

8804U

ECHO LAKE STUDY WEEKEND - 2007

FROM EDEN LOST TO EDEN RESTORED

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Study 1: From the foundation of the world

Well, thank you brother chairman and good morning our dear brethren and sisters, and it's nice to see fresh and smiling faces this early in the morning, on a fresh fall day. I come from the other side of the world and other seasons, we're just coming into Spring, but there's just that same nip in the air early in the morning, and it makes you feel invigorated. I hope what we're going to be looking at today will be spiritually invigorating as well, because what we'll look at is the framework of bible prophecy which allows us then to expand out into the fullness of the prophetic order of things and in particular, some things that are taking place in the earth today, to make sense of them all and how they all fit into the purpose of the Father and to prophecy unfolding.

By the way, there's one thing that I hope you'll take away from our studies today, it is this opening picture and the idea of the red line and the blue line; if you just go away thinking about the red line and the blue line, we will have made some progress in terms of understanding bible prophecy. When you really think about it, what really happened was this - at the start, at the very beginning of time, there ever was only the blue line, the blue line was God's line, God's way, God's purpose and at the beginning it was all focussed on what the Father intended in the earth concerning Himself. If we were to ask, 'what was that purpose? the answer is, that from the beginning it was the objective of God that He should reveal Himself in a multitude of mighty ones, and every one of those would reflect the qualities of the Father and in the fullness of time the whole earth would be filled with the glory of the Father. That was the blue line, wasn't it? right from the very beginning, the purpose of God. You know, b&s, that is the very centre of what we believe the truth is all about, that God intends to enthrone Himself in the hearts and minds of His people, so that He Himself is manifest in all the earth. That was the plan, wasn't it? right from the beginning, that's the blue line!

But you see, at "the foundation of the world", that's a very important phrase, isn't it? **the foundation of the world**, it covers that period of time that is commented on in Genesis 1, 2 and 3 and 4, the foundation of the world, and at that time, what happened was, a rival system of thinking was introduced, different to God's and from the fall in the book of Genesis, man began to vaunt his own ambition and his own thinking and his own principles, his own ways, over and above the divine counsel. So now there are going to be two ways manifested in the earth; and those two ways, the ways of man in the red

and the way of God in the blue, and the two ways would be in opposition to one another; in fact, come and have a look at Genesis 3, do you remember how important this prophecy is? Oh, I've given myself away, b&s, but come and have a look all the same because this is what it says in Genesis 3. We're told in verse 13, the record says, 'The LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel'.

B&S, have you ever stopped to think that that passage in Genesis 3 is actually a bible prophecy? It's a bible prophecy and, in fact, it is the first prophecy in the bible itself. And if you were to say, what is it a prophecy of? It is a prophecy of **enmity between the two seeds**, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, so that once the enmity had begun in Genesis it will continue down through time and that whole prophecy is founded in the purpose of God, you see, because what God is saying is that not until the blue line has triumphed and conquered the red line, will My purpose be accomplished in the earth. So this statement in Genesis 3, we believe, is the foundation prophecy on which all other prophecy is built and established. Here it is the foundation prophecy of all time.

Again, ask yourself the question, 'was there an enmity established at the foundation of the world?' yes or no? the answer is, 'of course, there was!' Does that enmity continue down through time? well, yes it does! Do you think that the enmity is finished yet? the answer is, of course it's not! Well, when is the final triumph of the seed of the woman over the seed of the serpent, when does it occur? be careful now! when does it occur? At the start of the kingdom? no! not until the end of the millennium, not until then could we say that the final struggle between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman will be resolved and in favour of the seed of the woman, so that God's way might triumph! So that enmity begun in Genesis 3 has been there down through time, and it's been there down through time because the two seeds are there down through time. You can't have an enmity unless you've got the two seeds there.

Do you know, b&s, the whole of the bible reverberates to the story of that conflict begun in Genesis 3, reverberates to that story, does it not? Have a look at this! Do you remember that the bible talks about two seeds and two ways and two women, and two trees, and two houses and two masters, and two cities and two communities? You see, that's all part of the story of that fundamental conflict between the red and the blue line down through time! It expresses it in all different ways, but it's all the same story! Or if we were to put it another way, the bible talks about the spirit vs flesh, truth vs error, above vs beneath, holy vs unholy, wise vs foolish, light vs darkness, good vs evil, life vs death. It's all the same conflict, b&s, just different words, different language to express the same fundamental controversy, you see! and it wouldn't matter which of those ideas

or things that we looked at, they would all follow throughout the bible.

