

Revelation 2 (Conrad Bowman) (1-27-08)

Alright. You should have a paper I want to start with this morning, called Babylonian Religion. And this is material that I've covered before. Phil was talking just a few minutes ago. He said he's been going back over, like we all do, I guess. Going back over the material we've covered in our class since we started in Genesis and moved forward and come through, and here we are in The Revelation to John. And I kind of looped back continually as we go through this material to make sure that we see it within it's context, and in it's setting. And each week as we go through, there's a connection all the way back to the Garden and Adam and Eve. All this stuff is just – there's a matrix that's there. And I don't know how difficult it is to see, but I'm constantly reviewing that matrix of how the truth that began to be unfolded in the Garden is in our day still being laid out in front of us, just like a newspaper. And in John, we see the whole thing kind of recapped and pushed forward a little bit. Now this is the paper I'm talking about. There're two of them. Two handouts, and this is one of them, and, it's, I think, on the table back there – on the corner of the table – if anybody else needs one. Popoy will be happy to get it for us while he's up and here and awake, and everything.

Jackie Parks. Is that the Babylonian one?

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. What you want is – what Jackie wants is this one. Jackie, the machine mis-fed this morning and so – Ok. We just ended up with barely enough copies with that one. It duplicates the material we went into on Pergamos, and I'm going into that same thing with this paper. Now originally this was by Harry Ironside, and I took it and adapted it for the class in terms of some of the things that we've studied and discovered. And I want to go through this paper first, because it's so pertinent to the lesson we've gone through with Pergamos and then into Thyatira. And look at what Harry Ironside pulled out of this thing. In Genesis 10, we go back to the beginning of history with Scripture, and we learn that the founder of Babel, or Babylon, was Nimrod. And you remember that. And Nimrod's achievements are what we look at in Genesis chapter 10. He was, he was the chief apostate, or the one who acted in defiance of God's command throughout the whole Age of the Patriarchs. And the Age of the Patriarchs would be Abraham's period – Abraham being the chief Patriarch. Because it was through Abraham – now Abraham was a type of the believer of today. So you don't have to look very far until you find you in the Old Testament. And that's when you look at Abraham and everything he did, you see your own life just displayed in bright colors. God came to Abraham and told

Abraham I want you to leave Ur and I want you to leave your family and go to a place that I've appointed you to go to. It's your land. It's your place. That's the same thing He says about us in Christ. I want you to leave the world you live in and enter a new world, as a new creation on the ground of peace – and it's Christ who is our peace. That's the whole New Testament message, and Abraham is a depiction of that. You see that. Now if you just have the story of Abraham, you wouldn't know all that connection. The reason we know this when we look at Abraham's life is we're reading Abraham through the lens of Paul. Paul gives it to us. Now we can look at those Old Testament characters and their lives and their very beings just come, just well up in front of us in bright colors. And we see that with understanding. That's the missing element in just a whole lot of teaching and preaching today. They don't tell you why we can look at those Old Testament characters and see ourselves, they just go there and say, these are examples. Well, they are, but they're examples when you look at them through the lens of Paul. You leave Paul out, and you'll find yourself taking on the burden of the Law, which we don't need to do. So, Nimrod, as it says here, was the Arch-Apostate of the Age of the Patriarchs. He was described as a mighty hunter before the Lord, and the Hebrew text and the Greek text says, that he was a mighty hunter in defiance of the Lord. Now what was the commandment that he defied? To shed man's blood, by man your own blood will be shed. That was the commandment. You can hunt animals, you can have anything that grows for food, but you can't shed man's blood. Nimrod made a practice of it. He was the first great hunter, and he hunted man in defiance of God. That's why he had the whole of God's opposition aimed at him. He was a mighty hunter in defiance of the Lord. Since man was forbidden to shed the blood of men, the implication of his defiance was that he was a hunter of the souls of men. Because the soul of man was the animal life-blood of man. Ok. That's the reason why blood was forbidden, because blood was connected to life, and the life of man is the soul of man. We share that with all animals. Ok. They do not have a spirit life, but they do have a soul life. And the blood is the symbol and the operating element of that in the physical being of men or animals. He was the hunter of the souls of men. The rabbis supported that in their writing. Nimrod avoided the altars where men worshipped or any place where God showed His presence. Following, following, you remember, following Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden, they taught their children – Shem, Ham, and Japhet – to offer those animal blood sacrifices on an earthen altar outside the Gate of Eden. You remember that from our study in Genesis. And Nimrod avoided those things and sought rather to hunt the worshippers in defiance of God who was worshipped. Going out from the presence of the Lord, which is what is said of Nimrod, he self-righteously, piously, sought to gather a multitude to himself

