

When we study alcohol in the laboratory, we find that it can be made; it is made, in nature, in the world around us, by the fermentation of sugar. This is what happens in wine. The Bible tells us in Isaiah 65:8 that there's a blessing in the new wine found in the cluster. In other words, the fresh juice of the grape as it's pressed

from the grape has a blessing in it. Part of that blessing is the glucose sugar made of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. It's a wonderful process that the Creator uses to take the carbon dioxide gas of the air, water sucked up by the roots of the vine, and in the leaf that carbon dioxide gas and the water are joined together in chemical union, built up in various forms of carbohydrate. The sugar of the grape, glucose sugar, is the same sugar as it's found in your blood. This is why raisins are used by long-distance hikers sometimes. This is why the grape juice is so quickly absorbed and furnishes energy. The sugar of the grape juice is the same sugar as your blood—glucose sugar.

Long ago, the great enemy gathered a great counsel of his demons. In the early ages of this world, he had this celebrated committee meeting. The purpose of this committee meeting was to find out how best to degrade and destroy the human family. Satan was, of course, the chairman of this committee. And under his chairmanship, the discussion went back and forth. One devil suggested one plan. One fallen angel another, and another still another plan. And finally Satan himself suggested the plan. His plan was that he would take the fruit of the earth and convert it into a poison. Satan has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature. He it is who sets in motion various diabolical plans to bring death and destruction.

This particular plot that he suggested on this occasion was to take the sugar of the fruits and convert them into a poison, which would make men's minds mad, and finally destroy man in the process. Alcohol is literally the child of the Devil. It is the product of his mind. He has thought through what happens. And remember what he uses is the delicious, life-giving sugar of the grape and other fruits. He has taken something that God has created and perverted it.

This is exactly what happens in the wine cup of Babylon. That's why I have explained what happens in the building up of the sugar in the grape and other plants, and then it's breaking down in the process of fermentation. Alcohol is not a creation, it's a perversion. Error is a perversion of truth. The Devil never originated anything—never, never. He is not a creator, but he's a powerful perverter. He can change and twist whatever of God's creation he can get his filthy hands on. This is what he has done.

In the wine cup of Babylon are all sorts of perversions. God calls this wine the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Those who drink this wine become more or less insane.

Most of you are familiar with the fact that alcoholic intoxication can take many forms. There is a stage in which an individual which is intoxicated is dead drunk. He has gotten so much of the alcohol that it puts him to sleep. There are times when under the influence of alcohol, a man is raging mad, ready to fight anybody. There are other times when, with a given amount of alcohol, a person is just so friendly he never meets a stranger. He's ready to talk, his tongue is loose at both ends, and he can engage you in friendly conversation and have a wonderful time

There are other manifestations. But every one of those effects is due—don't miss it—to interfering with the function of the forebrain. Right here in the front of the skull, God has put the most important part of the human brain. Here in the forebrain are the centers having to do with reason and conscience and judgment. And the reason that the man under the influence of alcohol talks so freely is that the governor has been put to sleep; inhibition is gone. He talks freely of things that if he was in his right mind, he'd keep still about.

Why does a drunk get raging mad, in other stages of intoxication? Again, because the governor has been put to sleep. He may even get so insane under the influence of alcohol that he will strike the wife that he promised to love and cherish as long as they both shall live, or kick and beat his children, or even commit murder. What is it? It's the influence of this alcohol, interfering with the function of the brain.

This is what happens as the result of listening to and being affected by the false doctrines of Babylon. As there are various stages of and manifestations of physical intoxication, so there are various stages of and manifestations of mental and spiritual intoxication. Some of the false religions of the world tend to make people cold and formal and dead. On the other hand, some of these things in the wine cup of Babylon make people full of religious pep. People call it getting the Spirit. It's a spirit all right. There are spirits in a bottle of whiskey; you know that. And there are spirits in the wine cup of Babylon that can make people shout and go through all sorts of unheavenly-like things. All this is part of the wine cup of Babylon.

I can only begin tonight to study with you this wine cup of Babylon. Next Friday night, God willing, I want to study some other things with you. But this evening, I want to study this point that all false doctrine is a perversion of the truth, just as alcohol is a perversion of the natural sugar of the grape and the other fruits. Remember, Satan never originates anything. He twists, he changes, he perverts.

Turn please to Romans 1:25. This first chapter of Romans contains an awful picture of the heathen world at the time that Paul wrote. And it is being duplicated today as our society plunges deeper and deeper into the filth of vice of all kinds. Paul in this first chapter of Romans, shows what is back of all this impurity, immorality of every kind. Beginning with the 21st verse:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations...”