Take that first one there, spirit vs flesh. Have a look at that thing, well, let me show you that, taking the words of Genesis, and all of them would be the same. So Genesis 3 said 'I'll put enmity between thee (that is the serpent) and the woman, between thy seed (the serpent's seed and her seed (the woman's seed). He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel' (the red and the blue line). And says the record, 'there's an enmity between the two'. Do you know what Paul says in Romans 8? 'For the minding of the flesh is death, the minding of the spirit is life and peace, because the minding of the flesh is **enmity against God**'. Now do you see all the terms? so instead of the seed of the serpent, we've got **flesh**, and instead of seed of woman we've got **spirit**, but it's the same controversy but there's an enmity between the two, the same story! just we've substituted the terms of 'seed of the serpent and seed of the woman for terms of 'flesh and spirit'. Or as the record says in Galatians 5 verse 16, 'walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh': and these are contrary (opposed, adversaries, in opposition to one another) the enmity of Genesis 3 is there.

Now when we put our act together, b&s, what we're suggesting is this: actually it's very simple, but perhaps very profound, that those two lines down through time, represent the seed of the woman who in turn represents the **thinking of the Spirit and the light of the truth**, and in opposition to that is the seed of the serpent who represents **darkness of error and the thinking of the flesh**. What we're suggesting is that this is the great theme of scripture! Would anyone suggest that there's a greater controversy, a more fundamental controversy than this one in the bible record? I don't think so, b&s! I don't think so! this is the one! and once the struggle has begun in the book of Genesis, it will carry on down through time. There is only one continuous theme of the bible, and it's the record of the seed of the serpent vs the seed of the woman. Not only is this the story, by the way, of how God's principles will finally prevail, but it becomes the foundation stone on which the whole framework of bible prophecy will be built.

You know, someone once said, didn't they? that prophecy is the mould into which history is poured, quite a good thought, isn't it? So if prophecy is the mould into which history is poured, then the question is, from whence sprang the mould from which prophecy was made or moulded? and the answer is the **purpose of God is the shape of the mould of prophecy**! Prophecy is but the unfolding of God's purpose down through time, that's what it's all about! prophecy isn't what's going on amongst the nations purely because of the affairs of man, but prophecy is the unfolding of God's purpose, that's where the mould of prophecy comes from. This is God's purpose, one day the seed of the woman will triumph over the seed of the serpent; now if you're still in Genesis 3 let's take another look at it, because I just want you to see all the critical words here. So we're told this in Genesis 3 verse 13, 'And Yahweh Elohim said unto the

woman, what is this that thou hast done? and the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. And Yahweh Elohim said unto the serpent, 'because thou hadst done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee, and the woman, and between thy **seed** and her **seed**; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

So you see, from the book of Genesis we've got a woman and a serpent, and we've got their seed, and we've got a war or enmity between the two parties. Now keep your place in Genesis and come to Revelation 12, so we've come from the very start of the bible now to the end of the bible; from the first book to the last book, and now see what the record tells us. Revelation 12 verses 15 to 17, and the record says this, 'And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman' (oh, have we come across those words before? a woman and a serpent?) and verse 16 says, 'And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon (serpent) was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'

So we've got a woman and a serpent, and their seed and a war or enmity between the two, but we're in the last book of the bible now, not the first book; would you say this is the same controversy? oh yes, b&s, I think so, and what Revelation is telling us, is that whatever the story was that began in Genesis, it is the exactly the same story, the same conflict, the same controversy, the same enmity that will finally be resolved at the end of time, says Revelation. God's purpose has never changed and His principles have never changed, and neither has the story, b&s. So this continuous theme of scripture, b&s, and do you notice that critical word at the top of our chart, the continuous theme of scripture is the very basis for our belief as a community in the **continuous historic viewpoint of prophecy**, and why do we believe in the continuous historic viewpoint of prophecy? because it's following through the unfolding of the continuous theme of scripture. So of course, it's continuous, because the story is continuous of the two seeds, isn't it? down through time.



