

# Babylon the Great Described

by Isaac Penington

---

*Babylon is a spiritual city built on the wisdom of the flesh, where sin and unrighteousness reign, and must be escaped by turning to the true life and power of Sion.*

**Scripture:** 1 John 5:21

**Topics:** "Spiritual Deception", "False Worship"

---

## Description

Isaac Penington preaches about the deceptions and sins of Babylon the Great, describing how the city of confusion, where Antichrist reigns, leads people astray by imitating the ways of God without the life and power of the Spirit. He warns against idolatry, blasphemy, and sorceries that bewitch individuals into false worship and practices, emphasizing the need to worship God in spirit and truth.

---

## Transcript

BABYLON THE GREAT

DESCRIBED

THE CITY OF CONFUSION

IN EVERY PART WHEREOF ANTICHRIST REIGNS

WHICH KNOWETH NOT THE ORDER AND UNITY OF THE SPIRIT, BUT STRIVETH TO SET UP AN ORDER AND UNIFORMITY ACCORDING TO THE WISDOM OF THE FLESH, IN ALL HER TERRITORIES AND DOMINIONS

HER SINS, HER JUDGMENTS

WITH SOME PLAIN QUERIES FURTHER TO DISCOVER HER; AND SOME CONSIDERATIONS TO HELP OUT OF HER SUBURBS, THAT HER INWARD BUILDING MAY LIE THE MORE OPEN TO THE BREATH AND SPIRIT OF THE LORD, FROM WHICH IT IS TO RECEIVE ITS CONSUMPTION AND OVERTHROW

ALSO

AN EXHORTATION

## TO THE POWERS OF THE EARTH

BY ISAAC PENINGTON, THE YOUNGER

[1659]

That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find out? I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason; and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness. And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, her hands bands. He that is good before God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. Eccl. 7:24-26

He that is born of the pure, immortal seed, and lives in the anointing, escapes the golden cup of fornication, and all the painted beds of fornication, and is not defiled with women; Rev. 14:4. but remains chaste to the bridegroom.

Lo this is the city which is built up of and filled with images and likenesses of the ways and truths of God, without the life and power.

On her outside there is the likeness of a church, the likeness of a ministry, the likeness of the ordinances, duties, and ways of holiness.

On her inside there is the likeness of the good knowledge, the likeness of repentance and conversion, the likeness of faith, the likeness of zeal for God, the likeness of love to God and his saints, the likeness of the Lamb's meekness and innocency, the likeness of justification, the likeness of sanctification, the likeness of mortification, the likeness of hope, peace, joy, rest, and satisfaction, &c., but the substance, the truth, the virtue of all these is wanting to her; and she herself is found persecuting that very thing (where it is found in truth) the image whereof she cries up.

This, this is the woman that hath bewitched the whole earth for these many generations, and is still changing her dresses and paints, that she might still bewitch people, and sit as a queen reigning over their consciences; but blessed be the light which is arisen to discover, and the power which is able to overthrow this stately, this lofty, this mighty city, and all that take part with it.

The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth in Sion; and antichrist, with his city Babylon, falleth. Sing praises, sing praises, O inhabitant of Sion! to him who subjecteth Babylon, with all her glory, under thy feet.

For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down; the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy. Isaiah 26:5-6.

---

PREFACE There hath been in me a zeal for God from my childhood, and a most earnest search into the Scriptures (which my soul deeply relished, and my heart honored and loved, and still doth) for the revelation of the mind and will of God. Two things did I earnestly search and beg for: the one was for the discovery of the outward way of worship; the other for the inward life, virtue, and power, which I looked upon the outward as the proper means to lead me to. At the beginning of the troubles in these nations, there was a lively stirring in me, and a hope that God was bringing forth somewhat.

I likewise felt the same stirring in many others, at which my heart was rejoiced, and with which my soul was refreshed; but I found it soon begin to flag and wither, which forced me to retire, and to separate from that where I found the life and power dying and decaying. In my separation the Lord was with me; my soul remembereth it right well; and he had regard to the simplicity, honesty, and integrity of my heart, which he himself had kindled in me. And though I fell too soon into a way of church-fellowship and ordinances; yet he had regard to me, and pitied me, and refreshed my life even there.

But at length the form overgrew us, and the sweet and precious life in us began to die. Then the Lord found out another way to refresh us (namely, by a sensible relating of our conditions, and of his dealings with us, and workings in us), which was very sweet and precious at first; but the enemy crept in there also. Out of this state I never made any change; but here the hand of the Lord fell upon me, striking at my very root, breaking all my life in sunder, and trampling my crown in the dust.

Then I became a man of sorrows (being stripped of all my life, faith, hope, joy, comfort, in one day) not knowing which way to look, nor what to desire. Sometimes there were breathings stirring in me, but they were presently judged; sometimes a little glance of refreshment from a scripture presented to me; but suddenly taken away, and my death and darkness increased thereby. Then should I wish, Oh that I might appear before his throne! for surely my conscience is clear in his sight, and I have not wickedly departed from my God, but was broken in pieces by his hand, even while my soul was earnestly seeking after him.

Oh how my soul did mourn, to see how I was fit to be made a prey to every ravening spirit! and many did seek to devour me, but the hand of the Lord was with me, preserving me, though I knew it not. And though I was wholly broken, and desolate of all that I had called, or could call, knowledge (insomuch that I could not call any thing either good or evil), yet the Lord, by a secret instinct, preserved me exceedingly out of that which was evil, and kept my heart secretly panting after the fountain and wellspring of good.

Yea, when I was at length (through deep despair of ever meeting with God any more in this life) captivated by the world, and betrayed by the love of it (which at last rose up in me, and gained upon me, by persuading me that my present estate and condition did require the free use of it, and the enjoyment of all it could afford), yet the Lord followed me, and often was I visited with secret loathings of the world, and turnings from it, and pantings after the spring of my life: but these were dreaded by me, and suddenly quenched by the evil part, for fear of that misery and unutterable anguish which I had felt hereby; the remembrance whereof was fresh in me.

In this my courting of the world, and estrangement from the life, the reasoning part (which the Lord had been long battering, and had laid very low) gathered strength in me; and I began to grow wise again, and able to judge of the things of God, and to hope and wait for some great appearance, wherein at length I might be visited, and meet with that which I so vehemently desired, and stood in such need of. Thereby the enemy deeply deceived me, pleasing me herewith, and keeping me hereby from unity with that which alone was able to give me the sight of him, whenever he should appear.

