

Spirit of Babylon

Intro

- Why a topic like this?

- **1) Better equip for SW**
- got to understand that SW isn't simply the casting out of evil spirits in case of demon possession.
- Got to know the destruction by the devil in possessing a person is no much difference from an attack like tempting someone to sin.
 - Basically, the only difference is the strategy.
 - The results of both could be as deadly.
 - So we mustn't be so naïve.

- **2) Next, SW needs to be fought at the higher level.**
- Because the spiritual realm follows a hierarchical system.
 - Just as there is higher authority/level angels, there is higher level demons.
 - This is what we usually call the territorial spirits or regional or cosmic
 - The bible says that –
 - **Eph 6:12** – powers of this dark world, spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
 - **Rev 13** – mentioned of the dragon, beast out of the sea, beast out of the earth, performing different tasks. It comprises of nations – 7 horns and 7 heads.
 - And then, there is also mentioned of Babylon in **Rev 18**.
 - **Dan 10:12-13**, typical example of territorial spirit, Prince of the Persian kingdom.
 - Revelation mention of the 7 churches.
 - Angels of Church.
 - Just as angels are deployed with authority over the church/region, demons too may be deployed with authority over the land.

- So we got to know that regional/territorial spirit exists, and they are at work to bring the Christians down.
- They could command a group of spirits under them to perform their work.

- In the gospels, Jesus did encounter such spirit
 - **Mk 4:39** – Calming the storm, uses the word ‘rebuked’, and Quiet – greek ‘Be muzzled’ – suggest SW.
 - Why? Because JC was about to enter into a ‘region’ (**Mk 5:1**)
 - The evil spirit confronted JC through possessing a man
 - **V17**, another form of attack, through the crowd, ‘leave their region.’

- So don’t be surprised if things could altogether go wrong around you. It is basically the different ways of attack.
- And don’t be surprised if you go to certain places, and people were hostile against you. Basically, this is the work of regional spirit in wanting to get rid of you, coz you step into their territory.
 - E.g. Dawn at her work.

- So we got to consider the regional spirit in our SW.
- We got to know that times are not the same in the past.
 - We are living in the times of increase of wickedness, it is not so easy to fight simply by repenting sin.
 - We got to discern the regional spirit.

- **Next, know that whenever we touch an evil spirit (or small spirit) in the territory, we are basically touching the regional spirit as well.**
- So don’t go around casting demons if u do not have a strong faith and anointing.
- You got to know who you are dealing with.
- Few biblical evidences of that I could think of.
 - 1) Paul persecution of the Christians.
 - JC responded, ‘why do you persecute ME?’
 - 2) **Lk10**, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.’
 - So you touch one, you touch all.

- In the same way, we must also see that when we reign in one, we would reign in all.
- We got to develop muscles/authority in SW.
- We could get stronger and stronger.
- Sharing: how the Lord trained me.

- **What is the Spirit of Babylon?**

- First of all, **it is not referring to a place, nation, or country.**
- It refers to a spirit, which was at work from the beginning of time, and a spirit at work against the church
 - Israel was once ruled by King of Babylon for 70 years, and that is a symbol of what that is happening in the spiritual realm.
 - Of course, as it is mentioned in **Rev 18**, as Mystery, Babylon the Great, etc, we know it is not something very small.
 - **V3, For all nations...the kings of the earth committed adultery with her,..the merchants...**
 - It is a spiritual network! – **A CITY (v16, Woe! O Great city! (also v18)**
- I like to refer to it as a spirit behind the system – the world, or the Babylonian system.
- **It is a system that comprises of all fragments of the life/society ranging from trade/economy/business, politics, to arts v22, to entertainment (v23), to technology, science, to education, to the spiritual (sorceries, idolatries, v23) and even to religion.**
- The reality is whether we like it or not, we are all already in the system.
- There is a need to **'Come out of babylon' (v4)**
- **Characteristics of the spirit of Babylon.**
- **In Rev 18**
- **v3, excessive luxuries**, also v7, luxury she gave to herself. Symbol of luxury.
- Capture of wealth (**v17**) also **in v19**, get rich through her wealth.
- Basically, it is very attractive to people who wants to get rich.
- Also **indulgence**
 - **V3**, drinking of wine till drunk.
- Into **spectrum of varieties.** (very resourceful)

- It has everything you could name...
 - o For products, **18:12**, cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls, fine line....and even bodies of souls of men.
 - o For trading by sea – **v17**, sea captain, travel by ship, sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea..
 - o Music – in book of Daniel
 - o Sorceries – all sorts, in book of Daniel.

- **Boastful**
 - o **V7**, she boasts, not a widow (not admitting anything lack.) (like Church of Laodicea (I am rich, I have acquired wealth, and do not need a thing.)(**3:17**))

 - o never mourn (meaning never repent)(basically pride) (never acknowledge God)

- Into the establishment of CITY (system or network) – **A CITY (v16, Woe! O Great city! (also v18))**

- **Killer of prophets/Christians (v24)**

- **In Book of Daniel**

- **1:1-2 Directly against God**
- convert things belonging to God into things for their gods.

- **V4**, young men, w/o physical defect, handsome,basically the cream.

- **Into the collection of the fast, strong and mighty.**
- In the system, it is the one who is strong will survive.
- => oppression, competition

- **v4, teach the lang...(way of life), literature.**
- Aims to brainwash the people of God.
- Induce their system, way of life into them.
- Want people to conform to them more than they conform to people (basically, want us to speak their language.)

- **Food and wine => indulgence, luxurious way of life.**

- Train for 3 years (**v5**)
- Speaks of a system which is organized, systematic.
- Not in the Hebrew system. (Time of training for roles, position in God's service usually not spelt.
- Focus on moulding of character, 40 yrs!)

- **V6, Changing names = changing identity**
- Names of gods.

- **2:2, magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologues => again speaks of the variety of resources.**
- Also in **3:5**, sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music.

- **3:5 – idol worship**

- **4:30**, Is not this the great Babylon I have built ...by my might power and for the glory of my majesty?
- => self glorification, self centeredness, no acknowledge of God.
- => man's work, effort results in man's glory.
- (Others – **Is 13, 47-48, Jer 50-51, Hab 1**)

- **Exactly, how it surface?**

- **Ans: From sin....**

- **Gen 4 – Cain and Abel**
 - o Cain killed Abel, was cursed by God.
 - o Next, **v17**, He was then building a CITY!
 - o **V20**, development of musical instruments, and technology (**v22**)
 - o **NB: VERY UNLIKE GOD'S PEOPLE, THE WAY GOD DOES THINGS!**

 - o When God does things...
 - o **Gen 5** – focuses on people who walked with God.
 - o No interested in what they did or invented, UNTIL they started walking with God.
 - o **V22**, Things became interesting or happened until Enoch walked with God.
 - o Then Noah, righteous man (**6:9**)

- Similar, pattern repeated in Noah's sons, to a deeper degree of evil
 - **Shem, Ham and Japheth.**
 - Ham (Canaan) was cursed.
 - **10:8, Nimrod – a mighty hunter 'against' God**
 - building of again 'CITIES'!!!
 - Babylon was the 1st, Assyria, Nineveh....great city,... basically evil cities known in the bible. **V19**, Sodom, Gomorrah..
 - In **Gen 13**, Sodom and Gomorrah was said to be a well equipped city.
 - **THEN CAME THE TOWER OF BABEL** (which is where the word Babylon came from.)
 - Babel = confused.
 - Observed the characteristic of Babylonian spirit
 - **11:2, Shinar, as in 10:10**, the descendents of Ham.
 - **V3, make bricks and bake them = into latest technology and gadgets.**
 - **V4, Let us build for ourselves a CITY!!!**
 - **"With a tower that reaches the heaven" = seemed religious!**
 - The spirit of Babylon is also a spirit of religion.
 - A spirit that loves to boast, exaggerate, (in an innocent, harmless, worldly acceptable sense = in the name of excellence!)
 - Nothing wrong to excel in things (Paul says 'excel in spiritual gifts')
 - But the problem is the motive
 - **'SO THAT WE COULD MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES'**
 - Problem with the church as well.
 - 'And not be scattered..'
 - In biblical sense, not obeying the will of God (ie. Increase in number and fill the earth.)
 - In human sense, the gathering of numbers give people a sense of security, status, power and pride.