Well, come back then to Genesis, and let me show you something in Genesis 10, because it wasn't long after those two ways emerged on the face of the earth at the foundation of the world, that soon both of the two seeds were developing into something quite distinct, in fact into two entire communities. There's one of those communities in the book of Genesis 10, so the record says in Genesis 10 verse 8, 'And Cush begat Nimrod, he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar'. Now what's interesting about this passage? Well, it's starts off by telling us that Nimrod was a mighty hunter, doesn't say what he was hunting, by the way, but we assume and believe at least at the start, he was hunting

animals; I think, by the way, that he was hunting more than animals, but he was hunting animals. Now let me just read you an interesting aspect in that regard from the book, *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, and he says this on pages 50 and 51, he says, 'The amazing extent of the worship of this man, Nimrod, indicates something very extraordinary in his character. There are ample reasons to believe that in his own day, he was an object of high popularity, though by setting himself up as king, Nimrod invaded the patriarchal system and abridged the liberties of mankind, yet he was held by many to have conferred benefits upon them, that amply indemnified them for the loss of their liberties, and covered him with glory and renown. By the time that he appeared, the wild beasts of the forest, multiplying more rapidly than the human race, must have committed great degradations on the scattered and straggling populations of the earth, and must have inspired great terror in the minds of men. The exploits of Nimrod therefore, in hunting down the wild beasts of the field and ridding the world of monsters, must have gained for him a character of a preeminent benefactor of his race. By this means, not less than by the bands he trained, was his power acquired when he first began to be mighty upon the earth. In the same way, no doubt, was this power consolidated. Then over and above as the first great city builder after the flood, by gathering together men in masses and surrounding them with walls, he did still more, allowing them to pass their days in security. Had Nimrod gained renown only thus, it had been well! but not content with delivering men from the fear of wild beasts, he set to work also to emancipate them from that fear of the LORD which is the beginning of wisdom and in which alone, true happiness can be found'. By the time that Nimrod had finished his career, b&s and young people, he wasn't just a hunter of wild animals, he was a hunter of the seed of the woman, because he had established a whole rival system of things! When it says in Genesis 10 verse 9, 'that he was a mighty hunter before the LORD', or before Yahweh, we believe that that phrase literally means 'in the presence or in the face of God'. He was doing it in defiance of God, he was a mighty hunter in defiance of God. He was hunting down the seed of the woman that he might persecute them! this is the very beginning of the persecution of the seed of the woman, 'I will put enmity between the two seeds', said Genesis, well, Nimrod was going to hunt them!

Do you see what it says, verse 10, 'the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon in the land of Shinar', that's the first time the word 'kingdom' is mentioned in the bible. Guess who establishes the first kingdom? Not the kingdom of God, it's the kingdom of men and Nimrod is the beginner of the kingdom of men. It's the engrandishment of the system of the serpent power and now it's being established, a rival system of truth; a rival system of religion, a rival system of politics and government, a rival king and a rival priest, they were all here in Babylon, lead and championed by none other than Nimrod who's the beginning of that story. Two rival systems that were going to be established in the earth.

If Babylon was going to be the first of those two, the second was going to be Israel! because if you come to Genesis 14 (so we're only 4 chapters later on in the book of

Genesis). What we've got is this, you see, this is chapter 14 and you'll remember it's the battle of Chedorloamer coming with his confederates against Abraham. But notice what Genesis 14 verse 1 says of how the record really starts; 'And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar'. Oh, that's an interesting word, because that's where Babylon was, that's where Nimrod was, the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon in the land of Shinar, says chapter 10, and now who's coming in to attack them? why, the land of Shinar, b&s, that's the enemy, that's Babylon, that's the seed of the serpent power coming against Abraham. In the middle of this chapter we're told in verse 18 it says, 'Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine; he was the priest of the most high God'. Ah, so he's a king, verse 18, and he's also a priest, and that's what Nimrod was in Babylon, you see; Nimrod was a king and priest in Babylon. But here's another king and another priest in Salem, ah, but this is the king-priest of that system of religion that belongs to the seed of the woman; this is the seed of the woman power in Salem, and the seed of the serpent power in Shinar in Babylon! In fact, Melchizedek goes on to say in verse 19, and it says, 'he blessed Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.' And so they were, they were the enemies of the seed, the serpent power; and this was the king of Salem rejoicing over the king of Shinar.