And in this fleshly wisdom I judged and despised the true life in others; as weak, low, and not able to bring them to that which I stood in need of, and waited for. Yea, the more I considered and reasoned in my mind, and the more I conversed with them (hoping thereby to find some clear ground either of owning or turning from them), the further off still was I; till at length the Lord powerfully touched, and raised up the life in me (which by all these reasonings and consultations, all this while, I slew); and then by degrees (waiting upon that), I saw, I felt, I tasted, I handled, as the Lord pleased to open to me here, that which was shut

out from me in my narrowest search and closest reasonings. Thus the Jew in me was cast off, and the Gentile called: but who can read this? I am sure the eye of man's religious wisdom cannot.

Hereby my eyes have been opened, and I have seen the fetters, whereby I have been held captive from my life all my days: yea, many of the streets and chambers of Babylon hath mine eye beheld (in the pure life), wherein the witch dwells which enchanteth from the life: yea, I have heard the tongue of the false prophet, which speaketh so like the true prophet, as no flesh can discern or distinguish between them: yea, I have seen the dragon in the temple, worshipped there for God, by the strictest sort of professors. And now, in tender bowels, in the true light of life, from the pure movings of the eternal spirit (as the Lord pleaseth to guide and direct) do I come forth to visit my poor fellow-creatures and captives in Babylon. And what I have seen and known, I testify for the relief of others, that, if it be possible (by the mercy and good hand of God), they may escape that misery wherewith my poor soul hath been overwhelmed, and may come out of that filthy, abominable city which God is making desolate; where the pure life, the conquering faith, the suffering love, the purifying hope, the putting off of the body of sin, the putting on the living garment, is not and cannot be witnessed, but men are only dreaming of these things in Babylon; where all the satisfaction they have, is from the pleasure of their dream; but when they awake they will find leanness, and penury, and nakedness upon their souls.

#### A DESCRIPTION OF BABYLON

#### FOR THE SAKE OF THE DAUGHTER OF SION, WHICH AT PRESENT DWELLETH IN THE MIDST THEREOF

Now, though the world be deaf and blind (even all sorts of worldly professors, from the highest to the lowest), yet open your ears, and hear the joyful sound; open your eyes, and see the city of desolations, and of all the abominations of the earth (both of flesh and spirit); and feel in yourselves what it is which is to be led out, and what is to lead you; that your feet may be guided to, and set firm upon, Mount Sion; where the life rules over all her enemies.

BABYLON is the spiritual fabric of iniquity; the mystical great city of the great king of darkness; built in imitation of Sion, painted just like Sion, that it might be taken for Sion, and be worshipped there, instead of the true, eternal, ever-living God, and King of Sion.

This is the seat of the man of sin: where there is a building framed in any heart, or in any society of men, like Sion; there he lodges, there he lives, there he sits as god, there he reigns, there he is worshipped, there he is exalted above all that can truly be called God in that heart, or in that society.

1. It is a city. This is a proper parable, to discover the mystery of iniquity by in this state; it is just like a city, in its kind it is a city. In a city there are several streets; in the streets, houses; in the houses, several rooms, to which families and persons appertain; and to all these there are laws and governments. Thus it is here; there are many streets in this city of Babylon, many houses in every street, many rooms in every house; and the houses and rooms have their several families and persons appertaining to them; and they have their laws and governments, their knowledge of God and Christ; their order, their worship, their discipline in which they walk, and by which they order themselves in their several services, places, offices, and employments, under the king of Babylon.

2. It is a spiritual or mystical city. It is not an outward building of earthly materials, but an inward building of inward materials. As the outward Sion, the outward Jerusalem, is passed away in its use and service; so

the outward Babylon is out of date too. (Ye need not look so far for it.) And as God hath built up an inward city, a spiritual building; so hath the king of darkness likewise. He could never have tempted from the city of the living God, from the city of the mystery of life, but by the city of the mystery of deceit. And as God builds his city of hewn stones, of squared stones, of living stones; so also hath the king of darkness his hewings, his squarings, his preparations, his qualifications for his buildings. If the light break forth, and make it appear too gross to have the whole nation a church, or to admit a whole parish to ordinances, he will gather a church out of the nation, and select some of his choicer stones out of the parish; yea, he may grasp in some of the stones of the true temple, if they come within his reach and circle; that is, if they look abroad, if they step forth, and keep not close to the anointing within, which is the great and only ordinance of the saints' preservation from antichrist's power: for if they step forth but so much as into a prayer against antichrist, out of this, they are caught in his snare, and are serving him in that very prayer, which they may seem with great earnestness and zeal to put up against him.

3. It is a great city; an overspreading city, a city that overspreads the earth. As Sion was a vast city, a city that did overspread the nations (how did the faith of the gospel over-run the world in the apostles' days!) so this city hath also over-run the world. Indeed it hath taken up the whole territories and dominions of the other city (and hath enlarged itself further), and Sion hath been laid in the dust, and trodden under foot. And though many witnesses, prophets, and martyrs, have mourned over her, yet none have been able to raise up the tabernacle of David, which hath fallen down, nor to recover Sion to this day; but Babylon hath had the power over her. Look with the true eye, and behold how all nations, kindreds, tongues, and languages, have been drunk with some or other of the mixtures of this false woman's cup (some of them over, and over, and over again), and have been inhabitants of this city, crying her up (though not all in her gross habit, but some in her more refined shapes and transformings) for the true church, for Sion; whereas, alas! she hath only Sion's dress, Sion's shape, Sion's outward garment (which is the likeness wherein she lies in wait to deceive), but not Sion's spirit.

4. It is a city of iniquity, of hidden iniquity. That which is hidden in this city, it is not the life, it is not the righteousness, the holiness of the saints; but iniquity, sin, transgression of the life. Look into any of the streets of Babylon, into any of the houses, any of the rooms, any of the chambers of darkness; there is sin there; there is unrighteousness there; there is not one cleansed heart to be found there; not one pure eye to behold the God of life is to be found there; but in every heart sin in a mystery, iniquity in a mystery, unrighteousness in a mystery. They seem to be for God and Christ, and to be cleansed by them; but uncleanness lodges in them, and sin rules in them against God, and against his Christ in a mystery; which their eye cannot see, and so must needs mistake their state. Yet this is the true state of Babylon, in all the parcels of it; it is the unclean city, where purity of heart and life cannot be known; but though it be washed and transformed ever so often outwardly, yet still it remains inwardly polluted; that which defileth keeping possession and dominion there in a mystery. The living water, the living blood, runs not in any of the streets of this city, so that there can be no true cleansing there. Nay, such strangers are the choicest inhabitants of Babylon to the fountain of life in Sion, to the river that cleanseth and healeth, that they cannot so much as believe that there is a possibility of cleansing and perfect healing, and making sound and whole here, while on earth. There is great talk of these things (of the water, the blood, the cleansing) in all the regions of Babylon (which hath heard of the fame, and forms to itself a likeness); but the thing itself is not to be found there, and so the virtue, which comes from the thing itself alone, cannot be felt there.

And here, in this there is a great difference between the vessels of Sion, and the vessels of Babylon. The vessels of Sion, they are weak, earthen, foolish, contemptible to the eye of man's wisdom (which cannot look for any great matter of excellency there); but the treasure, the liquor of life in them, is precious. The vessels of Babylon make a great show, appear very holy, very heavenly, very zealous for God and Christ, and for the setting up of his church and ordinances all over the world. Thus they appear without; but they are sepulchres; there is rottenness within: under all this there lodgeth an unclean, an unsanctified heart; a heart unsubdued to the spirit and power of the gospel, while it makes such a great show of subjection and obedience to the letter.

5. It is the city of the king of darkness, of the great king of darkness, of the prince of the power of the air, who rules universally in the darkness, in the mystery of iniquity throughout, even in every heart. Wherever is sin, there is Satan's throne; and there he hath his laws, his government, his power, in every heart of his dominion. And where there is the least subjection to him, he is yet a prince; his building is not as yet there wholly thrown down; he is not there as yet dispossessed and cast out. As long as there is any thing left wherein he may dwell, he knows his own, and keeps his hold of it. It is his right, and he will not lose it. All sin, all darkness, is properly his: it is his seat, and he hath the government there. Man is the land where these two kings fight; and whatever is good and holy belongs to the one king, and whatever is evil and unclean belongs to the other; and there is no communion or peace between them; but each keeps his own, and gathers of his own unto himself. And where the fight is once begun between these, there is no quietness in that land, till one of these be dispossessed: but then there is either the peace of Babylon, most commonly under a form of holiness; or the peace of Sion, in the spirit, life, and power.

6. This city was built (and is daily built) in imitation of Sion, painted just like Sion. The intent of its building was to eat out Sion, to suppress Sion, to withdraw from the truth by a false image, and to keep her inhabitants in peace and satisfaction, under a belief and hope that it is the true Sion; and therefore it must needs be made like Sion, else it could no way suit these ends. Every street must be like the streets of Sion; every house, like the houses of Sion; every tribe and family, like the tribes and families of Sion; every person, like the persons in Sion; all the laws, ordinances, &c., like the laws and ordinances of Sion; the worship, like the worship in Sion; the faith, like the faith of Sion; the painted Christ, like the Christ of Sion; all that go for truths, like the truths of Sion; they would not deceive else; Babylon would be soon seen through else, and become quickly desolate and forsaken, did she not lay her paint very thick, and with great art and skill. Now here is the wisdom, here is the true eye tried, to see through all the paints of this city, in all the shapes and forms of it; to turn from every street, every house, every chamber, every image and false appearance of truth; every false appearance of ordinances and ways of worship; every likeness of things which this spirit forms from the letter; every duty that it thus calls for; every promise of scripture which it endeavors to apply to that to which it belongs not, that it might lull the soul asleep, and cozen and deceive it of the thing promised; here, I say, is the true eye tried to turn from all this, and to wait for the raising and redeeming of the true seed of Sion, and for the springing up of the true life and power in it and from it: for as long as this spirit can deceive you with any likeness, ye shall never know the truth, nor come to the worship of the true, living God, which alone is in the spirit, and in the truth.

7. The end of all this, of Satan's building up this city, this great city (thus accurately in the power of deceit, and in the very likeness of Sion) was, and is, that it might be taken for Sion, and be worshipped there as God, and that without jealousy or suspicion. And he hath attained his end; his city hath deceived and doth deceive, it passeth current for Sion among all the inhabitants of Babylon; almost every sort of people cry it up for Sion, in one appearance or other, though all do not cry up the same appearance; but their own

image, way, and worship, every one extols; their own image of the truth, for the truth; their own way of worship, for the way; their own church and family, for the church and family of God. And worshipping here, they worship him, and not the Lord: for the Lord cannot be worshipped in any part of Babylon; but the king of Babylon is worshipped in Babylon, and the king of Sion alone in Sion. Ah! how deeply do men deceive their souls! they think they believe in God, they think they pray to God, and hope to be owned at length by God, and yet are so far from coming out of mystery Babylon, that it was never yet so much as discovered to them; but they have either walked in the way of religion and worship they were brought up in, in the apostasy, or perhaps have removed out of one or two of the broad streets of it, and so thereby think they have left Babylon; whereas the same spirit hath set down in another street of the same city, building up another house by the direction of the king thereof, and there worshipping the same spirit as they did before; but their souls never knew the fire in Sion, and the furnace in Jerusalem; by which the very inwards of their spirits must be cleansed, before the pure eye of life be opened which can see Sion.

Now, because ye are more able to receive things from scripture expressions, than from the nature of the thing itself, spoken as it is felt in the heart (concerning which much more might be said, were ye able to bear it), consider a few scriptures.

Babylon is called a great city, Rev. 16:19. and a great and mighty city. chap. 18:10. Oh, the power of deceit in that city, to bewitch from the life! Oh, the multitude of lying wonders that are there shown in the heart, to make a man believe that he is in the life! to persuade men that the king thereof is the king of Sion! and that the laws, and ordinances of worship there, are the laws and ordinances of Sion! that the prayer there, is the prayer of the true child! that the believing there, is the true faith! the love there, the true love! the hope there, the true hope, &c. Some parts of Babylon, some likenesses of truth there, are so taking, that none but the elect, by the opening of the eternal eye, can espy the deceit.

And it is a spiritual city, a mystical city, a city built by the working of the mystery of iniquity, 2 Thes. 2:7. whereupon she is called mystery. Rev. 17:5. It is not a city of plain wickedness, but a city of sin hid; of sin keeping its life under a covering, under a form of godliness; of sin reigning in the heart under zeal, under devotion, under praying, believing, worshipping, hoping, waiting, &c. Where sin lies hid within under these, there is Babylon; there is the mystery of witchcraft; there is the painted throne of Satan; there is spiritual Egypt and Sodom, where the Lord of life is daily crucified. This is the city, the mystical city, the spiritual city. Rev. 11:8. And here is building up and throwing down continually. She builds; the spirit of the Lord confounds, then down goes her building; then up with another, then down again. This is her course without end, when the spirit of the Lord disturbs her; for otherwise she can settle in any form of knowledge or worship; though in her ordinary course she hath also many changes and turnings; one while this or that being a truth, another while not; one while this or that being the sense or meaning of such a scripture, another while not. Babylon is hardly ever without this kind of building up, and throwing down.