- Basically, to build up power or resources till there is no need for God.
- You see, by uniting, man can achieve seemingly impossible things.
- Even God acknowledges that in **v5-6, 'nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.'**
- So when a church sets to do a thing, and did it with great success, it may not mean that God was behind it, to grant success. It can be human efforts that lead to the success.
- **We got to be careful and discern.**
- **How? The motive of the heart is the tell sign of whether the man/leader is influenced by the Babylonian spirit or not.**
- **When people end up exalting the church building, church name, or pastor instead of God, then we will know that is the fruit of the Babylonian spirit that was in the church.**
- To do a thing that is purely for God is different from doing something our way (to our agenda) and at the same time, that thing be used as glorying God.
- Basically, we got our human agenda before God.
- We say, lets build a building big and tall, so that people could say, wah, that's a church, that's God.
- While to have people glorying God is so called the result we want to see, we got to inspect the attitude of the heart.
- What is the starting point?
- Why you want a building big and tall in the 1st place.
- **The consequence of building tower of Babel (v9)**
 - **confusion** (people do not know what the church is for, or where the church is heading)
 - **division**

- When we continue to observe the pattern in Genesis, we could actually observe the pattern of how God does things, and what He is into.
- You see, God is into people walking with Him, living a righteous life.
- God is into the moulding of people.

- Does it mean God is not into building of church building?
- Yes, He is, but not until people are CALLED OUT, and walking in His ways and purpose.
 - o In fact, you look at the bible, God is in no hurry to build temples or church building.
 - o Wilderness for 40 yrs, God just got the people to build a tabernacle.
 - In today's church, if the church has a 40 yrs lease, they would not mind building a church building with materials that could last until the day Jesus come.

 - o David wanted to build God a temple, but God says, no, your son's generation.

 - o God actually in the end, abandoned the solomon's temple and the herod's temple in the NT times, which was more glorious than the solomon's temple.

 - o When the disciples of JC says, look that beautiful temple,
 - JC say, time will come where one stone will not be attached to another.

- God is into the heart and attitude of people.

- God is into the heart of worship, that's why ***'I will restore David's fallen tent'***

- God is not so much into church building, coz in the end, He will have for us the **HOLY CITY, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM coming down from the skies.**

- God wants the church to be into the HOLY CITY that is eternal. As such, there is a need to be pure, to come out of Babylon.

- **After the generation of Ham, Shem and Japheth, come Abraham.**

- You see, God is into separation of people from sin. Into His elect!
 - o Abraham and Lot separated.
 - o Isaac and Ishmael separated.
 - o Isaac's son – Esau and Jacob separated.
 - o Jacob – God was into the moulding of him before he bore forth the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - o NB: it took 3 generations for God to establish the 12 tribes, but look at Ishmael, **Gen 25:13, He established the 12 tribes immediately.**
 - o **Meaning the spirit of Babylon is into establishing a system quickly to come against God's people.**

- **HOW THEN DO WE OVERCOME THE SPIRIT OF BABYLON?**
- **Some practical points.....**
 - **1) Examine the heart (motive)**
 - E.g. You want to start a business, then say, I want the business to glorify God, I want God to bless my business so that I will give great offerings to God.
 - But exactly what is in your heart is what we need to evaluate.
 - Is there somewhere at the corner of the heart that I'm longing to be rich.

 - I start a church, my purpose is to reach out to the nations.
 - But if there somewhere in my heart that I want to get famous.
 - You could set bring famous as a goal, and yet still do a ministry, and somehow the ministry touches a lot of people, and bear fruits.
 - But if that in the heart is left unchecked, it's a matter of time the spirit of Babylon will start to surface in the ministry.

