

The Catastrophe of Self-Confidence

Isaiah 47:1-15

God may use the evil that people do in the world to accomplish His ultimate purposes, but that does not turn evil into good. Those who commit evil will still be held accountable for what they have done.

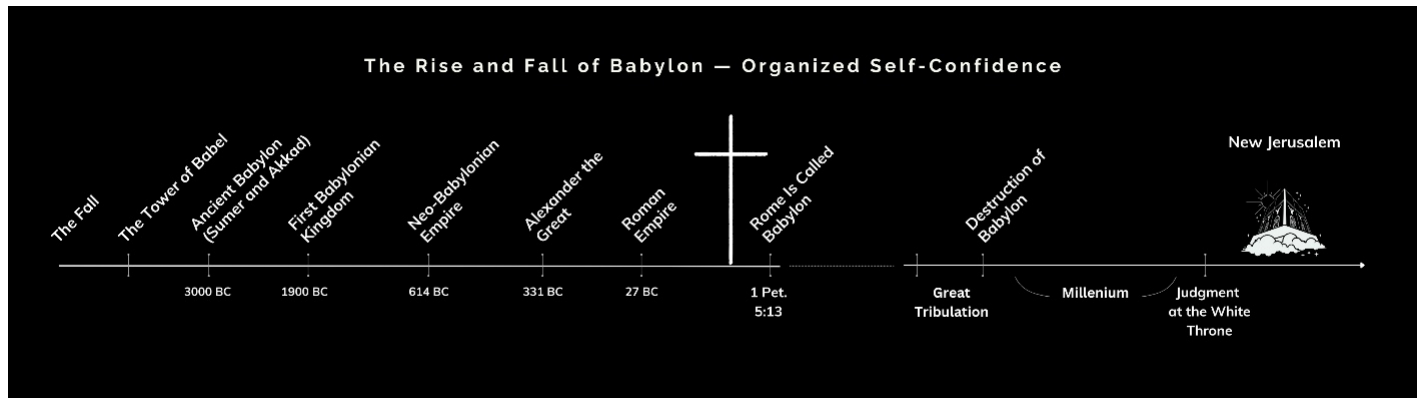
I. The Great Deception

Dan. 4:29-30 At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?"

Is. 47:1 Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate.

Is. 47:7 You said, "I shall be mistress forever," so that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end.

Is. 47:10 You felt secure in your wickedness; you said, "No one sees me"; your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray, and you said in your heart, "I am, and there is no one besides me."



Gen. 3:5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Gen. 11:4 Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.'



1 Pet. 5:13 She who is **at Babylon**, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

Babylon is a symbol of the organized form of self-confidence.

II. The Inevitable Fall

A. False View of Oneself

Is. 47:1-3 Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind flour, put off your veil, strip off your robe, uncover your legs, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your disgrace shall be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will spare no one.

Dan. 5:22-23 And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven. And the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored.

Is. 47:1-3 Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind flour, put off your veil, strip off your robe, uncover your legs, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your disgrace shall be seen. **I will take vengeance**, and I will spare no one.

When you encounter someone who is being disciplined by God, do not make yourself their judge. Show mercy. You too have reasons to be judged.

Is. 47:5-7 Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no more be called the mistress of kingdoms. I was angry with my people; I profaned my heritage; I gave them into your hand; you showed them no mercy; on the aged you made your yoke exceedingly heavy. You said, 'I shall be mistress forever,' so that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end.

Is. 47:8-9 Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children': These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments.

B. False Reliance on Idols

Is. 47:9 These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments.

Is. 47:12-13 Stand now with your enchantments and with the multitude of your sorceries that you have practiced from your youth; perhaps you may be able to help yourselves; perhaps you may strike terror. You are wearied with your many counselors; let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you from what will come upon you.

Is. 47:14-15 Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no fire to sit before! Such to you are those with whom you have labored, who have done business with you from your youth; they wander about, each in his own direction; there is no one to save you.

C. False Confidence in Human Strength

Is. 47:10 You felt secure in your wickedness; you said, 'No one sees me.'

D. False Confidence in Knowledge

Is. 47:10-11 **Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray**, and you said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me.' But evil shall come upon you, which you will not know how to charm away; disaster shall fall upon you, for which you will not be able to atone; and ruin shall come upon you suddenly, of which you know nothing.

Is. 47:13-14 You are wearied with your many counsels; let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new moons make known what shall come upon you. Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no fire to sit before!

Babylon is the organized form of human self-confidence

Rev. 14:8 Another angel, a second, followed, saying, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.'

Rev. 16:19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.

Rev. 17:1-2 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.'

Rev. 17:5 And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: 'Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations.'

Rev. 18:1-3 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. And he called out with a mighty voice, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.'

Rev. 18:7-8 As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.' For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her.

Rev. 18:9-10 And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. Standing far off because of the fear of her torment, they will say, 'Alas, alas, the great city, Babylon, the mighty city! For in a single hour your judgment has come.'

Rev. 18:20-21 Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her! Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, 'So with violence the great city Babylon will be thrown down, and will be found no more.'

III. The Only Savior

Is. 47:2-4 Take millstones and grind meal; uncover your veil, strip off your skirt, lift up your legs, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be exposed, and your shame will be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will spare no one. Our Redeemer—the LORD of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel.