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G. The Ziggurat

It is surely the ziggurat which has been the focal point of scholarly attention because of its ties with the Tower of Babel. Unfortunately, there is hardly anything left of the ancient monument due to the common practice of reusing mud bricks; excavators have found only the quadrilateral base on a few courses of bricks. The numerous restorations proposed have relied until recently on the scanty archaeological remains, the description by Herodotus, and on a scribe's tablet dating from the Seleucid era which gave a rather obscure description of the monument. These facts led to the restoration of a very tall and straight ziggurat which had little in common with the monuments of this kind discovered at other Mesopotamian sites. However, very recently, J. Vicari has studied the Seleucid tablet and has furnished the basis for a very reasonable restoration of that famous edifice.

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Trans. PAUL SAGER

H. Babylon in the NT

Babylon is used in the NT in a variety of senses: literal, symbolic, or both. All of these categories have been subject to debate.

1. **Literal Sense.** Babylon used as the name of the ancient Mesopotamian capital and empire which took Judah captive into exile in the 6th century B.C.E. or as a pivotal epoch in Israel's history is found in the Matthean genealogy (1:11, 12, 17) and in Stephen's defense (Acts 7:43). In the latter, the MT and LXX of Amos 5:27 is changed in light of historical events from "beyond Damascus" to "beyond Babylon" as the specific place of Israel's captivity.

2. **Literal or Symbolic Sense.** In 1 Pet 5:13 greetings are sent from "she who is at Babylon." Babylon has been taken literally as the Mesopotamian Babylon or the Egyptian Babylon. Mesopotamian Babylon was still inhabited in the 1st century C.E. and Peter could have visited it (Erasmus and Calvin). However, it is difficult to believe that Mark and Silvanus, who accompanied Peter, would also go to Mesopotamian Babylon (5:12-13). There is no church tradition linking Peter, Mark, or Silvanus with Mesopotamian Babylon. Neither is there evidence of a church there in the 1st century (but cf. Acts 2:9). In fact the Jews were driven out of Babylon in the reign of Claudius (41-54 C.E.; *Ant* 18 §371-79), a situation which would have limited the possibilities of missions in the city. Dio Cassius (68.30) records that Trajan found Babylon mostly deserted when he visited in 115 C.E. The fact that the Eastern church claims Peter for itself is of little import because it is a recent tradition based upon 1 Pet 5:13.

Egyptian Babylon was a settlement in Egypt near Old Cairo, possibly founded by a portion of Nebuchadnezzar's army and still inhabited in the 1st century (*Ant* 2 §315; Strabo 17.1.30; Diod. Sic. 1.56.3). Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 7.17) states that the Alexandrine heretic Basilides claimed to hold Peter's apostolic tradition through Peter's interpreter Glaukias. A strong tradition links Mark with the Alexandrian church and Mark as the companion of Peter. However, Babylon was little more than a Roman military outpost, providing little reason for Peter to have gone there, and there is no evidence that he ever went to Egypt.

Babylon has also been interpreted as a symbol of the church using feminine imagery. It has been suggested that Babylon is a cryptogram used for reasons of security against the Romans, but the content which exhorts obedience to the state (2:13-17) and adherence to moral virtues makes such measures unnecessary. It has also been suggested that Babylon is a symbol of Christians' earthly exile as opposed to their heavenly home, and recalls the language of exile and dispersion in 1:1, 17; 2:11. However, since all Christians are exiles, there is no reason for Peter to refer to writing from exile. The very particular greetings which conclude 1 Peter (5:12-14) indicate that a particular church is in mind.

The general consensus of the church from earliest times is that Babylon in 1 Peter is a symbol for Rome. Two early cursives add *en Romē* as an explanatory addition to 5:13. Early church tradition claims that Babylon in 5:13 is a metaphor for Rome and 1 Peter was written from Rome (Clem. Al. *ap. Eus. Hist. Eccl.* 2.15.2). Strong tradition links

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Peter to Rome, a tradition virtually unchallenged until the Reformation when efforts were made by Erasmus and Calvin to dissociate Peter from the Roman Papacy. Mark is also strongly linked to Rome (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24) and to Peter as his companion and interpreter in Rome (Papias *ap. Eus. Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.5–7; Iren. *Haer.* 3.1; Clem. Al. *ap. Eus. Hist. Eccl.* 2.15.2; 6.14.5–7). A comparison of the contents of 1 Peter and 1 Clement strongly suggests a common background in Roman Christianity.