 - I go to church, I listened to sermons, I worship God, I give offerings, what is the thing that is at the corner of my heart.
 - Is it so that I be blessed? Is it so that things in life are ok – marriage, family, children all going to good school, grow up, married and have kids?

 - We don't to deliberately break down the spirit of self-centeredness.

- **E.g. worship, what do you come to church for? For yourselves? Any thought for others?**
- Do you wait for others? (Paul addressing the issue of HC in Cor church whereby people don't wait for each other.)
- How about accountability to church/each other?

- Is your attitude "***I came, I get blessed. I don't come, I don't get blessed.***"
- Then basically, that is spirit of self-centeredness -> idolatry

- Talking about idolatry, which is also work of Babylon, we got to evaluate who we come to church for?
- For the pastor? Do you miss church when the pastor is not preaching?

- Or do you have the tendency to glory in your pastor, or pastor's vision, encounter in God?

- There are times it comes in subtly w/o we realizing it.
 - o E.g. Watching Cat101... subtly communicating to viewers a type of life to long after. Talk not just about caring of animals, but how it could fit into the family, with shorts of the type of people with big houses. It just tells you,,,, you now have a house, what is lacking could be a pet...
 - o And when you get a pet, be status conscious. Don't go for the shua teng gou.
 - o The show even have shorts of which famous people have the species of animal, as if to say the value of the animal is attached to how famous the owner is.

 - o Talking about technology – Iphone copy cat.
 - o The spirit behind it – aimlessness.

 - o We always got to discern the spirit that is behind.
 - E.g. the national day march song.
 - S'pore a nation we adore.

- **2) Focus on walk with God, inner change, character building.**
 - o More on the being than on the doing!
 - o Beware of programs, projects, campaigns.

- E.g. why mission week? Church should be missional, empowered by the HS.
- **3) Examine how we view success and failure**
- Will we be joyful only because things are going well with us, and be zealous in God, and when things not going well, we not happy, cursed God, stop coming to church?
- Do we need to be successful in the eyes of the world to be called 'blessed'?
- Or could we be simply contented by the fact that God has blessed us?
- We got to check why we get despair so easily.
- Why our mood swings from one end to another?
- These are work of the Babylonian spirit.
- Dawn's quote, ***'God may allow His servant to succeed when He has disciplined him to a point where he does not need to succeed to be happy.'***
- ***The man who is elated by success and cast down by failure is still a carnal man.***
- ***God will allow His servant to succeed when he has learnt that success does not make him dearer to God or more valuable in the total schemes of things."***
- **Are you conscious of titles and positions?**
- **Can you serve w/o someone giving you a position?**
- **4) Come out of it (Out of comfort zone, convenience)**
- **Be careful with settling down in places too much, that we start to build things on top of it, to make it secure...or become too convenient, till we don't need God's help.**
 - E.g. Using credit card for offering.
 - Instant noodles – Rob of health, rob of family life.
 - With SMS, facebook, twitter, people seems to be keeping in contact of each other, but not keeping in fellowship. (Look at what technology has caused us.)

- Nowadays, putting up things on facebook is becoming more status attached, than anything else.
- Be careful with 'package', be mindful of things we need, and we don't need. (=> excessive)
- The word 'luxury' could simply mean comfort -> relaxation
- Things you do as a relaxation to an excess (just as you get drunk when you drink wine in excess) (or a degree of indulgence), e.g. gym, watching TV, even just news, hobbies, even rearing of pet.
- It is easy to enter to a level of luxury or over-indulgence if we are not careful.
- It is a matter of choice – We got to be deliberately choose to be out of the system.
- **Why Daniel thrived in the Babylonian system?**
- **1:8**, But Daniel resolved not to defile – He made a choice.
- 'and he asked' – He was bold...not afraid of punishment and death.
- **1:17** – Depend on God for wisdom and knowledge, instead of pumping himself with the knowledge introduced to him.
- **2:27**, Moving into supernatural.
- **3:17-18** 'If you throw us into the blazing furnace...'
- Be ready to die for God, not bowing down to the system.
- **6:10**, Daniel had a good prayer life.