because he addressed the multitude when he says, let us go and build a city and a tower. Now you remember Abraham was marked, when he took God's command, and God said, I want you to go to a place that I'm going to show you. That made a wanderer of him. He had to leave his city, he had to leave his family behind, and leave his countrymen behind in Ur, which was Chaldean, and he was going to go to the place where God had showed him or appointed him, and that was Canaan. He was to go down to Canaan and possess it. Well, where he came from, cities were built with walls around them. They were fortified for protection. Walled cities, as opposed to tents, afforded human protection from marauding bands of people who out there might rob or steal or assault you or what-have-you. So man learned to depend on walled cities to fortify themselves and hide behind and produce their own protection, rather than wandering across the countryside in tents where you're vulnerable and had to depend on God. So you see the choice that was made as to whether you lived in the tent and wandered, or whether you lived in a walled city. That's the primary failing of Lot. You remember when Abraham and Lot finally got to the plains and they looked out there at those three cities, which included Sodom. One of them was Acad, and the third one was Sodom. And Abraham said to Lot, I'll give you first choice. And Lot chose the plain, the lush plain with the three cities. And then he moved inside the city. And he said to himself and his family, we're going in there and we're going to just, we're going to evangelize this place. We're going to move into the city and we're going to be good examples of God's people right here in front of them. Well, he didn't change anybody's mind about anything. Ok. They were – now think about that, as you consider your vote – in what you hope will happen with your vote. Ok. We're in one of the most fortified places on earth – the United States. The strongest military, the most might. We have our resources are poured into protection. In fact, the underlying thing that we are led to expect from our government is protection. That's what is the number one thing. Then after that we have this whole list of stuff that we want. We're asking for everything from diapers and baby's milk to the cars we drive and the homes we live in. But the underlying thing we expect is protection. Well, Abraham had that same thought in mind when he looked at a walled city. It was there for protection. The Great Wall of China, which is much on TV right now, is another example of the same thing. They attempted to protect the whole nation with a wall. And that takes us right back to this right here. Our protection is always from God. Walled or fortified cities were a departure from the nomadic lifestyle of men as they spread across the earth in answer to God's command. And it signified their attempt to provide for their own security, instead of depending on God for protection from other men.

Now, we come to the tower. I don't know what you were told about the Tower of Babel, or what you were led to expect from that story. We learn the story quite early, that the Tower in Babel was a very significant place. Associated with that, it was a tower by which people might climb up to heights sufficient to escape another possible flood, because the Flood was history by then. Others may have been taught that this was to be a tower that rose to a great height, and it was recognized as a temple. Because there were some who did not walk in obedience to the Word of God who had – and it was God who had delivered Noah and his family. And on the media today, Nimrod called their city and tower, Babel, the Gate of God. And it was purported to be a way to rise to heights sufficient to command the authority of God. That was the intention of the Tower – was to occupy a place that only God could occupy. And you did that by building a tower tall enough that only God was on your level. That was it. By then the thought comes in, not that you're going to rise to the heights of God, but that you're going to rise to a height that God might not be able to reach. They had reduced God in their concepts to humanistic proportions, and you could actually out-build God – was the thought that was there. That persisted, and everything that goes with it, until it diminished God in the eyes of men. Now if you watch the Comedy channel very much, you can see that on a broad base, that's happened today. I mean that's happened today. There're some things on there that when I hear them, I start listening for thunder and looking for lightening. It's – I'm amazed that God hasn't judged that more. Then I look around at society in general and realize that it's simply a reflection of what we see around us – of our own selves, and it's just been put on public display. So Nimrod-son of-Cush, you see in that third paragraph – Nimrod-bar-Cush. Nimroud-bar-Cush actually, as he's called on the monuments that have been discovered since this was written in the twenties ('20s), 1920s. The son of Cush inherited the judgment that was pronounced on the sons of Ham because of Canaan. And you remember the story after the Flood, Canaan went to his dad and he said, you ought to see what grandpa's doing. And Cush went in and saw his father uncovered in his tent and engaging in some immoral acts. So Ham went in – his two brothers went in and covered him up. Ham was so indiscreet that he called attention to it to his other brothers. And that was serious enough at the time that there was a judgment pronounced against Canaan, not against Ham, but against Canaan, and the Canaanites, and Cush; and the whole animosity that came out of the three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, grew out of that single act. His name, Ham's name – I'm on page 2 – spelled out upon Egyptian monuments, is Khem. Kind of roll that out of the back of your throat. It clears your throat at the same time. But it's pronounced – it's "K-H-E-M" – is the way it shows up on the monuments, and it's Khem. This agrees with the literal sound of the Hebrew word that's rendered