And this city is a great city, a city spread over all the earth. "She made all nations drink of the wine of the cup of her fornication." Rev. 14:8. The woman, which is this city (Rev. 17:18), "sat upon peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Rev. 17:15. She sat upon them as queen, as princess, guiding them in their knowledge and worship of the king of Babylon. And those that once hated her, and made war with her, and burnt her flesh with fire, she cozened them with a new paint, got them into her new bed of fornication, and made them worship the king of Babylon again, Rev. 17:12-13. and ver. 16-17. and there they lay committing whoredom with her, till the time of her last burning and utter desolation; but then they forsook her, for fear of her torment, when they saw the smoke of her burning. Rev. 18:9-10.

In the temples of this city (for in all the streets thereof, yea, in every house, there are temples) antichrist sits as god, and is worshipped. 2 Thes. 2:4. "He, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." He hath clothed himself like God, he appears like God (like the holy, pure spirit of life and power), he appears in the temple of God, he sits there, he rules there, he gives forth laws and ordinances of worship and devotion. Yea, if any one will question his godhead, or his right to do thus, he will prove it, he will make it manifest in the very temple of God, that he is God: "He, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." He hath exalted himself into the throne, above all that is called God; he hath got into the temple, he sitteth there as God, and there he maketh it manifest to all his worshippers that he is God; insomuch as, among all the inhabitants of Babylon, he is acknowledged and worshipped, and the true spirit of life is hid from their eyes, and denied and crucified. He hath showed himself that he is God; he gives demonstrations of his godhead, which that eye which is out of the life cannot but acknowledge and take to be true. There is none can see and acknowledge the true God, the true Christ, but those that have the true eye, the true anointing ("no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy spirit," 1 Cor. 12:3); and yet how many can speak great words of God, and of Christ, who know not what belongs to the anointing? Alas! alas! all nations and sorts of professors, out of the life, are cozened with the devil's demonstrations, with antichrist's demonstrations, with the whore's demonstrations, with the false prophet's demonstrations, which are undeniable to that wisdom wherein they stand, and to that eye wherewith they look to see.

Now mark this: antichrist's coming, when first perceived, was very mighty, exceeding strong. 2 Thes. 2:9-10. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness," &c. Weigh the thing well. Satan used all his art, and all his strength, to conceive and bring forth this mystery of iniquity, so like the mystery of godliness, that it might pass for current in the world, and he rule as God in it. With all power, &c., no power of deceit wanting; he did not spare for signs, and lying wonders; yea, he gave power to the beast to do wonders and miracles, even to make fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men (which was the sign and wonder whereby the God of Israel was distinguished from Baal; power to work this very sign Satan gives to the beast, to confirm the godhead of the dragon and antichrist with). Rev. 13:13-14. These are the things men look for; see but great power, signs, miracles, they are satisfied. The whole world stands ready to be deceived with this. Yea, and if the eye be not opened in persons, which can distinguish of power, they must needs be deceived. Signs, wonders, and miracles had their place in the first covenant, and were to that part to which the first covenant was; not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. Now after the full demonstration of the truth by signs and miracles, the power of Satan riseth up; and by lying signs, wonders, and miracles overturneth the truth. Now the unbelieving part in man expects and calls for signs and miracles, and says they will determine the controversy, and settle the state of the church again; but that part is not to prescribe God his way; yea, he will steal as a thief upon thee, whose eye is abroad, and looketh for demonstrations without.

And as antichrist got up thus, so antichrist will go out thus. He will raise up this power, and what lying signs, wonders, and miracles he can, to defend himself with, now the spirit of the Lord is risen up to dispossess him, and cast him out of the house which he hath long lodged in. And he that can be cozened with power, with signs, with lying wonders, (which are lying because they come from the spirit of deceit, with an intent to deceive, though they may come to pass, and appear true to man's eye. Deut. 13:1-3) or with any of the deceivableness of unrighteousness, shall never come out of Babylon; but only be translated into some of the more refined chambers of it, and fed with some more fresh likenesses of truth, where he shall still remain an inhabitant and worshipper in some image, perhaps of universal love, life,

and liberty, and yet be out of the life, out of the love, out of the liberty of the truth, which stands in the power and presence of the spirit of God, and not in the most refined image or likeness.

"All the world wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast." Rev. 13:3-4.

The dragon is the devil; the beast is that spirit of the earth which he raiseth up, and feeds in men with a form and appearance of truth; to which he gives his power, his seat, and his authority: and every man hath a measure of this according to his state and condition, place and service in Babylon. And now what a man doeth here in religion, be he ever so devout and zealous, and frequent in ordinances and duties, is the worship of this spirit, and of the dragon who sits and rules in this spirit. I am run into hard expressions, very hard, because the nature of these things is hid from men's eyes, and they are in the mist of antichrist's raising, in the smoke which comes from the pit, where there is no opening of the true eye, and no true sight of things; but truly if ever you espy the dragon, the beast, antichrist, the whore, the false prophet, ye must look at home, and read within; and there having found the thing, and seen it in the true light, ye will be able to see it certainly abroad also. Now do not go about to distinguish these things in the notion of the understanding; but come to feel the life, to unite with the life, and the eye will open which can see into the nature of things, and will behold all in its season; for that eye which is so eager to see, shall never see these things; but that eye alone which waits in stillness and quietness on the pleasure and good-will of the opener.

