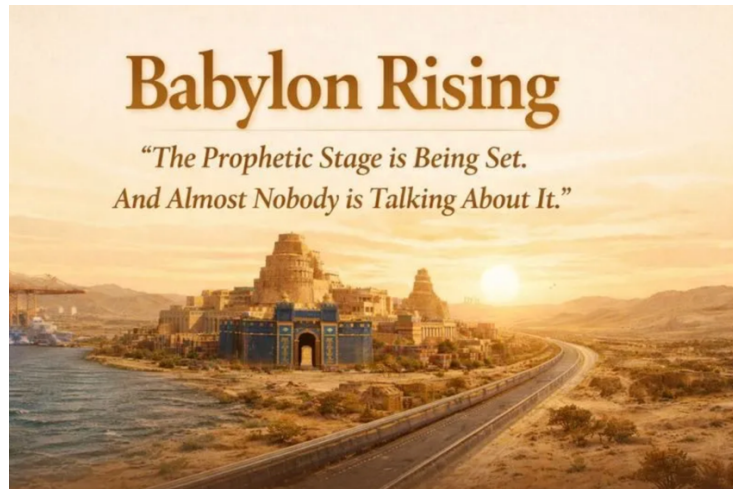


Handout with Revelation Bible Study Chapter 17



The \$17 Billion Prophecy Unfolding In the Desert

By Randy Kay, February 1, 2026

<https://randykay.substack.com/p/babylon-rising?r=izcsb&triedRedirect=true>

Somewhere in the scorching flats of southern Iraq, where the Euphrates and Tigris rivers surrender their ancient waters to the Persian Gulf, a city is being conjured back from the dead.

For two thousand years, skeptics and scholars alike pointed to the ruins of Babylon and laughed at the prophets. *Ships?* they scoffed. *Merchants trading at Babylon?* The place sits fifty miles from the nearest coastline. Nothing but sand and broken stones. A graveyard of empire. Whatever the Apostle John saw in his apocalyptic vision, it couldn't possibly be *literal* Babylon.

That objection just became obsolete.

Right now—not in some hazy prophetic future, but this year—the Iraqi government is pouring \$17 billion into one of the most ambitious infrastructure projects on the planet. At the exact confluence of those legendary rivers, construction crews are erecting the Grand Faw Port, a behemoth designed to handle 99 million tons of cargo annually. The world's longest breakwater—14.5 kilometers of engineered defiance against the Gulf's currents—is already complete. The first ships are expected before the year ends.

Connected to that port stretches a 1,200-kilometer artery of highways and railways snaking northward through Iraq, into Turkey, and onward to Europe. Four nations have signed on. Officials are calling it “the new Silk Road.” They want Iraq to become—in their own words—“the heart of global trade.”

And at the ruins of Babylon itself? A four-thousand-year-old temple to a pagan goddess is being lovingly restored—with American funding—for weddings and festivals. It reopens this autumn.

The prophetic stage is being set. And almost nobody is talking about it.

Ground Zero for Rebellion

To understand why this matters, you have to understand what Babylon *is*—not just historically, but spiritually. This isn't merely another ancient city rising from archaeological obscurity. In the biblical

narrative, Babylon functions as something far more significant: it's the fountainhead of organized rebellion against the Creator.

The name appears over 280 times in Scripture, threading from Genesis to Revelation like a dark river. It begins with Nimrod, the hunter-king whose very name some scholars translate as "against the LORD." He didn't just build a city. He built a kingdom in cosmic defiance.

Then came the Tower of Babel—humanity's first collective middle finger raised toward heaven. "Come, let us build ourselves a city," they said, "with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for *ourselves*." Not for God. For themselves. A one-world system erected on the foundation of human pride.

God scattered them. But the spirit of Babylon—that ancient impulse toward self-worship, toward empire-building without reference to the divine—never died. It surfaced in Egypt, in Assyria, in Rome. And Scripture tells us it will emerge one final time, in full force, at the end of the age.

The Shipping Manifest of the Apocalypse

The book of Revelation devotes two entire chapters to the rise and fall of end-times Babylon. And what the Apostle John described from his exile on Patmos reads less like mystical symbolism and more like a maritime commerce report.

"The merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries," he writes. Then he catalogs the cargo: gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple silk, scarlet cloth, citron wood, ivory, bronze, iron, marble, cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, carriages—and human beings sold as slaves.