"Ham" in our Bibles. It means "swarthy," or "darkened," is the word it means. It's like a dark Mediterranean complexion, or more literally it's the "sunburned one." The name is indicative of the state of the man's soul. What's a sunburned person? It's a bit of a stretch, but this is one who is darkened by exposure to the source of light from the heavens. One whose soul is darkened by the source of light that comes from the heavens. The sun which is light giving also has the power to burn from overexposure. Now what that says is this: How much do you love the life that you live? More basically, how much do you love life itself? We cling to it. We expect our doctors to perform miracles pulling us back from the threat of dying and keeping our life going. In one sense, if you think about it, we make too much of life itself. Ok. The end of life here is the gateway to life there. If you don't have a proper perspective on your heavenly existence, you can't appreciate how loose the hold ought to be on life here. Because that's the thing that keeps you from stepping into God's perfection for you. Ok. Now, what that does is change your perspective from one of living your life to one of, what is it I need to do before I get out of here? What has God assigned to me? What's the purpose for which I'm being here? And that's a theme that underlies everything from the Garden to eternity to come. What are you doing with the life He's given you? Ok. What purpose does it have? And it does have a purpose. It does. That's personal and individual. Ok. It's designed for you. And that's what we need to be discovering as soon as we can, as early as we can, and working within the confines of that for whatever time we have left while we're here, before we step into absolute perfection under God. Any questions or comments on that?

Lady. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Absolutely. That's right. If we don't have clearly in mind our relationship to God for – to whom we are accountable as the source of our eternal life, then we can't even ask the questions. It's impossible. So we study to find out about God, and to learn about His character, and His provision for us. And then we can address the question of, what is it that I should be occupying myself with here in order to make my going a thing of rejoicing and joy. And it de-mystifies the passing altogether. Death then we say, "Oh death, where's your victory? Where's your sting?" It's not. It's lost in Christ. You know. And the closer we get to that point, the more aware of it that we become. But not with despair, but rather with joy, with rejoicing, and with higher expectations. Alright.

Now, the sunburned one – you noticed that the sunburned one, the one who is characterized by sin across history, got that way by being exposed to the light

that God had provided to the world. Ok. Now what did Paul say about the Law? If it wasn't for the Law, I wouldn't have even known sin. But the Law which defined sinfulness for me, and expressed God's perfection in terms of expectation, is representative of the light that man walks under. When we see God's expectation of us, and how high that bar is that He's raised for us, we begin to realize how desperately we need Him in our life to hold us up to meet those expectations. And then having failed to meet them, the Law also prescribes a remedy for that failure. And this is the whole perspective of the Christian on the Law. When God defined sin, and then writes that description out for us in those 616 laws, we see sin fully exposed to the world. If it wasn't for the life that He gives us, we would not know how deeply in the hole we've sunk. So there it is. You know. There it is. He gives us a light, we look at ourselves, and we see how dark we've become. That's the picture that the sunburned one – and that's in Ham, in Cush, and Nimrod – that declension. We see how far they've sunk. Ok. So the example is there. Anytime we want to see God's standard, you have but to look at the heavens and look at the light. Be careful. Because if you look too long, what's the natural result? You're blinded. You can't see anything. Alright. No man has seen God at any time. The Son, He has clearly revealed Him. That's what the New Testament says about the God we serve. You see. We can't stand in our moral state to see God as He is in His perfection. So God provided a complete image of Himself. All that we could stand in the Son that He made to be humanity. And sin, in order that we could see it. Questions?