It says in verse 20 at the end of the verse, 'And he gave him (Melchizedek) tithes of all the spoils of victory', so Melchizedek shared in Abram's victory over the king of Shinar, the seed of the woman experienced a moment of triumph over the enemies, not just of Abram, but of the truth. What we've got in these two passages is the beginning of a great rivalry which will come down through time and will be a rivalry between Babylon and Israel and it's going to be there to the time of the end. In fact, when you come to that last passage (we're not going to look at all those passages) but it's just an illustration see, Genesis 10 which is the beginning of the kingdom of Babylon with a king-priest; Genesis 14 the beginning of the kingdom of God with a king-priest in Salem. When we come to Revelation 18 we're told this, the very end of these two particular rival systems, is again spoken of in similar language, which leads up to the conclusion of being deliberately paralleled because it says in Revelation 18 verse 21, 'A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all'. So just notice what it says, 'it's a great city is Babylon, a great city, but it's cast into the sea with great violence, that it might not be seen again, it's the final end of the Babylonish system of the seed of the serpent. Now come to Revelation 21, on the other side of the ledger and in Revelation 21 and verse 10, it says this concerning another city, the other city, the city of the seed of the woman, 'He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, (so they're both great cities, yes, a great city that belongs to Israel and Jerusalem and the seed of the woman) but this city, the holy Jerusalem, descends out of heaven from God'. The one is cast down with great violence that it might be never seen again, the other descends out of heaven from God to be perpetuated forever. So finally, the one city and one system

has triumphed over the other. This is the whole controversy of the bible, b&s, the story of the two seeds, but rendered down now to two crucial names, **BABYLON VS ISRAEL** in terms of the nations, or **BABYLON VS JERUSALEM** in terms of the cities. But it's all the same story, you see!

Not only were there two cities, but in this story of the conflict there's going to be two rival champions, each of these systems would have a leader; and in the case of Babylon vs. Israel when this controversy first began, we believe, of course, that the rivals were Nimrod and Shem. So Nimrod is a king-priest of the Babylonish rites of worship and Melchizedek was the king-priest of Salem where God is worshipped in truth, after the pattern given to Noah and thereafter. What's interesting, by the way, is of course, I didn't say Melchizedek but I said Shem there, and some of you may know that brother Thomas said that Melchizedek was Shem. Now, we cannot say or speak particularly of this thing, but I believe that brother Thomas is right for a number of different reasons, but most probably that the Melchizedek of Genesis 14 was probably Shem. What's interesting is that if you check through the chronologies of the time, you will find that these two men were alive at the same time. Shem and Nimrod were both alive at the same time and I believe there was a conflict between them because they were the two leaders of the two systems. In fact, what's interesting about that story of conflict is this, that in the Babylonish records we're told of a controversy between two kings, and another king who isn't named had Nimrod judicially put to death because he would not tolerate the system of apostasy that Nimrod had devised. A certain king put him to death, said the ancient Babylonish records and that Babylonish system which documents the untimely death of Nimrod, put to death by the sword on the orders of a certain king, well that king is named in the Egyptian account of the death of Nimrod; and in the Egyptian record the king who caused the slaying is called Sim, and I believe it was the Shem of Noachian time, and that controversy between the two kings lead to the death of the one.

You know, it's interesting, and you'll know where this comes from but let me just read it to you so you can feel a sense of perhaps deja-vu; 'And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the LORD shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming'. The end of this controversy, b&s, at the time of the end, the man of sin of 2 Thessalonians, why he shall inherit the mantle of Nimrod, and the Lord Jesus who is the Messiah of Israel will be the latter day Shem, and the one champion will order the execution of the other, in this final resolution of this conflict, in the final conflict of the two systems. There will be two champions at the time of the end, just as there were two champions at the start of this whole story, two rival systems with all authority and power, based in one man on either side of the ledger; it's quite marvellous how the bible is very specific, very precise about the balance of this story. It's really quite simple once you see the framework.

One of the reasons why I think it's important to understand all this is because one of the main ideas that has been around in the brotherhood for a while, as an alternative view

to prophecy in its most essential form, says that the controversy at the end of time is the Arabs vs the Jews; there's going to be another great battle of the Arabs vs the Jews and the Arabs will win and the Jewish nation will be decimated and it will look as if all hope is gone, and it is the Jewish-Arab controversy that's the cause celebre of bible prophecy at the time of the end. Well, I don't think so, b&s, and one of reasons that I think so, is I've never seen any explanation how the Arabs are the latter day Babylonians. You see! I don't believe they are the inheritor of the Babylonish system, and yet the bible says that this is the great controversy. We saw that the book of Revelation was still using the terms, Babylon and Israel, and Babylon and Jerusalem which began in Genesis; and the very fact that Revelation would still talk about this controversy using the terms, Babylon and Israel, would suggest to us, that it's one and the same controversy that's been the same down through time, you see.