Notice, the imagination comes into this. I'll have more to speak of this presently.

“...and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...”

In the search for education, they lost the wisdom of God. Worldly education drinks from the wine cup of Babylon.

“...and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves...”

All sorts of vice, immorality. Now the 25th verse, watch.

“...who changed the truth of God into a lie...”
Romans 1:21–25.

Here’s the process, the fermentation: The truth of God is what? Changed into a lie. What does the Devil start with? He starts with the truth, and he ends up with what? A lie. Just as in the fermentation of wine, he starts with this delicious, life-giving, glucose sugar and ends up with a terrible poison that intoxicates while it kills. So in the religions of this world, the Devil starts with truth and changes it into what? A lie. He never—don’t miss this—gets to the point where *all* the truth is obliterated and gone. Just as in the fermentation of wine, there’s always some sugar left—never pure alcohol. So in the Devil’s wine cup, there is always some truth.

There’re several reasons for this. One of the most obvious reasons is this: The Devil uses the truth which he retains as bait to attract people. He uses it as a screen, a mask to hide the error. And how many millions of people will defend this religion or that religion, this erroneous teaching or that erroneous teaching on the plea, “Think of all the good that’s in it.” Don’t you think this is true? Don’t you think this is good?

Oh, my friends, what good is it to plead that there is some sugar still in fermented wine when I know that if I drink it, I’m getting, along with the sugar, I’m getting what? Alcohol. And the trouble with the Devil’s wine, the wine of Babylon, is that along with truth, there’s a mixture of error. But remember, all the error comes from a perversion of truth. “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever.” Amen.

Now, I want to ask you something, if this is true what we’ve studied so far, what do you want? Do you want truth or a lie? Which do you want? You say you all want truth.

All right, let’s turn to John 17:17. Where do we find the truth? What does Jesus say? Christ addressing His Father says:

“...Thy word is truth” John 17:17.

Notice, we do not say this Word *contains* the truth. We say it *is* the truth. There’s quite a difference. The Bible does not simply *contain* the Word of God, it *is* the Word of God, and God’s Word is truth. Do you know why it’s the truth? Well, turn to John 14:6, and you’ll see. What does Jesus say about Himself here?

“...I am the way, the truth, and the life...” John 14:6.

Jesus is what? The truth. Since Christ *is* the truth, everything He says is truth. The Bible says that God cannot lie. Every time God speaks, it's the truth.

Now let's turn over to John, while we're in this wonderful book, to the eighth chapter, and we'll see where lying started. Christ speaking to the Jews. They were great religious people—the Pharisees and scribes who eventually condemned Him to death, He says:

“Ye are of your father the devil...”

Were they religious? Never anybody more religious in the history of the world. But Jesus says ye are of your father the Devil.

“... and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth...”

Was he in the truth once? Oh, yes; when God created him, he was in the truth, but there came a time when he moved from the truth to something else.

“... because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” John 8:44.

Who's the father of lies? Satan. Does every lie then come from Satan? Yes. Truth comes from God. The Devil takes truth and perverts it, twists it. Tell me, friend: when truth is twisted, is it pure truth anymore? What did we read over in Romans 1 happens—truth is changed into what? A lie. So, what is a lie? It's a twisted truth. And remember, two half-truths are simply a whole lie; they never make a whole truth. No number of half-truths makes a whole truth, do they? No. Always a lie.

Now turn over to 1 John 2:21. We're letting the Word of God speak to us tonight. The Word of God is what? Truth, and that's what we want is truth. We want the fresh, pure juice of the grape, pressed out of this wonderful vine. We don't want the fermented wine of Babylon.

“...no lie is of the truth” 1 John 2:21.

Will you say that with me? “No lie is of the truth.” Then before I read something, do you think I ought to ask whether it's truth or a lie? Do you know the name that is sometimes used for some kinds of things that aren't true in books? Fiction. That's right. You've heard the proverb: The true is stranger than fiction. Now the thing that makes fiction intoxicating, and if you've ever read novels or any

type of fiction, you perhaps know that it is intoxicating. The thing that makes it intoxicating is that it is a perversion of truth. A perversion of truth.

You have seen stories that are said to be based on fact. You have seen novels that are historical novels and that are said to be based on the historical narrative. Remember, all wine is based on fresh unfermented wine, but it gets off its base. And the thing that makes the novel exciting is the unreality of it. If a lot of reality is mixed with it, remember it's the unreality of it that intoxicates and excites. People want that exciting thing. Just as in some parties, people take fruit juice, and they spike it with some kind of an alcoholic beverage, so a true, good story can be so written and so mixed with fiction that it is spiked, exciting, intoxicating.