This isn't vague prophecy. This is an inventory list.

But here's the verse that made theologians scratch their heads for twenty centuries: "Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?'"

Sea captains. Ships. Sailors watching a city burn from the water. John saw a Babylon with a *port*.

For centuries, this seemed impossible. The ruins sat landlocked in the desert. No harbor. No shipping lanes. The prophecy *had* to be symbolic—Rome, perhaps, or America, or some future global system.

That interpretation is getting harder to defend by the month.

"You Who Live by Many Waters"

The prophet Jeremiah, writing centuries before John, offered his own description of end-times Babylon: "You who live by many waters and are rich in treasures, your end has come."

Many waters. Rich in treasures.

Now consider what's rising at the confluence of those ancient rivers. The Grand Faw Port isn't just another harbor—it's designed to rank among the ten largest on Earth. The Development Road project connecting it to Europe cuts fifteen days off the Suez Canal shipping route. Test shipments have already proven the concept works.

Iraq wants to become a logistics superpower. The infrastructure is going in. The agreements are signed. The money is flowing.

And there's more. The Euphrates River—named *by name* in Revelation's bowl judgments—is prophesied to dry up, clearing the path for "the kings from the East" to march toward Armageddon. I'm not claiming current events fulfill that specific judgment. That belongs to the Tribulation period. But the mechanism is no longer theoretical. The Euphrates has been at historic low levels in recent

years. Upstream dams in Turkey. Prolonged drought. Climate pressures. Iraqi farmers have watched their water vanish.

What John saw two millennia ago can happen. It's already happening in slow motion.

A Throne for Wickedness

But the economic resurrection of Babylon tells only half the story. The spiritual dimension is darker still.

Five centuries before John's apocalyptic vision, the prophet Zechariah received a strange and troubling revelation. He saw wickedness personified as a woman, carried in a basket. When he asked where she was being taken, the angel answered: "To the country of Babylonia, to build a house for it. When the house is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."

A "house" for wickedness. The Hebrew word is *bayith*—the same term used for the Temple in Jerusalem. Zechariah foresaw a temple being prepared for evil. A throne. A place of worship in the land of Babylon.

Now consider what's happening in literal Babylon at this very moment.

The World Monuments Fund, with funding from the United States Embassy, is completing the restoration of the Temple of Ninmakh. This four-thousand-year-old structure was dedicated to a Sumerian goddess—a female deity associated with creation and fertility. Ancient texts claim she "breathed life into mankind." A counterfeit creator. A false god claiming the role belonging to the LORD alone.

What will this restored temple be used for? According to news reports: weddings, concerts, and the annual Babylon Festival. It reopens this autumn.

A temple to a female deity. In literal Babylon. Being prepared for worship and celebration. With Western funding.

The Ishtar Gate—dedicated to the goddess of love, war, and sexuality—is also under restoration. Tourism to Babylon approached 50,000 visitors last year. Wedding parties at pagan ruins. Officials proudly calling Babylon "a symbol of Iraq."

Ground that was consecrated to demonic worship four millennia ago is being re-consecrated. Zechariah's prophecy is taking physical form before our eyes.

Why Babylon Must Rise Before It Falls

Some will object: "Wasn't Babylon already destroyed? Didn't these prophecies find fulfillment when Persia conquered it?"

This is crucial. Look at what the prophets actually said.

Isaiah: "Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations."

Jeremiah echoes: "As I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah... so no one will live there; no people will dwell in it."

"Like Sodom and Gomorrah." Fire from heaven. Sudden. Catastrophic. Supernatural. Total annihilation. Then permanent desolation—never inhabited again.

Here's the historical problem: *that never happened.*

When Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC, there was no destruction. He walked in through a diverted riverbed while the city held a festival. When Alexander the Great took it, he wanted to make it his capital. The city simply declined over centuries. People kept living there. Tourists still visit. It became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019. Nearly 50,000 visitors last year.

That's not "like Sodom and Gomorrah." Not even close.

Which means either Isaiah and Jeremiah were wrong—or the prophecy hasn't been fulfilled yet. It's still waiting.

And here's the key: you can't bring sudden, catastrophic judgment on a ruin. For Babylon to be destroyed "like Sodom," it must first be rebuilt. It must prosper. It must matter.