Let me show you why I believe it's so, and perhaps a helpful thought to be clear in your mind. You see, I think, that the two terms Israel and Babylon are proxy terms for the two seeds. Now why it's helpful, you see, is because that alternative view which focusses on the Arabs at the time of the end, actually says this. You need to focus on the nation of Israel because God's purpose focusses on Israel. Watch Israel, because that's where God's purpose is! Well, funny enough, b&s, I'm not sure that's right! well at least, it's not completely right? You see, most of us would say, wouldn't we? that God's purpose focusses on Israel, well, I suppose that is right! well, after all, Christadelphians believe in the hope of Israel! But it isn't quite right, is it? because does God's purpose focus on the nation of Israel? what thinkest thou? Well, let me explain why that's not quite right, you see.

Just imagine that these lines represent epochs of time, and each of those bands are 2,000 years of history. So we've got 2,000 years and 2,000 years and 2,000 years = 6,000 years of man's history during which time the conflict between the two seeds has taken place; of course, that's not an accurate graph because the bit in the middle didn't really come at the end of the 6000 years but at the end of the 4000 years - graphically, you'll know what I'm saying!

Question - approximately when did the nation of Israel begin in the history of those 6000 years? and the answer is - approximately 2000 years! 2000 years after the history began! Question - was God's purpose involved with anything before then if there was no Israel? Why yes, wasn't God's purpose working with Adam and then with Seth and then with Seth's son, and then with Methuselah or Enoch or Lamech, Noah or Shem down through the years? Well, of course it was! those first 2000 years was the enmity at work? yes! Was the seed of the serpent in existence? yes! and was the seed of the woman in existence? yes. All during those 2000 years, b&s, notice there was no nation of Israel in existence, was there? Now the nation of Israel once established was there for about 2000 years, give or take 100 years, and it disappeared in AD.70, didn't it? so Israel was there for about 2000 years of that history, what happened in AD.70? well, give or take a 100 years there's been no nation for the last 2000 years, so does that mean that God's purpose stopped in AD.70 and there's been nothing going on with

anybody for the last 2000 years? No, I don't think so, b&s. Has there been no seed of the woman during the times of the apostles and beyond? Oh yes, I think there has been, but there's been no nation of Israel! So when someone says God's purpose revolves around the nation of Israel, what they mean by that is the natural seed of Israel in the land as a nation, I'm not sure that's right! But what I do know is that this is right, that from the very beginning of time, God's purpose has revolved around the seed of the woman who will manifest Him. During the time that the nation of Israel was in existence, where did God quarry the seed of the woman from? and the answer is, why, from the nation of Israel. When the nation of Israel ceased to be in existence and went into captivity because of the Romans, where did God quarry the seed of the woman from? and the answer is, from the Gentiles, didn't He? and not from the nation of Israel! But the seed of the woman was still there, so you've got to be careful, you've got to be precise in your thinking! God's purpose revolves around His intention to fill the earth with Himself and He does that through the seed of the woman!

The seed of the woman as an idea, is more ancient than the nation of Israel! It came before the nation of Israel and it lasted after the nation of Israel and at the time of the end when Israel is restored to the Land, as they have been, when Messiah returns the nation of Israel will be grafted back into their own olive tree; of course, they will they're part of the promises, they're not the whole story, and never have been. Romans 11 says that 'when the natural branches were broken off, there were other people who would be grafted into that hope from the Gentiles. They're all part of God's plan down through time! If God's purpose had only revolved around the nation of Israel, why would we have had 6000 years of history where only 2000 years of that history had a nation of Israel? and the answer is, that God's purpose revolves around the seed of the woman, doesn't it? as long as we understand that Babylon and Israel are proxy terms for those two more ancient ideas, then our understanding will be consistent with bible prophecy. Here it is!

Let's just summarize then! So in the Old Testament, the seed of the serpent which we may describe as Babylon phase I, and in the Old Testament, the seed of the woman we might describe as Israel phase I. Of course they were, they were the nation of Israel, but remember, it goes back before the nation. When we come to the New Testament, we're going to find there's another Babylon, but by the way, it's not in the same place! In the New Testament the seed of the serpent is going to move to a new location, but it's still Babylon, and in the New Testament the seed of the woman is going to reach out and embrace Gentiles but it will still be Israel. It will still be Babylon and Israel but it'll be phase II of the same story and of the same controversy. We'll come back to that in a moment, b&s, just to establish how that worked its way through from an historical point of view.

