

Revelation 17

Babylon

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VERSE 1

And there came one of the seven Angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me. Come hither; and I will show unto you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters.

After the rapture, Babylon as a literal city, is mentioned in the fulfilment of “things which must be”. We looked in detail at this Revelation Chapter 4, immediately after Jesus’ word to the seven of churches. Here are a number of scriptures about Literal Babylon that helps us in defining the two Babylons, Literal Babylon and Mystery Babylon.

Literal Babylon

Babylon must again be a great commercial centre Rev; 18, 3-10.

Babylon must again be a great religious centre Rev; 18, 2-10

Her sorceries will deceive all nations after the rapture Rev; 18, 23. 2,Th.2; 10.

Orders for the death of the saints will go out from Babylon Rev; 18, 24.

Babylon will be destroyed at the end of this age Rev; 16:18; 18: 1-24.

Time of the destruction of Babylon

In the day of Israel’s final restoration Rev; 16: 17-20, (the first organized rebellion against God began at Babylon and it will end at Babylon Gen, 11: 1-9).

In the day of the Lord Rev:16:19, 18: 1-24, Isa: 13: 6-13,

At the end of the tribulation Rev: 16: 17-21, 18: 1-24.

When Israel is given rule over her oppressors Isa. 14: 1-4.

How Babylon is to be destroyed.

By an earthquake Rev: 16: 17-21.

Suddenly in one hour Rev: 18:9-19,

By fire from heaven Rev; 18; 8-18 Isa; 13; 19.

With violence 18: 21.

By the earth swallowing her Rev; 18: 21: Jer: 51:62-64;

There are many more so follow them as you find them in your Bible reference and margin scriptures.

In Genesis Chapter 11 verse 1. We read about the whole earth speaking in one language, and a very large number of people travelled from the east and found a large plain in the land of Shinar and so they dwelt there. This group of people were led by Nimrod a descendent of Noah and a son of Cush. He was a mighty hunter and he instituted the first organised rebellion against the Lord and those who followed Him. Nimrod also organised the building of a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Archaeological finds show this plan was very well researched, well thought out and organised. It also shows man’s arrogance even thinking they could reach God using their own ways and by their own devises. The only way any of us can come to God is through the shedding of blood, and Nimrod led the people away from

God by his own selfish, greedy desires that were full of pride. Gen. 9:1. Says the Lord told Noah and his sons to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" It was God's intention for mankind to be scattered over the earth but Nimrod and his followers were intent on doing the opposite. From verse 3 they said "let us make brick" "let us build a city" "let us make a name for ourselves lest we be scattered over the face of the earth"

This very large round tower was built in the plain of Shinar. The base on which the tower was built was about 1000 feet square and walls were built around the inside making many smaller shrines dedicated to various gods. Visitors could come in and choose which god they wished to worship that day! Four gates were found, one on each side and in the centre the tower was built and according to the archaeological documents found in 1876's, this became a vast area of beautiful buildings. In the centre the Tower was built 300 feet high in spite of the many shrines found for all sorts of gods none was found for the worship of the One True God. Many other false religions and false doctrines became prominent. Babylon has always stood for every false religion, every false doctrine, and all things anti God from its inception. That is why the book of Revelation refers to all things related to Babylon as "the great whore, the mother of harlots, and the abomination of the earth". An ancient Babylonian tablet was found which reads "*The building of this illustrious tower offended the gods and in a night they threw down what they had built. They scattered them abroad and made strange their speech. Their progress was impeded and they wept hot tears for Babylon*" So far were the Babylonians from almighty God they thought their many gods guilty of destroying the tower and not God. Right from the time when the city was opened its doors to Satan (who obligingly marched in). Every type of sin and every form of opposition to God began to emanate from this place. In New Testament times Babylon was still a city and there was now with a Christian Church (1 Peter 5:13) there. At the time of King Nebuchadnezzar the promise was given that although the Empire of Babylon would fade as an Empire, the imperialism that Babylon had created would continue through many centuries in three more Empires (Persia, then Greece and then Rome) right up to the time when Jesus would return.

According to Isaiah's prophecies Babylon would be the first city to be judged. There is no question about it Babylon was, is, and will be the great enemy of God right up to Christ's return. Babylon is Satan's city in opposition to God and Jerusalem which is Messiah's city from which Jesus will rule the world.