Alright. We know something about this today because we speak of people today who've become, in our own terms, hardened of heart to the Gospel. Perhaps too they have been darkened by the light and are often the leaders in apostasy. So we should look at that with understanding. If your eyes are good – this is from Matthew – your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is the darkness? Or deep is the darkness? Now that comes from Matthew. We touched on Genesis. We touched on the Age of the Patriarchs. Now we see the same message being given again in Matthew, and we're reading about it in John. Now if you ever propose to be a teacher, you need to learn that pattern. The lesson that's exposed in Genesis is going to be re-taught through the pages between Genesis and Matthew. It'll be re-taught in there. That's what the prophets and the books of history are all about. Then when you get to the Gospel, you're going to see it in its presentation form, because that's what Christ was doing. He'll take that same principle and put it in presentation form so that those people could get ready to occupy the Kingdom on earth. I'm talking about the Millennium Kingdom. Then you come to Paul's epistles, and in Paul's

epistles you see it through the eyes of the ascended Christ in His post-crucifixion, post-resurrection being. And then from there you see the setting of that Gospel explained in John's Revelation. Questions?

See those touch stones? The truth starts in Genesis, is reinforced through the Patriarchal Ages in the books of history dealing just with Israel. Then it's reinforced and put in presentation form by Christ Himself in the Gospels. And then following the Gospels, you have Paul's epistles that give it to us through the sieve of grace. All is forgiven. No claim is made. The humanity has access to God. That's in Paul. And then you see a recap of it in reminder form in Revelation. That's gorgeous. Because John is writing The Revelation from a Jewish man's perspective, but he's writing it in 100 A.D. He's writing it after Paul, after Peter, after the Ascension. So he has all that history of the New Testament available to him, and then he writes The Revelation. Ok. So it's rich, rich, rich. Any questions on that? That's the best short outline I could ever give you as a teacher. The absolute best. If you want to approach Scripture in any format, whether you do it in your own personal witness or your evangelizing missionary efforts, or just in your own study; you touch those four places and you see the message clearly laid out and it reinforces and helps you to find out that message.

Ok. We speak of people today – I'm on the second paragraph of page 2 – who've become as we say, heart-hardened to the Gospel, perhaps they too have been darkened by a light, and are often the leaders in apostasy and then the verse from Matthew is there. There are many in the world today who have listened with tears in their eyes to the story of the matchless grace of God, as revealed in the cross of Christ, but are now unmoved even though that story can be told by them with loving tenderness. Now you pay attention to that. There are many that you talk to today who've listened with tears in their eyes to the stories of the grace of God as revealed in the cross of Christ, but are unmoved by it in their own choices. That's a soul hardened, light burned hardness. If you wonder why you can't reach people who have at one time, you know, claimed to be Christians. And now their heart is as hard as that lectern [Conrad knocks on the lectern], and you can't have a conversation with them, because they just turn you away. And it's irrational to those of us who love the Lord for what He's done for us. It's completely irrational, but that hard heartedness is there, and a principle that has flowed out of that for years is right at the end of that paragraph. They've become so hardened in their sin, and their conscious's are so seared that they no longer feel the Spirit's breath. You don't want to trifle with light from heaven, because, with knowledge comes responsibility. And that's something you'll

hear often in this class. With knowledge comes responsibility. You can't run from it. The caution always ought to go out. If you give somebody the Gospel, make sure they know what you're putting in their hands, because God holds them accountable for that Gospel. Ham was darkened by the light. We know his failure and we know his sin. But note carefully – that next to last paragraph – that when Noah had recovered himself and knew what his son had done unto him, he pronounced by the Spirit of Prophecy a curse upon Canaan, not on Ham. Why did he do that? God had already pronounced a blessing upon all three sons of Noah – Shem, Ham, and Japheth. So that when Noah passed over his unworthy son, Ham, he utters a curse upon Canaan, his grandson. Was he a chip off the old block? Yep. He was an acorn that didn't fall far from the tree. Ham had a son named Cush, the black one, and he became the father of Nimrod, the apostate leader of his generation. So there are connections and prices to be paid. Ancient lore from the Middle East now comes to our assistance. It tells us that the wife of Nimrod-bar-Cush was the infamous Semiramis, the first. There've been others, but she was the first one. She's reputed to be the founder of the Babylonian mystery, and the first high priestess of idolatry. Thus, Babylon became the primary source of idolatry, and the mother of every heathen in pagan system in the world. I don't know why we should be so surprised that today some of the most misguided leaders in religion and purporting to be Christianity today seem to be women who have picked up the mantle of leadership and have proposed themselves as leaders of religion. There's Mary Baker Eddy, I mean you can go down the list – there's Katherine Kuhlman – they have a huge following. There're following after the same pattern of Nimrod. Even the Catholic Church, with the Pope as the head, reveres and venerates Mary. As they say, if you want to get to the heart of God, go to His mother. Now that might seem strange to you, but that established the principle that man is following closely today. He loves to revere the feminine. He just delights in it. And will accept it. And it's hard for us to understand that because we have the image of a heavenly Father so firmly fixed in our mind, that we owe everything to. And I'm not denigrating the position of women. What I'm doing is pointing out the strength they have in their own personality. If you want to look at what a man will do, look at the woman he's subjected himself to. Ok. In so many ways. She can bend him, and turn him, and run him into a hay bailer – gladly singing her song, if she just sets her mind to it. Ok. We are vulnerable, vulnerable creatures. Our egos are frail, they get shattered very easily, you know. We can take rejection from a man much better than we can take rejection from a woman. That's why it's so difficult for men to work for women in a workplace. The very natures, swelled up innocent in rebellion. Well, Semiramis – you go back farther than that, I mean – Adam. She gave him that banana and he ate that sucker so

fast it didn't even slow him down. Right? All she had to say was, I tried this, it was good, here, you have it. He said, great, let me have one. In direct disobedience to God, he took that thing, and without even thinking about it, he ate that fruit. And immediately his eyes were open and he knew the sin that he committed. The light went out that surrounded him that was the reflected glory of God, and there he stood in his earthen body. He knew he was naked. That's why God asked the question? Who told you that you were naked? Well, the answer is, nobody told me. I looked and saw myself for the first time, and realized that I didn't look like you any longer. So I tried to cover myself with fig leaves. You see how amazing that story is? As new Christians, we understand that we've taken on God's character, as we lost ourselves in Him. And then the first time, as new Christians, we find ourselves committing the same old sin that we used to commit, we look and we see that the light has been turned off. We don't reflect God's character any longer. And God could ask us, just as He asked Adam, who told you that you were naked? And your answer is going to be what Adam's answer is. I saw it for myself. Because now he had the knowledge of good and evil within him. That's what he gained. Pitiful gain that it was. Because from then on, when he committed sin, he saw it for what it was. Terrible. And he saw very little righteousness in him, and all – virtually total sinfulness. And that's the condition of man.

Now, the Great Lie of Satan in verse (page 3 of the handout) three, and this is the only thing we're going to get to today but it's going to be worth it. The Great Lie of Satan. He is the master counterfeiter – and I'm on page 3. He builds on the promise of the woman's seed who was to come. In Genesis 3:15, the Redeemer was promised to Adam and Eve. Semiramis said she bore a son after the death of Nimrod. So she declared that that son was miraculously conceived, and that her son was the Son of God. And the god that he was the son of was Nimrod. And she presented him to the people, and he was hailed as the promised deliverer. And she took on the title, Queen of Heaven. I want you to mark that out, because Queen of Heaven is referenced by the prophets. Ezekiel especially. That son's name was Tammuz. Or the Turkish called him, Dumuzi. But it's Tammuz whose worship Ezekiel protested against in the days of the captivity. So that's further down the road. This established the mystery of the mother and the child – a form of idolatry that's older than any other known to man, and which persists right until today. And there are statues of the mother and child that are found in ancient, ancient, ancient archeological sites, long before Michelangelo ever got his hands on it, and carved one out of marble. So you can go into the Middle East and these statues were commonplace of the mother holding the child. And that's a depiction of Semiramis and Tammuz. This established the mystery of the