Then did you notice this, there's this strange bit in the middle, why do we have that strange wiggle in the middle? Well, we do because there is a middle point, and the question is,

so why are there two stages? you talk about Babylon phase I and Israel phase I, and Babylon phase II and Israel phase II? why are there two paths to the story? why Old Testament and New Testament? Well, I think there is an answer because there's a path in the middle. That sounds profoundly logical, doesn't it? b&s. It's because God's purpose was marked out with two great stages on the other side of the coming of Christ, and Christ, of course, is the true seed of the woman, and around which the whole story pivots. It all pivots around the centre of Christ, He's the middle of the prophetic framework, He's the true seed of the woman, and through whom and by means of which the whole of the contest will be resolved between the two seeds. So God's purpose and His balance comes on either side of our Lord Jesus Christ and becomes the two parts of Babylon vs. Israel.

So let me show you that another way! You see, wasn't the start of the story in Genesis, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman'? and what happened at the first coming of Christ? 'thou shalt bruise His heel?' and what happens at the second coming of Christ? isn't it, 'He shall bruise his head'? and that special opening prophecy in Genesis 3, is seen to have, as it were, those three parts of the story. The story begins and there will now be two parts down through time to the resolution of that controversy, as the prophecy itself declares in Genesis 3, and that's why God's purpose unfolds in that way. In fact, if we look at that in another way, we're going to see that each of those stages is marked by a prophet of the Old Testament who will chronicle the controversy between Babylon and Israel, and that is the prophet Daniel and the prophecy of Daniel. But in the middle of the story will be a special prophecy of Christ, known as the Olivet prophecy and if you read the Olivet prophecy you'll find that it refers back to the book of Daniel and the controversy of Babylon vs Israel. Not only does the Lord's prophecy of Daniel refer back to the book of Daniel but we'll find that it refers onwards to the book of Revelation which is the second part of the story of Babylon vs Israel, and we've got three prophecies locked together, the one of Daniel, the one of John, and the one of our Lord, in the middle, which refers backwards and forwards, but it's all part of the same story, you see! Marvellous! how God has planned that all that should be so!

So let's have a look then at how that transition, in fact, occurred in terms of these two stages. Babylon phase I and Babylon phase 2, and Israel phase I and Israel phase II. In fact, what actually happened historically was this - I think most of us would agree that Israel phase I came to an end in AD.70, after all that was the time of the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth and the disbanding of the Jewish nation upon their land. Do you know, b&s, that before that overthrow of Israel phase I, isn't it true to say that, Israel phase II had already begun about 40 years before with the founding of the ecclesia at the death and the resurrection of Christ. A new Israel had begun, Israel phase II had already been established by God, in the providence of God, before Israel phase I ever came to an end. That's exactly how it worked, you see, it's like an overlay, that before the first stage finished the second phase had begun, so that the blue line could carry on through time, you see. By the way, that's exactly what happened with the red line, because Babylon phase I came to an end we suggest, around about BC.293

(and I'll explain the significance of that date shortly). What's interesting is that about 40 years before, Babylon phase II had already begun, and in the providence of God, Babylon would finish in one place and begin in another place, in its second life or second phase, and it would be a crossover! and you see, this story of this controversy would never stop down through time; it would cease in one place or with one people, but it would reappear elsewhere. One of the great interesting things about bible prophecy is to satisfy ourselves both scripturally and historically, well, who was phase II? who inherited this system of things on both sides so that we might see the continuum of that prophecy down through time?

Well, let me walk you through that. First of all, on a scriptural basis for the seed of the woman's side, for the side of Israel phase I and II. So here's scripturally what happened! You see, we're told in Luke 21, we're told this in an interesting passage in, why! the Lord's Olivet prophecy; and He says in verse 24, 'they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be lead away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled'. Now ordinarily, b&s, we take the phase 'the times of the Gentiles' as representative of Gentile domination, and Gentile subjugation, but I think there could be another aspect to that phrase. That word 'times' in verse 24, there are two Greek words for 'times', one word is the word 'chronos' (5550) which means 'a fixed period of time', and the other word is the word 'kairos' (2540) which means 'a season of time'. In Luke 21 verse 24 when it talks about the 'times of the Gentiles', it means the '**season**' of the Gentiles; by the way, that word 'kairos' is translated in at least two places as the word 'opportunity', they might have had an opportunity to do this, etc. and the question is, what was the opportunity of the Gentiles? what was the season of opportunity? well, the answer is, it was their opportunity to become part of Israel.