Now all this time, while Babylon stands, while antichrist sits in the temple, while Satan reigns over all the antichristian world, the true and living God hath not been known, feared, nor glorified; but men's knowledge hath been of a false god they have set up, and him they have feared, and given the glory to, in their worship. Nay, the gospel hath not been preached; the true gospel, the everlasting gospel, the gospel wherein is the light and power of eternal life, to turn men from all antichristian forms of knowledge and worship, to the true life and power: but when Babylon falls, and Mount Sion begins to appear again, then the gospel is to be preached again, even by an angel, who receiveth it from God himself, Rev. 14:6-7. for man could never recover it again: it requires a new inspiration. "The law is to go forth out of Sion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." And this gospel is to be preached "to every nation, kindred, and tongue, and people," ver. 6. Mark: there was not one nation, not one kindred, not one tongue, not one people that kept the everlasting gospel; but it was laid up in Sion; it was carried with the church into the wilderness, and there it hath been hid all the time of the apostasy, since the days of the apostles. But now Sion is redeeming, the true woman bringing back again out of the wilderness, she brings back the true, everlasting gospel with her; and there is an angel chosen in the power of the Lord (even in the same power and spirit that first preached it) to preach it again to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And the Lord hath so ordered it, that he will have the voice of this angel as despicable to the wise in religion, to the zealous in devotion, of all sorts in this backsliding age, as the former preaching was to the wise and devout both among the Jews and Greeks. So that whosoever is wise in religion according to the flesh; whosoever is wise in expectation and waitings for the kingdom; whosoever is wise in reasoning about it, and can tell the foregoing signs of it, &c., shall not know the voice: but he that can shut his eyes by the leadings of the pure life, and enter into the hidden womb of wisdom, where the light of life is sown, he shall be new formed, and come forth a child out of the womb of wisdom, with the new eye, the new ear, the new heart, the new understanding and senses; and keeping in the childish simplicity, out of the wisdom, zeal, and devotion which deceived him before, he shall receive and enter into the everlasting kingdom.

Therefore all people wait humbly for the candle of the Lord, that therewith ye may search out Babylon, and may come to see what of her treasures ye have gathered; that ye may throw them away speedily, and give up your ships and vessels (wherewith ye have trafficked for these kinds of wares) to the fire of the Lord's jealousy; that ye may receive the durable riches; that ye may hear the joyful sound of the everlasting gospel, and know the true Christ which it alone reveals; and come to fear and worship and glorify the true God; and not go down into the pit or lake with the dragon, the beast, the whore, and false prophet, which will be the portion of the most zealous false worshippers. And when your eyes come once to be opened in the true light, ye will bless the Lord for giving you these warnings, and not be so angry at us (who have paid dear for them) for our willingness, if it be possible, to save you some of the charges they have cost us: however, at least to preserve your souls from that ruin and dreadful destruction which all the paths of Babylon lead to.

## THE SINS OF BABYLON

Although, in the foregoing description, some of the sins of Babylon have been touched at; yet I find my spirit further drawn forth (in a way of service to the Lord and his people) to take a further view, both of them, and some other of her sins.

THE sins of Babylon, by the spirit of life (which hath righteously measured and knoweth them) are referred to these two heads, fornication and abomination. She allureth the spirit of the creature into a strange bed, and there it acts filthily and abominably with this strange spirit. Now of these there are two sorts; first, some more open and manifest; secondly, some more hidden and secret, hard (yea, utterly impossible) to be discerned, without the shining forth of the pure light of life.

All sorts of men are estranged from the life; under the whole heaven is the Lord God forgotten, and his holy and pure law and way of life; and filthiness and abomination are committed everywhere. Now all this filth (even the common filth of the earth) springs out of Babylon, hath its rise from her womb. Were it not for her, the sound of life would be heard even among the heathen, and they would not be such strangers to him that made them; nor would they act so contrary to those leadings and teachings of the spirit of God (who is the God of the whole earth), which the darkest parts are not without. It is she which withdraws their minds from the pure glimmerings that rise up in them, setting up another god in their eyes, and heathenish, sottish ways of fear, worship, and devotion: and under this she makes them filthy and polluted, unclean in their minds and in their bodies, brutish in their knowledge and in their practices; "for she is the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth." Rev. 17:5. Look what of pride, of vanity, of cruelty, of envy, of wrath, of lust, of covetousness, of idolatry, of blasphemy, &c., is to be found anywhere among men upon the earth, she is the mother of it all. All the common filth and stench of the earth springs out of this womb, this secret womb, this hidden womb: for though, in this her open and visible appearance, she be manifest to the eyes of many; yet to those children of hers who are thus conceived, brought forth, and bred up by her, she is a mystery of iniquity, and they perceive her not so much as here, and so cannot escape this her openly polluted bed.

Secondly, The whore hath more secret fornications and abominations. Where she can pass thus, she need not paint either herself or her ware; but where need requires she hath her paint, she hath her delicates for the curious eye. Rev. 18:3. She hath her cinnamon, odors, ointments, and frankincense for the nice scent; she hath her fine flour and wheat, &c., for the fine palate; and gold, precious stones, pearl, and vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, for the more stately worshipper; as well as of brass and iron for the more common. Rev. 18:12-13. She can paint both herself and her ware,

so as to make them taking to the eye of all flesh. She can so mingle her cup, as shall please every palate but that which is truly living; and cast such a color upon her abominations, as no eye that is without can suspect; but takes with every young man that is hunting abroad, and knows not the spring of life in himself. So that all the deceits in religion, all the several forms and ways of knowledge and worship, all the ordinances, duties, and devotions which the spirits of most men take pleasure in, are of her. And herein are her pride and glory, in subjecting these, in ruling over these, in blinding the eyes of these, and opposing the true life and power by these. She doth not value whole territories of the other so much as the congregation of these. For mark:

The great master-piece of the whore was to paint herself like the Lamb's wife, and so to withdraw from the true church, and set up a false church; which, by reason of its paint and likeness to that which once was the true, should pass up and down the world, and be taken for the true: and here lie her beauty, her glory, her majesty, her life, her heart, even in the deceivableness of this appearance. Therefore her great care and endeavor are to keep her possession and dominion here. She often reneweth and changeth her paint, nearer and nearer to the image and former likeness of truth, that she might make it pass instead of the truth, and so keep that which is indeed the truth down still under reproach, contempt, and persecution, as she hath done these many ages. Therefore she hath her sorts of paint by her, her varieties of sorcery, of witchery, of enchantments, whereof her cup is full, and wherewith her wine is made strong, to make the inhabitants of the earth drunk thereby; that being thus besotted, being not themselves, but their spiritual senses bound up (as the wine doth very effectually, wherever her cup is drank of,) she might lead them up and down from one thing to another, from one chamber to another, from one bed to another, from one practice and way of worship to another, and still keep them from the true, living thing which their souls seek.

For were it possible for persons who did but so much as read in the Scriptures concerning the power of life the saints formerly enjoyed, the living ministry and ordinances, their sweet walking and fellowship in the light, the presence of the spirit in their worship, and in their whole course, their sincere love in the spirit, and tender bearing with one another's weaknesses, doubts and differences, which he that reads singly cannot but pant after; and the state of the gospel was not to be a decaying and dying in these things, or a losing of them, so that the power of the Spirit, and the revelations thereof should cease (as the whorish spirit, which hath gone out from the life, pleads); but to grow and increase, and the last times to abound most of all with the power and glory of truth: I say, were it possible for persons who should read and entertain the least taste and savor of these things, to be satisfied with any of those dead ways and forms which the whore hath set up instead of them, unless they were wholly bewitched, and altogether deprived of their senses, being made dead drunk with the whore's mingled wine in this dark night of apostasy? Yea, professors are drunk, they have deeply drunk of the cup, and are sorely overtaken, and their hearts overcharged with strong liquor; which makes them even mad to draw others into their beds of fornication, and to stand up themselves in great rage, and call also to the magistrates for the defence of them. Yea, like the clamorous woman, they make a great noise about ordinances, duties, ministry, church, &c. ("I have decked and perfumed my bed," saith the lewd woman, the subtle-hearted woman, Prov. 7:16-17.) but do not soberly consider which are painted ones, which the truth. We have run on headily after these things too long; it is now time to stand still a while, and wait for the purging out of the wine wherewith all our brains have been overturned, that we may come into soberness, and into a fit temper to be led by the spirit of life out of the bed of fornications, and out of the ways, worships, ordinances, and duties of fornication, into the bed of the undefiled spirit. Now he that worships God aright, must feel life within, and that life raised and strengthened by him who begets it; and this will savor death; and, faithfully following its

guide, will come out of the land of death; even that land wherein all the false worshippers inhabit, and wherein all these false ways and worships, duties, ordinances, ministries, &c., are set up and flourish.

Now these secret sins of Babylon are the same with the more open and gross; the great difference is their secrecy, their not appearing like sins, their paint, their color, whereby they are swallowed down for holy and good. As for instance:

There is fornication (or adultery from the life) in the finest, in the purest way of worship man can invent or imitate: but the fornication doth not so plainly appear here, but they who have drunk of the cup take these things for the ways and appointments of God. Those that set up the whore's church, do not call it so, nor perhaps think it to be so; those that set up the whore's ministry, or ordinances, do not give them that name, but call them the ministry and ordinances of Christ: yet this is as truly, as really fornication from the life, as the grossest ways of heathenish worship. Oh mark it! mark it!

If thou hast read the Scriptures, and thrust thyself into any practices thou there findest mentioned, without the raising up of a living thing in thee, and without thy following by the guidance thereof, thou hast done this by the whore's advice; and in this thou art committing fornication, and erring from the life: for the true worship lies in the spirit and in the truth, and it is the new birth that God seeks to worship him; but the spirit of man thrusting itself into these things, the Lord abhors and rejects. And this spirit never can be thus cleansed, and fitted to enter into Christ's bed; but only gets a paint from scripture, and enters into the painted bed and bosom of the harlot, where it remains unrenewed, unchanged, unmortified, in the midst of all its great talk and profession of these things. And thus the Scripture, the holy Scriptures of truth (which were given forth from the pure spirit of life), the whorish spirit maketh use of to estrange from the life. For what sort of persons, which have fornicated from the life, but make use of the Scriptures to maintain their whoredoms by, and to bewitch others into their whoredoms with? Every sort cries up their own way and worship to be the way and worship according to the Scriptures; and if any be gathered out of these witcheries into the power of God, then the bewitched say that such are bewitched.

Then as for all the abominations of the earth, all the filth that defiles the heart, it is to be found on the skirts of the whore, even in her most refined dress: for her religion, her worship, her profession, her practices, do not reach to the purifying of the conscience, but only to paint over the old sepulchre, where rottenness lodgeth within. The sore was never thoroughly searched; the heart was never thoroughly circumcised or baptized; the old man was never put off, or the new man put on; the blood of purifying (which truly washeth away the sin) was never felt in its virtue and power, but only an apprehension and talk that they are cleansed in Christ, from a notion they have stolen out of the Scriptures; but not from the sensible feeling of the thing in life and power in their consciences. And so the evil nature still remains, the evil heart of unbelief is still to be found in them, and they want the life, they want the power, they want the spirit, they want the love, they want the humility, they want the meekness, they want the patience, they want the innocency and simplicity of the lamb and dove. And when the Lord comes to provoke them to jealousy by the shining of his light, and by the appearance of his power in some whom they despise, then the pride, the passion, the envy, the heart-burnings, the hard speeches, the false surmisings, with the rest of the enmity which still abides with them, stirs and rises against the life and power, and their hypocrisy is made manifest. Yea, some of the strictest among them can scoff and jeer at the appearance of life; so strong is the evil and unmortified nature in them, and so conceited are they in their ways and practices, because of their cover, under which all this iniquity, for the most part, lies hidden from their eyes. But, for all that, it is there; the Lord's candle will search it out, and thine own eye shall see it, and find in thyself bloody Cain, scoffing Ishmael, profane Esau, the uncircumcised Jew; who is angry that his brother's sacrifice is

accepted, and his not; who disdains and derides the true seed of life, the living heir; who hunts abroad for food pleasing to that nature which is to be famished; who crucifies the Lord of glory because of his meanness, and because he appears not in that way of devotion and holiness wherein they expect him. Neither will he appear so; but to overturn all that which ye have set up, and to set up that which ye disdain. This is the Lord's work, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

Now there are several sins which the spirit of the Lord hath charged Babylon with, and which he will reckon with her for, and with all that partake with her therein; some whereof I may mention, as: --

1. Her deep fornications from the life, under a pretence of honoring and worshipping of it. (Be not offended that I begin with it again, seeing it is also mentioned among other particular sins of hers. Rev. 9:12.) She speaks fair words; she calls to have the worship of God set up, and a godly ministry, and the ordinances of God in a nation; but the thing is not so in the sight of God, but in all this she seeks the advancement of her own whoredoms. And this was, and this is, the very way of antichrist's rising; he gets into the form, he cries up the form; and by the form which he cries up, he eats out the power. If antichrist should speak directly against the power (without first creeping into, and setting up a form, and crying up that) he would soon be detected: but, under a form and profession of truth, he hides himself, and covers his spirit of enmity and persecution therewith: and here he can secretly and safely smite the innocent, and fight against that very spirit, life, and power, which he himself, in his form, makes a profession of being subject to. And this is the wolf in the sheep's clothing, which, by this fair appearance of the sheep's wool on his back, covers his ravenous nature from the eyes of the beholders.