Isaiah 13: is about the doom of Babylon and verse 19 to 22 relates to the judgment on Babylon described in Revelation 16:2 and 18:1-2. Re built Babylon will be the Antichrist's headquarters before he enters Israel to dominate the Temple in the last 3 ½ years of this age. But it is from Babylon that he will, under the power of Satan, cause all the nations to prosper and the kings of these kingdoms will enjoy riches, pleasures and freedom of will that, when unchecked leads to sin and debauchery, it always has. The Antichrist will make sure that Babylon remains a Godless society.

The extent of Babylon's destruction.

The Bible tells us that after the destruction of Babylon, Arabs and shepherds will never dwell there again Isa: 13; 20.

More than that, Babylon is to become one of the openings to hell, Rev; 19:3. Isa 66; 23-34. Men will be astonished at such destruction. Jer; 50:13.

This last reference in Jeremiah shows the extent this beautiful city but so full of sin and devastation that it will be reduced to nothing by the hand of God.

Jeremiah 50 verse 13

Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: everyone who goes by Babylon shall be astonished and hiss at her plagues.

God likens Babylon to Sodom and Gomorrah both cities are a den of iniquity and because of rebellion to God both are destroyed by God never to be inhabited again. Dust and dirt and wild vegetation and wild desert animals will cover the once beautiful houses, palaces, buildings and courtyards of Babylon. Babylon will become the habitation of all types of spirits led by the three unclean spirits like frogs that come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. (Rev. 16: 13) This ungodly trio now begin to secure the help of the kings of other nations who were to march across the now dried up river Euphrates to advance on Israel.

Revelation 17 verse 1 Mystery Babylon

And there came one of the seven Angels which had the seven vials and talked with me saying come hither; I will show unto you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters.

The Great Whore.

The great whore is symbolic language that refers to religious fornication and idolatry. Isa. 23: 17.

And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years that the Lord will visit Tyre and she shall turn to her hire and shall commit fornication with the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

As soon as Israel returned home from exile they committed fornication and idolatry with the kingdoms of earth. Remember Fornication and Idolatry amounts to anything put in the place of the worship of God. Prostitution is a common and graphic scriptural metaphor for unfaithfulness to God. Jeremiah 3: 6-9. Ezekiel 20: 30.

Isa. 57: 3-7.

But draw near hither you sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the Whore. Against whom do you sport yourselves? Against whom do you make a wide mouth and draw out the tongue? Are you not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?

Here God addresses the seed, the offspring, the children of the adulterer, the fornicator and the sorcerer and asks whom do they sport with; He asks do they understand that they have received falsehood and the wide mouth, which is a statement expressing scorn and derision from their parents who lived a lie and did not teach their children to worship and follow after God but led them to be children of transgression and seeds of falsehood in opposition against God.

Mystery Babylon is not a political power because she is not classed as one *with* the “kings of the earth” instead Satan uses evil spirits in Babylon to influence the kings to “become drunk

with the wine of her fornication” and take their minds away from all things Godly. This is done by her influence through harlotry and her influence over the nations is through religion.

Mystery Babylon is a religious power.

At the time of the end there will be a One World Government, A One World Religion and a One World Economic System.

When we look at the building of the Tower of Babel we read that God intervened because they all spoke the same language and understood each other. Bringing all their skills and knowledge together in a short time they became strong in their opposition to God. It was necessary to break up this unity and strength which was not God centred and make them confused. Today most of the world can use, speak and understand English. When there is a summit meeting with the world’s top men and women get together there is very little use for an interpreter, most speak English or all have a good understanding of it. I believe the world is in a similar position to that of the building of the Tower of Babel and somewhere soon will be a great ‘confusion’ needed. With so many men from so many backgrounds and upbringings, ideas and ambitions and not all to the good all wanting their own way, God will have to step in before man gets far too clever for himself and He will step in by His Second Coming.

One World Government

There is no doubt there is a shift in the world today. Nothing is safe, nothing is steady, and nothing can be relied on any more. I know great arguments in our parliament, under the name of debate have often been reported in our newspapers over the years. But since the advent of Television in the UK , House of Commons and the House of Lords we are now able to see the looks of distain and in some cases viciousness and almost hate which characterises these debates which gets worse year after year. The Bible says *out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*, and the Bible lists some of those evil thoughts as; *Murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemies*. This shows the depravity of the unconverted human heart Matthew 15: 19. I saw a ