

Religious Babylon

The Apostate Church During the Great Tribulation

Rev. 17

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We are at the point in our studies of Revelation where we have looked at the end of the Great Tribulation period. In Chapter 16 we read of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ, this actual coming of Christ and the battle of the ages is described in the last part of Revelation 19. The section we are now in discusses one great topic, the final judgment of God upon the ungodly world – federation of nations in the end-time under the leadership of the last great world dictator, the beast out of the sea of which we read in Rev. 13, and the judgment of the false Antichristian church of the Antichrist, under the leadership of the beast out of the land, also described in Rev. 19.

We will be dealing with the religious (one world church) in this chapter and the commercial (one world government) in chapter 18. The two chapters are revealing the Antichristian system known as Babylonianism and its final doom. This system begins in Gen. 11 and ends at the end of the Tribulation.

Gen. 11:1-11 Ref. In this passage of Scripture we have the record of the building of the city of Babel.

17:1 "Great Whore on a Scarlet Beast": This world religious system is described as a woman. She is the direct opposite of what we find in the Bible about the true church which is described as a chaste virgin. The clearest way to describe this Whore on many waters is to know this is speaking of the great masses of people to whom this system will have total control over.

V 2. "Kings": This is showing us that there will be an unholy alliance between this false church system and governments.

"Drunk": False truths and feel good works will dominate this group of people intoxicated under the big lie.

VI. "Into the wilderness": It appears this is describing both Babylon and Rome because there is a wilderness connection to each of them. In Isa. 47-48 and Jer. 50-51 we are shown that Babylon was to become a wilderness. Outside of Rome there is a wilderness called Campagna. The chaotic condition of the world at this time brought about by the religious confusion of the Babylonian religious system is being shown us.

"A woman upon a scarlet colored beast": First let us note that we are being shown a woman therefore describing religious Babylon verses commercial Babylon. The beast is Antichrist ruling over the restored Roman Empire. This woman will be used by Antichrist until the middle of the week when he will attack and destroy her and also at the same time break the "covenant" with Israel and stand in the restored temple declaring himself as god.

"Seven and Ten": We will look at this deeper in verse 9.

VII "in purple and scarlet": The Roman Empire used purple as the color worn by those in authority. Note how the Roman soldiers placed a purple robe on Jesus in mockery. The Roman Catholic Church adopted scarlet as their color worn by their hierarchy.

"Gold": This is indicating the approach of this Babylonian Religious system from the beginning in placing outward display in front of inward truth. Jesus spoke of this with the Pharisees when He said they were whited sepulchers full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

"Precious stones and pearls": Once again, pertaining to having the focus on outward props which have no significance for the soul. Mat. 23:25 Ref.

"Golden cup full of abominations": Abomination is defined as anything that is wicked, vile, disgusting, and morally wrong. The standard being what God has declared to be so. This is describing this Babylonian religious system as it has developed into this last world-wide counterfeit gospel. Jer. 51:7 Ref.

V5. "Name written Mystery": Paul calls the Church a "Mystery" because it was not known to the Old Testament Patriarchs and Prophets. (Eph. 3:1-21; 5:23-32) These verses show us that Christ was to have a bride was first revealed to Paul. The Mystery that Antichrist is to have a "bride" was first revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos. Mystery Babylon is a religious and apostate system comprised of all the counterfeit religions that attempt to mimic truth but in fact is full of lies. 2 plus 2 equals 4. One right answer and many wrong ones. "Did God say?"

Babel was built by Nimrod. Gen. 10:8-10. This is the center of this great apostasy. The Babylonian Cult has its origin here. The system claims to possess the highest wisdom and to reveal the divinest secrets. Anyone becoming a part of this system had to confess to the Priest. This activity allowed the Priest to have a hold on the individual. This system has moved thru the span of mankind giving these "leaders" to decide what is right or what is wrong.

During the time of the writing of Revelation this "mystical brotherhood" had moved from Babylon to Medo-Persian and now in Pergamos in Asia Minor. The headship was then given to Rome who set up a pontiff to be the head of the priesthood. In A.D. 378 the head of the Babylonian order became the ruler of the Roman Church. Rome and Babylon into one system. Damasus was made the supreme pontiff and soon afterwards in A.D. 381 the worship of the Virgin Mary was set up. Following is the rosary, celibacy, order of Monks, order of Nuns, baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation (bread and fruit of vine becomes literal blood and body of Christ), holy water, and multiple rites and ceremonies that are mumbled in a language that tends to mystery and to confusion which is the meaning of the word Babylon.

This "mystery" was not present in John's day because the Papal Church had not yet developed; though the "mystery of iniquity" was already at work. (II Thess. 2:7). It, in our present, time is no longer a mystery for the identity is easy.

The colors of the Papacy are scarlet and purple. Five of the articles worn when he is installed are scarlet. A vest covered with pearls, and a mitre, adorned with gold and precious stones is also to be worn. The picture speaks for itself.

V6. "Drunken with the blood": Saints and martyrs are given here. This will include those of the time of Antichrist and the nineteen centuries of the Christian Church. The early Christians and those who faced the "inquisition" in Papal lands experienced the wrath of the Papal church.

V7-18. "Seven heads": This corresponds to the seven hills of Rome.

"10 horns": This is prophesied in Dan. 2:41. It was the description of ten kings represented by the toes of the image Daniel interpreted to Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 7-8.

The fact that the Woman sits on a "Scarlet Colored Beast" reveals the fact that at that time (first half) the Beast (Antichrist) will support the Woman in her ecclesiastical pretensions, or in other words, the Woman, as a "State Church", will control and rule the State, and her long dream of world-wide Supremacy will at last be realized, for John tells us that "the waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues". That means after the "True Church" (The Bride of Christ) is taken out of the world the "False" or "Papal Church" (the bride of Antichrist) will remain, and the professing body of Christians (having the form of godliness without the power) left behind, will largely enter the Papal Church, and it will become the Universal Church. But this will continue for a short time for the "Ten Kings" of the "Federated Kingdom", finding their power curtailed by the "Papal System" will "hate the Whore" and strip her of her gorgeous apparel, confiscate her wealth (eat her flesh) and burn her churches and cathedrals with fire. This will occur at the time the worship of the Beast is set up, for Antichrist in his jealous hate will not permit any worship that does not center on him.

J. Dwight Pentecost: "The Beast, who was dominated by the harlot system (Rev. 17:3), rises against her and destroys her and her system completely. Without doubt the harlot system was in competition with the religious worship of the Beast, promoted by the False Prophet, and her destruction is brought about so that the Beast may be the sole object of false worship as he claims to be God."

The rebuilt Babylon (Isa. and Jer.) is shown being destroyed in Rev. 17 and 18. The religious Babylon will be destroyed by the wild beast while the commercial Babylon will be destroyed by the return of Christ.

"And there are seven kings": Govett: "1, Julius Caesar—assassinated; 2, Tiberius—poisoned; 3, Caligula—poisoned; 4, Claudius—poisoned; 5, Nero—committed suicide, 6, (The one is) refers to Domitian who was living in John's day, who was also assassinated. 7, (The other is not yet come) refers to the Antichrist.

"Beast that was": This refers to the past history of the Roman Empire under the emperors.

"And is not": This refers to the end of the Imperial Rome with its global empire, which came to an end sometime between the third and fifth centuries.

"Himself an eight": This identifies the Antichrist with the return of the Imperial Empire. He is the "little horn" of Daniel 7. He is not one of the ten horns, but he is separate from them. He is an eight head in this seven, yet he is one of the seven since he restores the last form of government to Rome.

"God hath": God is in control as He has always been. It is His longsuffering toward His creation that we have not been thrown into judgment. Throughout the Bible we are taught that He sets up kings and princes and takes them down. The end of this known world's activities is well known to Him thus we have this written revealing of them. In Jeremiah we saw God using a nation (Babylon) to deal with adulterous Israel. He knows the end from the beginning.

"That great city": The name of Antichrist's "bride" is Babylon the Great. Some may ask why give to a "bride" the name of a city? The answer is that it is not unusual in the Scriptures. When the same angel that showed John in this chapter the Mystery Babylon the Great came to him in chapter 21:9-10 and said—*"Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride—'The Lamb's Wife'"*, he showed John, instead of a woman, that great City, the "Holy Jerusalem" descending out of Heaven from God. Here we see a city is called a bride because of its inhabitants, and not the city itself, are the bride. It is a system of false religion.