Now there are three ways of fornication, one of which this spirit is always guilty of, sometimes of them all.

1. By inventing things which the Lord never commanded, or adding to that which the Lord did command. The mind of man is very busy, and full of inventions; and where the heart is touched with devotion and zeal towards God, the inventing part exceedingly exerciseth itself this way, either in imagining and forming somewhat which it thinks may be acceptable to God, or in adding to those things which it finds commanded. In this way of fornication the popish church abounds, being filled with ceremonies of their own inventing, and of additions to such things as are found mentioned in the Scriptures. The common Protestants also have been too guilty here.

2. By imitating of those things which were commanded to others. When a man finds in scripture the things which some others did, or which they were commanded to do; and so he is venturing upon them before he feels the leading of that spirit whereby they were led thereunto. Now in this he errs from the life; he goes without his guide; he doeth that which was a good thing in others (who were led by the spirit thereto), but in him it is fornication. This man is a thief and an intruder; he steals into the outward knowledge and practice, without the inward life and power: he intrudes into that into which others were fairly led; not coming in by the right door, for which entrance he should have waited, and not have run on headily of himself. This way of fornication the strictest among the Protestants have generally been ensnared in, who have run on further and further to search out the purest way of worship, the nearest pattern to the primitive times, and so have applied themselves diligently thereto, not knowing what they were to wait for to be their guide, and give them the entrance. And here now, thinking themselves to be in the right, they have contracted a lofty spirit (and held forth their conceptions of the way as the only way), and so have lost the meekness and simplicity, which were fresh and lively in some of them before; which sets them a great way back, and makes the entrance into the kingdom very hard to them. Whereas if that simplicity and tenderness were fresh in them, the Lord would show great regard to that, easily pardoning this their error,

and, in mercy to them, visiting that evil spirit with his judgments, which stood nigh them, and was the cause of their error. But they are grown high, they are grown wise, they are become confident, they know the way already, and can maintain it by undeniable arguments (as they think) to be the way; so the Lord, with his teachings, is at a great distance from them; that lying very low in them, which the Lord alone will teach.

3. By continuing in practices, to which they were once led by the spirit, without the immediate presence and life of the spirit. For the whole worship, the whole religion of the gospel, consists in following the spirit, in having the spirit do all in us, and for us: therefore whatsoever a man doth for himself is out of the life, it is in the fornication. If a man pray at any time without the spirit, that prayer is fornication, and is not either acceptable to God, or profitable to himself; but grieves the spirit, hurts the life, and wounds the soul. Now this way of fornication have they especially fallen into, who have been acquainted with the true leadings and openings of the spirit, and have afterwards run to them for refreshment, and so by degrees forgot the spirit that opened. And by this means was that life, which was precious and very savory in the ranters (before they were seduced by the spirit of deceit into that way of ranting) overturned. And thus they also (who deeply saw into the mystery of whoredoms, and into the more inward ways of fornication above others), even they also were deceived with the whore's cup, and drank afresh of that wine of fornication which the whore very cunningly had new mingled for them; and they also are become a reproach to the inhabitants of Sion, who find a living habitation in that spirit of life which they turned from.

Now if there be a true eye opened in any in the reading of this, how easily and manifestly will he see whoredom, fornication, adultery, generally in men's religious practices, in their churches, in their ministries, in their ordinances, in their prayers, in their whole course! Oh how, think ye, doth the eye of the jealous God behold these things! but your eyes, who are held captive here, cannot see it. The God of the world, with his mists, hath darkened you; the great whore, with her sorceries, hath enchanted you; and ye are her slaves, ye are drunk with her cup; and how can ye judge soberly either of your own estate towards God, or concerning your practices in religion?

2. Her notorious blasphemies. Having fornicated from the life, and from the spirit, then she blasphemes the life, and the holy, pure power and movings of the Spirit. "The woman which sat upon the scarlet-colored beast (with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication) was full of names of blasphemy." Rev. 17:2-3. Yea, the beast which carried her, which had many heads, horns, and crowns, he also had on his heads "names of blasphemy." Rev. 13:1. "And there was given to him a mouth, speaking great things, and blasphemies." ver. 5. And he, with the whore together (for he did it by her spirit and instigation, by virtue of the wine he had drunk out of her cup) "opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." ver. 6. This hath been the work of the tongue, in every head of the beast; namely, to blaspheme the life, to blaspheme the true, living power, in all ages and generations, since the apostasy from the life and spirit of the apostles.

Now there is a twofold blasphemy, which the whore, and the powers of the earth that serve her, are guilty of.

1. There is a speaking well of the ways of their own invention, or the ways which they have imitated without the life. To call these the ways of God, the true ways of life, is blasphemy. "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but a synagogue of Satan." Rev. 2:9. There were, even in the apostles' days, persons who pretended to be Christians, and pretended still to be of the church,

though they had lost the life; and this the spirit of the Lord said was blasphemy. And what is their gathering into a church, who were never gathered into the life, and setting up ordinances, and pastors? What is this? What is it for him to call himself a Christian, or inward Jew, who never had the foreskin of his flesh cut off by the circumcising knife of the spirit? What will the Lord say this is, when he comes to judge?

2. There is a speaking evil of the truths of God. The true knowledge, the true fear, the true worship, the true saints, the true God, the true tabernacle, the true temple, the true heaven, (all which is in the spirit, and is alone revealed and seen there) these are reproached, these are misrepresented (and the true sight and acknowledgment of them called error, heresy, and sectarianism) by all the blasphemers of Babylon.

Israel, who had the law and the prophets, the true ordinances and the true priests, yet they "called evil good, and good evil; they put darkness for light, and light for darkness; they put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." Isa. 5:20. "They were so wise in their own eyes, and so prudent in their own sight; they were so mighty to drink wine, and men of such strength to mingle strong drink (justifying the wicked for reward, and taking away the righteousness of the righteous from him)," there was no convincing of them by the LIGHT of GOD, shining from the prophets, of their "casting away the law of the Lord, and despising the word of the Holy One of Israel." ver. 21 to 25. Nay, they were observers of the law, and hearkened to the prophets and the priests of the law. Jer. 5:31. Therefore, when the overflowing scourge came, it should not come near them: yea, when the true prophets of the Lord threatened them with his coming with dreadful vengeance, and his strange work, they, in the height and confidence of their spirits, could reply, "Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it." Isa. 5:19. How blind were they from seeing their blasphemies; their calling of evil good, and good evil, &c. Yea, in the very days of the apostles, the way of truth was evil spoken of, and synagogues of Satan setting up, and blasphemies growing up apace from those which held the true form, but denied the power, even while the pourings-forth of the Spirit, and revelations from the Spirit, did abound: how can it be expected it should be otherwise now, when the Spirit is grown such a strange thing, that to mention such a thing as being moved by the Spirit, or acted by the Spirit, is become ridiculous? and the very teachers of the nation (who must speak by the Spirit, if they speak the word of God) cry revelation is ceased, and count it a reproach for a man so much as to pretend to speak by the movings, and in the power, of the Spirit.