3. Symbolic Sense. In the book of Revelation, all references to Babylon are symbolic of either a place or a place and an idea (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). This is indicated in 17:5 (cf. v 7) where the name Babylon is said to be a *mysterion*, a name to be understood figuratively (cf. names in 2:14, 20; 11:8). As a place, Babylon has been understood as a symbol for Jerusalem, an interpretation based on two questionable assumptions: (1) the prophecies of Jesus in the Gospels have Jerusalem as a central focus. Although this is true, these same prophecies have a worldwide impact and those of Revelation need not be restricted to Jerusalem; (2) Jerusalem persecuted the prophets and Christians as here in Revelation 17–18. However, Rome is better known in the late 1st century for this characteristic.

As a place and an idea, Babylon is symbolic of the power, influence, idolatry, and wickedness of Rome. This was the position of the early church (Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 3:13; *Adv. Jud.* 9; Jerome; Augustine) and has remained the majority opinion. Rome is identified with Babylon in early Judaism, for like Babylon it overthrew Jerusalem and destroyed the temple (2 Bar. 11:1–2; 67:7; 2 Esdr 3:1–2, 28; Sib. Or. 5.143, 155–61, 434, 440; Str-B 3.816). The similarities between Babylon and Rome as capitals of great empires led naturally to their pairing in symbolism. Like Babylon, Rome ruled the kings of the earth (14:8; 17:1–2, 15, 18), was a center of world trade (14:8; 18:2–3; 11–19, 23), reveled in luxury (18:7, 11–17, 22–23), was a persecutor of God's covenant people (17:6; 18:24; 19:2), and was destined to fall (14:8; 18:2, 10, 21). The portrayal of Babylon in Jer 51:6–10 as a cup in God's hand making all the nations drunk seems to have had considerable influence upon the symbolism of Rome as Babylon in Revelation. Rome is clearly indicated by particular details such as its location on the seven mountains (17:9; cf. vv 3, 7).

As a symbol, Babylon embraces more than the empire, city, and culture of Rome. It is the sphere of idolatry and worldliness under the temporary control of Satan, a worldliness in opposition to the people and work of God, a worldliness epitomized first by Babylon and then by Rome. Babylon as the mother of harlots and abominations in opposition to God (17:5) is the antithesis of the Church as the Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem, and the Kingdom of God.

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BABYLONIA (HISTORY AND CULTURE). See MESOPOTAMIA, HISTORY OF.

BABYLONIAN JUDAISM. See JUDAISM (BABYLONIAN).

BACA, VALLEY OF (PLACE) [Heb *'emeq habbāka'*]. The "valley of Baca" (Ps 84:1—Eng 84:6) is either a historical place name or a symbolical expression for "deep sorrow." The first part of Ps 84:6 seems to mean that by "passing through the experience of deep sorrow, righteous ones can make it the source of life." The Septuagint translated the phrase into Gk as "the valley of weeping." The word *'emeq* "valley" has the root meaning of "deep," so the expression may mean "deep sorrow."

However, some have considered it as the "valley of the balsam tree" from the same word in plural form found in 2 Sam 5:24. This is based on the assumption that *bāka'* may be a "gum-exuding [weeping] tree" (Morton IDB 1: 338). Another possibility is that the word *bēka'im* (pl. of *bāka'*) may mean "weeping rock-walls" in the valley of Rephaim on whose tops David and his troops were waiting for the coming of the Philistine army passing through the valley below (2 Sam 5:24). It seems safe to seek the meaning of *bāka'* in relation to the dripping water, since we often find this word in the names related to rivers and wadis, such as Wadi el-Baka in the Sinaitic district and Baca on a wadi in the central Galilee area, W of Meroth. It is also possible to understand *Bēka'im* as the place of "weepings" of the Philistine army for their defeat by David. After all these considerations, the expression the "valley of *bāka'*" can best be taken as a symbolical expression "weeping" or "deep sorrow" which fits well in the context of Ps 84:6.

YOSHITAKA KOBAYASHI

BACCHIDES (PERSON) [Gk *Bakchidēs*]. An important supporter of Demetrius I (162–50 B.C.E.). He was ranked as a "friend of the king" and may have held this position already under Antiochus IV (Joseph *Ant.* 12. 393). In the first stages of Demetrius I's reign he was entrusted with the governorship of the Trans-Euphrates province (1 Macc 7:8).

The exact position of Bacchides and the extent of his province are debated among scholars. Some think that he was governor of Coele-Syria, called "beyond the river." Others suggest that all the Trans-Euphrates region was assigned to him temporarily at the time Demetrius was occupied with war on his E frontiers.

The name Bacchides is first mentioned in 2 Macc 8:30 as one of the officers outside Judea, with whom Judas fought. But it remains uncertain whether it is the same person with whom we are concerned here.

Our Bacchides is mentioned for sure first in 1 Macc 7:8