May I tell you something from my own experience? I've never been drunk on alcohol. I've never tasted wine or beer or whiskey. I don't know what it tastes like at all. But I've been drunk. I remember when I was a boy, getting drunk on a novel, and it was a religious novel, a "wonderful" novel. It intoxicated me. It unfitted me for life's duties. When I was reading that thing, there was just one thing I wanted—to get to the next chapter, to get to the next chapter, to get to the next chapter.

Some people would say, "Well, isn't that wonderful? That's a way to get acquainted with the life of Christ."

No, my dear friend. The One who knows says, "Do not encourage your children to read the life of Christ in the form of a novel." No. When I want to get acquainted with the life of Jesus, I want it the way God Himself presented it through Matthew and Mark and Luke and John. And if I want that magnified and enlarged upon, think of those wonderful 800 pages in the book, *The Desire of Ages*—an inspired commentary on the life of our Lord. Interesting? Yes. Inspiring? Yes. But exciting the way whiskey and wine and beer are? No. And the proof of it lies in this fact: the mind that has educated itself to enjoy the exciting intoxicating fiction, whether religious or otherwise, finds the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy tame and boring—am I correct? You know it's true.

On the other hand, the person who has learned to love the Word of God which is pure truth does not want that fermented stuff.

By the way, do you have to drink a gallon of it to find out whether it's fermented or not? The smell is enough, isn't it?

Never allow yourself, says inspiration, to open the lids of a book that is questionable. Whenever we know that a book is not truth, the place for it is not under our reading eyes. Why? Well, what did we just read here in 1 John 2:21, you repeated it with me: "No lie is of the truth."

Oh, but there's so much good in it. Yes, more is the pity. That's what the fish thinks that takes the bait, but there's a hook in the bait.

Let's turn now to Revelation 22. Oh, this wonderful book of Revelation; we'll begin reading the 14th verse:

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without..."

That is outside the city.

"...are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" Revelation 22:14–15.

People that make lies are going to be in the golden city? No. Outside. What about people that don't make them, they just love them? Where will they be? The answer is very simple when you look at it. They're where what they like is. Do you think there'll be any lies in the city of God? The people that love lies then would be lonesome. You can see that. People that have to have an exciting TV program in order to keep happy, what would they do up there in Heaven? Looking at their wristwatch to see what time their favorite program is coming on. But there's nothing like that up there. Everything in Heaven is real, nothing phony, nothing fictitious, nothing make-believe.

May I tell you a little secret, friends? There are dozens of people, scores of them, sitting here tonight that agree with everything I say, but they don't realize that there are still some phony and unreal things in their lives. It could be you. I want to challenge you to do something between now and next Friday night: I'd like to invite you to every day take these verses we've studied tonight to God in prayer, and ask God if there's any of the wine of Babylon coming into your mind or soul. Ask God if everything in your life is real. Ask God if everything in your mental diet is true, real, heavenly. What about your dress? What about the way you wear your hair? What about the way you talk? Are you an actor or a witness? Do you try to make an impression that is not actually truthful? Do you try to give an appearance of wealth that you don't have, of education that you don't possess, of position that you don't have?

What did we read in 1 John 2? No lie is what? Of the truth. Do you know that the only way that a person can speak the truth? That is for the truth to have full possession of them. If there's any pretense in our heart, it's going to show up. If there's any make-believe in our character, it's going to come out. Oh, it's a wonderful thing to reach the place where all that we want is to be true. All we want is Jesus and His truth.

Now we've looked at this sad picture in Revelation 22:15 of the people outside the city that make lies and love them; now go to Revelation 14 and see the ones *inside* the city. Here're the 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mt. Zion. They have the Father's name written in their foreheads, their brains are thinking straight. Then the fifth verse, will you read it with me?

“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” Revelation 14:5.

I’m told that that word translated “guile” there has in it its origin the thought of that which causes fermentation. In other words, the 144,000 are free, not only from every lie, but from every *tendency* to twist the truth. They love pure truth, and no lie is of the truth.

May we bow our heads? Precious Lord, rightly interpret to our hearts the verses from the Bible we’ve read tonight. Help us not to judge others, but help us to come to the judgment bar of God and let Thy Holy Spirit convict us personally. Oh God, what a shame it would be to wake up and find we’ve been hugging lies of whatever form. I pray that Thou will give us a great love for Jesus, who gave His life that we might be purged of lies and fall in love with God’s truth. Make it so for every one of us. We ask it in Jesus’ name, amen.

[Testimony service]

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