Now this double blasphemy necessarily follows the fornication: whoever is fornicated from the life, he blasphemes the life, in all his knowledge, in all his worship, in all his religion. He calls that prayer which is not prayer; that an ordinance which is not an ordinance; that a church which is not a church; that a minister which is not a minister; and that which is indeed the prayer, the ordinance, the church, the minister, he denies and blasphemes; and cannot do otherwise, until the righteous judgments of the Lord purge the whore's wine out of him, and he be led back to that life and spirit again, from which (in all these ways of worship, inventions, and imitations) he is gone a whoring.

The whore, for these many ages, hath been laying blasphemy to the charge of such as, in any degree, have been led by the spirit of the Lord from her whoredoms; but now the Lord is taking it off from them (who have long been unjustly charged therewith), and charging it upon her, and she cannot escape his judgment; for though she put on ever so fine dresses and appearances, like the spouse and church of Christ, yet the Lord can distinguish and find out his spouse, though naked in the wilderness, and without her attire; and can also espy the whorish spirit, though clothed with the church's attire; and can charge her blasphemies (against him, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven) upon her.

3. Gross or more refined idolatries. "Little children," said John, "keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5:21. He saw antichristianism breaking in apace, many antichrists being already come; and now (saith he) keep to the anointing, and keep from idols. Without a very strict watch, without a mighty preservation by the anointing, he saw idolatry would even creep in upon them, who had tasted of the true power and virtue of life. But how shall they keep from idols, who know not the anointing, but think the revelations thereof are ceased? He that buyeth not the tried gold of Christ, (Rev. 3:18) how can he avoid buying untried gold of antichrist, or silver, or brass, or wood, or stone, which his merchants traffic for, and make idols of? Rev. 9:20. If thine eyes be anointed with the true eye-salve, thou mayest see and read the parable.

Idolatry is the worshipping of God without his spirit (that is the plain, naked truth of the thing). To invent things from the carnal mind, or to imitate things, which others, who had the spirit, did in the spirit, by the command of the spirit, for thee to imitate and practise these without the spirit, is idolatry. An invented church, an invented ministry, an invented worship; an imitated church, an imitated ministry, an imitated worship, without the life, without the spirit, all these are the work of men's hands, and are idols, and all that is performed herein is idolatry. Rev. 9:20. This is a religion without life, a worship without life, a fabric for idolatry; and the whole course of worship and service in it, is idolatry. For the living God, the Lord God of endless life and power, is alone worshipped by his spirit, and in the truth of that life which he begets in the heart; and all other worship, though ever so seemingly spiritual, is idolatrous. Ah! professors, professors! if ye knew how many idol-prayers and services ye have loaded the Lord with, and how ye have been whoring from him, while ye have seemed to be drawing nigh to him, ye would hang down your heads and mourn! for whatever ye have done in the worship of God, without the leading and presence of his spirit, it hath been idolatry. For the worship of God, under the gospel, "is in the spirit and in the truth," and required of them who are in the spirit and in the truth, and not of others. John 4:23. For them alone the Lord seeketh to worship; and the Lord will admit of none to his worship, but such as he seeks. And if any else will thrust themselves into his worship, it is not accepted; nor do they worship the true God, but they "worship they know not what;" and their whole state and course here is a state and course of idolatry.

4. Sorceries, witchcrafts, divinations, and enchantments (I do not mean outward sorceries or witchcrafts; they are but the shadow or figure of the inward mystery of deceit of this black, dark spirit, which appears as an angel of light, that he might bewitch and deceive). "Neither repented they of their sorceries." Rev. 9:21. This false church, this adulterous woman, she hath her golden cup, and her wine mingled; and with this cup she bewitches the eye, with this wine she inflames the heart, and intoxicates the brain. She invents ways and worships like to the true, or she imitates the true ways and appearances of life; and when the poor, simple young man is singly seeking after God, from some true touches of his life, before he comes to know the spirit of life, before he can come to be married to the Lamb, she comes with her golden cup, and with her tempting wine, and bewitches the poor heart therewith, and so leads it aside into her painted bed. Wouldst thou enjoy God? saith she. Wouldst thou worship him aright? Wouldst thou have fellowship with him? Lo, here is the way; here is the church; here are the ordinances; here is the ministry; here are the means. Thou must wait upon God in the use of the means, and these are they. Did not the saints formerly do thus? Did not they meet with God here? Did not they serve and worship God thus? Come thou hither also; do what they did; enjoy what they enjoyed. Yea, but thou whorish woman, did ever God appoint means without his spirit? Thou leavest the main, yea, indeed, the only thing behind thee, which itself alone is accepted, and without which nothing is accepted. And this is the course of the whore; in all her transformings, in all her baits, in all her temptings, she still leaves the spirit behind her. She may perhaps speak of the spirit, to hide herself the more (because the letter of the scripture is so express therein); and teach people to look and wait for the spirit, but so as it never is to be obtained: for he that

begins in religion either to pray or worship, or seek the knowledge of God, without the spirit, shall never meet with the spirit so; but that way of knowledge, religion, and worship of his, must first be broken down, and he become a fool, and receive the spirit as a fool (out of all his religious knowledge and wisdom which he had gathered before); and afterwards, following the spirit which is thus received, he shall be led into the true wisdom. Now mark that which follows, ye that have a desire to understand.

This spirit of deceit, this whorish spirit, this spirit of divination and witchcraft ("which by her sorceries deceived all nations," Rev. 18:23) came forth curiously decked at first, with all manner of deceivableness of unrighteousness. It had the exact form of life (the true form of godliness) and a lively spirit in it: it had the form of knowledge, and the form of worship, and with these it came to tempt, and draw away them from the life and from the power who were in the life and in the power; and it did prevail upon such as kept not close to the anointing. But after it had overcome, and gained the church's territories, then it might safely c

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/isaac-pennington/babylon-the-great-described/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**