Now come and have a look at the other reference, Romans 11. Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles', that's the overthrow of Israel phase I **until the season of the Gentiles is fulfilled**. Now do you see what it says in Romans 11 verse 25, 'For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel (phase I), **until** (oh, there's the word from Luke, you see) 'until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in', That's the season of the Gentiles, isn't it? when they have the chance to be grafted in to the Israelitish hope! Verse 26 says, 'So **all Israel** shall be saved'; and now that phrase 'all Israel' in verse 26 is thinking of both Jew and Gentile who have all become part of the commonwealth of Israel and are treated as part of the blue line at the time of the end. So you see, looking at it biblically, there was a time when the Gentiles would be grafted into the Israelitish tree, was there not? and they would be part of Israel, a genuine part of Israel. Now by the way, in Revelation 7 we're told of the sealing of the servants of God in the New Testament era, and by the way, they're Gentiles and yet in Revelation 7 it was 'like the sealing of all the children of Israel' that's what it calls it, but they weren't Israelites, they were Gentiles, but Revelation says they're part of Israel.

Then again in Ephesians 2 (and you'll know what Ephesians 2 verses 12-19 say) 'At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world - but now ye are no longer strangers or foreigners, but are fellow citizens with the saints'. We're part of the commonwealth of Israel, says Ephesians 2, we Gentiles! and by the way, Galatians 6 verse 16, Paul writing to Gentiles calls them 'peace be upon the Israel of God, he said. He's talking about Gentiles! the Israel of God, that's got to be **Israel phase II**, not phase I, because the nation of Israel had been cast into captivity, this has got to be after AD.70 that he's talking about. It's the coming in of the Gentiles, the Israel of God, and some of you might know that in Exodus 19 when the nation of Israel first came to Sinai, they were described as a peculiar people, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation; and now Peter would write in 1 Peter 2 to Gentiles and call them 'a kingdom of priests, a holy nation and a peculiar people', and will use the very expressions in Exodus 19 that first applied to Israel phase I, and will talk about the Gentiles with exactly the same language, because the Gentile ecclesia must be Israel phase II in the New Testament era, but still the Israel of God as far as God's concerned which, of course, we understand is a proxy for what? why the seed of the woman's community in the New Testament era. So God's line continued in that way, did it not? b&s. Yes it did!

As with that line, so with the Babylonish or red line, the same thing took place, because as far as the Babylonish line is concerned, we know this, and this is a passage we'll look at God willing, later on in our next study, but we're told in Zechariah 5, that the temple in Shinar would be replaced by another temple, in another Shinar, and we'll look at that, God willing, in our next session. So there's a prophecy in Zechariah 5 that there's going to be a new temple built in the land of Shinar, and shortly after this prophecy, within 200 years, the real temple in the land of Babylon would be destroyed, never to be built again, at least not in Babylon. Ah, but another temple would be built in another land of Shinar and that would also be part of Babylon, but named Babylon phase II in another place, you see. Likewise, in the New Testament record, we're going to find that the term 'Babylon' used by the apostles as a cipher for the city of Babylon. What do I mean by the word 'cipher'? a code, a secret code, because when the apostles were writing they had to be very careful, of the authorities of Rome itself, so when Peter talks about where he is and greetings from the place he is in, 1 Peter, he talks about greetings from 'the ecclesia of Babylon' and he probably means the ecclesia of Rome; and John is going to use the same phrase, isn't he? about the woman sitting on the beast, with the name 'Babylon'; but he's not thinking of the Babylon of the Old Testament times, he's thinking of a new Babylon in another place and yet it is part of the seed of the serpent power. In fact, the circumstances of the overthrow of Babylon phase I would be exactly matched by the prophecy of the eventual overthrow of Babylon phase II. If you go to Jeremiah (which we won't turn up) but if you go to Jeremiah 51 verses 6, 8 and 9, you'll find to your astonishment and to your surprise that those very words will pop up again in Revelation 18 verse 4 and 5 and in verse 9, and

it'll be exactly the same language to describe the overthrow of another Babylon but it's the Babylon of the New Testament, Babylon phase 2, you see! Lastly, Babylon phase 1, we're told in Jeremiah that it was destroyed for two reasons; 1. she had corrupting doctrine and 2. she persecuted Israel. When we come to the book of Revelation, you'll find in chapter 17 that the Babylon of Revelation is going to be overthrown for two reasons, she has corrupting doctrine and she persecutes Israel! It's all part of the same story! Can you feel it, b&s? can you feel the matching of the two sides of the story? you see, this is the framework of bible prophecy, it's actually very powerful once you get to see it. Once you get to see this framework, b&s, you'll suddenly find that the whole of Bible prophecy all locks together on the red and the blue line somewhere in that story. It really is as simple as that! all the complicated symbols in Revelation, are simply a part of the red line, blue line controversy; you're going to see it later on!