That's exactly what's happening.

The Acceleration

Consider the timeline. The prophet Daniel was told that in the last days, knowledge would increase and many would "go here and there." Travel and information would explode. What once took generations would happen in years.

Watch the acceleration:

2019—UNESCO designates Babylon a World Heritage Site, lending international legitimacy to preservation efforts.

2024—Four nations sign the Development Road agreement. Port berths completed.

2025—Port opens. Temple reopens. Transit systems go live.

2028-2038—Full completion projected.

Six years. In six years, Babylon has transformed from forgotten ruins to global trade hub under construction to pagan temples reopening. What took Nebuchadnezzar decades is happening in a single political cycle.

The prophetic clock isn't just ticking. It's accelerating.

What I Was Shown

I don't come to this topic merely as a student of prophecy. I come as someone who has glimpsed the other side.

Years ago, I died. Clinically dead for over thirty minutes, my heart stopped, my body cooling on the table. And during that time, I stood in the presence of Jesus Christ. I've written about what I experienced—the overwhelming love, the absolute holiness, the light that somehow doesn't blind but illuminates everything.

But I was also shown things. Prophetic glimpses of what was coming. I saw a period of shaking. Of darkness rising before the dawn. I called it "The Storm."

For years, I didn't fully understand how the pieces would fit together. But as I watch these headlines—as I see Babylon literally rising, ancient temples reopening, the infrastructure for Revelation 18 being built with billions of dollars and international cooperation—something in my spirit recognizes it.

This is part of what I was shown. The storm I saw? I believe we're watching it form on the horizon.

I'm not setting dates. I'm not claiming to know the exact timeline. But I am telling you—with the certainty of someone who has stood before Jesus—we are living in a pivotal season of history.

The Unprecedented Convergence

Let me lay out the full picture.

The Bible said Babylon would rise again as a center of global commerce. A \$17 billion trade corridor is under construction.

The Bible said ships and merchants would trade at Babylon. A massive port is being built at the mouth of the Euphrates.

The Bible said the Euphrates would dry up. The river is at historic low levels.

The Bible said a temple for wickedness would be built in Babylon. A pagan temple is being restored for celebrations this fall.

The Bible said Babylon would be destroyed “like Sodom”—but that never happened historically. Babylon is being rebuilt, positioning it for future fulfillment.

The Bible said the last days would be marked by acceleration. All of this is happening within a six-year window.

This has never happened before. Not once in two thousand years have all these prophetic elements aligned simultaneously. This is not coincidence. This is convergence.

“Come Out of Her”

So what does this mean for those of us watching?

In Revelation 18, a voice thunders from heaven: “Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues.”

“Come out of her.” That’s not a suggestion. It’s a command.

And it applies to more than geography. Babylon isn’t just a city rising from the Iraqi desert. It’s a system. Remember Babel—“Let us make a name for ourselves.” The spirit of Babylon represents human pride untethered from the divine. **The pursuit of wealth without God. Building your life on foundations that cannot hold.**

That spirit permeates our age. It lives in our media, our financial systems, our entertainment, even in churches that have traded the gospel for cultural approval. The spirit of Babel whispers the same ancient lie: ***You can be your own god. Build your own kingdom. Make a name for yourself.***

The question for everyone reading is simple: What are you building your life on? Are you entangled with a system God has promised to destroy?

The City That Endures

I don’t write this to frighten you. I write it to awaken you.

Because the Bible doesn’t end with Babylon. It ends with a different city—the New Jerusalem—descending from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. “God will wipe every tear from their eyes,” John writes. “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

That’s our hope. Not Babylon—the **New Jerusalem**. Not human empire—the **Kingdom of God**. Not towers built on pride—but **a city whose architect and builder is the LORD Himself**.

If you’ve never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, there has never been a more urgent time. The stage is being set. The clock is accelerating. And Jesus stands ready to receive anyone who comes to Him.

If you’re a believer who’s grown comfortable—hear the Spirit’s call: Come out of her. Set your heart on things above. Be found faithful when He appears.

Babylon is rising. But so is the Son.

Keep looking up. Our redemption draws near.

Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.

See also:

Babylon the Harlot for extensive Bible study of everywhere in Scripture where Babylon is named.

https://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/Book_of_Revelation/commentary/htm/topics/babylon.html#86496