mother – child in a form of idolatry that's older than any other known to man persists today. The rights of this worship were secret and only known to the initiated who were initiated into the priesthood, and they were taught to know the mysteries. One of the reasons why the Catholic Church for so many years did not encourage Bible reading, or trying to understand it and read it on your own, was because they were protecting the priesthood who were taught the mysteries of the church. And they protected them from disclosure by not encouraging this. Ok. This is what – that's one of the things that Luther rebelled against in the Reformation. Was the fact that Bible was restricted and discouraged to any but the priesthood, and that protected the priesthood's special place of knowledge. You see how intertwined that is? Ok. You see it just fits all woven up in there, isn't it? Adam fell because he now knew the difference between good and evil. Ok. Semiramis comes along and has a son, establishes a religion, and only they know the mysteries. But they'll tell you for a price. Does that sound familiar to you? Huh? You turn on the TV and you can find out of 50 channels, you can find 30 of them – somebody standing up there declaring, "thus saith the Lord." And claiming to have special knowledge of what Scripture says and means that they will reveal to you. You're going to have to listen, which means you're going to have to support it, because we've got to stay on the air. And that turns into a system. But the system is old. It's as old as Semiramis.

Now, this is Satan's own effort to delude. Understand, that all of history comes down to this pinpoint of existence that brings you here and puts you in that chair this morning. All of God's history is pointed to what's going on today. Today is where it's going. The more we know about this [Conrad holding up the Bible], the better we understand today. Ok. If you don't understand this, you can beat your brains out trying to make sense of the political structure and inter-workings of the world's leaders today. Ok. If you know this, it's not a mystery. It's no mystery. This is the Great Lie of Satan. Ok. This worship business. It was Satan's effort to delude mankind with an imitation so close to the truth of God that they would not know the true seed of the woman when he came in the fullness of time. Justin Martyr writes a great deal about this, and it's worth your perusal if you want to pick up a couple of books of something in the library and study Justin Martyr. From Babylon this mystery religion spread to surrounding nations. You can see we've studied the years as they've passed, and the world was populated by the descendants of Noah, including the sons of Ham through Cush. And there're some good tracings on that in map or poster form. The symbols were the same wherever the religion spread and everywhere the cult of mother and child became the alternative that was most often adopted by men.

Their worship was celebrated with practices that appealed to men's desire to gain advantage over other men. And that usually is the underlying condition.

The image of the Queen of Heaven with a babe in her arms was seen everywhere in the older world. It soon became the mystery religion of Phoenicia, and was carried by the Phoenician merchant fleet to the ends of the earth, because the Phoenicians were merchants. And the Phoenicians were the Chaldeans. Ashtoreth and Tammuz – that's the mother and child of Phoenicia. In Egypt, they were known as Isis and Horus. In Greece, they were known as Aphrodite and Eros. And in Italy, they were known as Venus and Cupid. So those are not just cute little objects to make statues of. They had very, very, very deep significance. It bore many other names in more distant places, and a thousand years later, Babylonianism had become the religion of the world. Which had rejected divine revelation and prophesied the coming of Kinsman Redeemer. They claimed the Kinsman Redeemer had already come. Linked with the central mystery – I'm on the bottom of 3 [the handout] – were countless lesser mysteries the hidden meaning of which was known only to the initiates. The out-forms were practiced by all the people. Among these were the doctrines of purification after death. Or cleansing and release from purgatory. Salvation by countless sacraments – hmm. We at the end of the time. Where I'm going with this – you read the rest of this before next week, because this is the religion that the synagogue of Satan was practicing in Pergamos when John wrote his revelation. And it had been there for years. Ok. A direct connection from Adam and Eve in the Garden to Pergamos and the letters to the seven churches. Any questions?

Evelyn Wamble. I'm glad you touched on Pergamos. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. Finally got there. [Laughter]. That was a bare connection.

Phil Richman. He's giving you background here.

Conrad Bowman. Thank you for your patience.

Phil Richman. Thank you. Bill, would you close us in prayer?

Bill Morgan. "Heavenly Father, what a privilege is ours to be able to come to this place and hear Your Word taught so thoroughly and accurately, and we pray that You would help us apply what we have heard today to our own souls, our own lives, that we might prove to be better representatives; and that the Lord Jesus Christ be seen in us and glorified. In His name we pray. Amen."