Now I know that most of us would be happy to hear that the Gentile believers of the New Testament were the successors of Israel and that line of succession is understood by us; and I think probably even biblically we'd be happy with the line of argument that there was going to be another Babylon, but what you may not know was how it happened historically. So let me show you the historical working of how Babylon phase I became Babylon phase II, because it's quite interesting really, just exactly what happened. You see, what happens is, in 333BC. a very famous conqueror entered Babylon; what was his name? has to be Alexander the Great and he entered the city of Babylon. Do you know that the time that Alexander entered the city of Babylon, the last high priest of the Babylonish system of worship, packed up his bag, packed up all his magic spells, all the Babylonish ritual, popped it in his suitcase, and left Babylon for the last time. He truly did! and he went to the city of Pergamum, now that's interesting because in the book of Revelation do you know what Christ describes the city of Pergamum as? He describes it as 'Satan's seat', and so it was, b&s, the last surviving remnant of the old Nimrodian-Babylonish religion established in the land of Shinar, had literally transferred from the city of Babylon to Pergamum in that year.

Now what happened after that was 40 years later, a man called Seleucus Nicator decided to build a new city; which surprisingly for some strange reason he called it Seleucia and in order to build Seleucia 10 miles north of old Babylon, he pulled all the buildings of Babylon apart and transported all the stones and all the brick and all the rubble to Seleucia, to build his new city; and old Babylon was virtually abandoned in BC.293. I say virtually because there were still people there up to 100 years or so ago, but it was as good as finished, but before Babylon had fallen, b&s, the spirit of the Babylonish system had already disappeared out of that city to another place to begin another life and you'll never guess what happened? For 200 years the high priest of Babylon practised his priest craft in the kingdom of Pergamum quite happily until the last king of Pergamum came along whose name was Atlas III, and Atlas had a problem. Atlas was king of what was a wealthy little kingdom which included the Babylonian high priesthood but the trouble was he had no sons or daughters, absolutely no family to pass on his kingdom to. So what Atlas decided to do, was to bequeath it to someone;

well, you'll never guess who he bequeathed his kingdom to? the power of Rome. But, ah! included in the bequest was, you get free of charge the Babylonish priests and the whole system of Babylonish religion which was transported from Babylon to Pergamum, and now becomes Rome's by means of inheritance of that kingdom.

You know, the old title for the Babylonish high priest was in the Latin, Pontifex Maximus, not that it's a Babylonian title, but the Latin title, Pontifex Maximus is the equivalent to the old Chaldee name for the king-priest of their religion. What happen was in 63 BC, Julius Caesar became the Pontifex Maximus of the Babylonian mysteries in the city of Rome, because that's where it had gone to, and had been inherited from the city and the kingdom of Pergamum. The very emperor of the Roman empire actually took the title Pontifex Maximus to signify that he was in charge of the Babylonish system of religion practised from that city. Every emperor from that time when Julius Caesar in 63.BC took the title Pontifex Maximus, the leader of the Babylonian mysteries, well, at least until then! Then in 213. AD, Constantine issued the edict of Milan to establish Christianity, and they began the introduction of the Babylonian rituals and doctrines and practises throughout Christianity itself. In fact, what happened finally was one of the emperors whose name is Grecian, finally decided in AD.376 that he didn't want this title, Pontifex Maximus, anymore and left the Roman senate with a bit of a problem of what to do. So the senate took a vote and offered the title to somebody else, Pontifex Maximus, the high priest of the Babylonish system. Well, who should we offer the title to? and you'll never guess who they offered it too? Why the bishop of Rome, and they said to the bishop of Rome, would you like to be called Pontifex Maximus, the leader of the Babylonish ritual? and he said, 'why yes, I'd like that title' and the bishop of Rome of the Christian church which became the Papacy took the title, Pontifex Maximus in AD.378, and since that time every bishop has been called Pontifex Maximus.

I tell you what, b&s, the whole of the Babylonish system was transported lock, stock, and barrel to Rome. They are the inheritors of the Babylonish system; it's absolutely wonderful how it happened! This is not just a scriptural line of argument, it historically moved there, it's precisely what happened, and the controversy between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, between Babylon and Israel, would migrate out the land of Israel and into a new theatre where prophecy would be unfolded in the land of Europe, where the new Babylon was established, and where new communities of the new Israel could also be seen. That conflict, b&s, would carry on in accordance with bible prophecy.

So, there's the beginning of our framework, b&s, that's what we're going to be looking at in the course of our studies this weekend, and we hope as we progress into the next stages.....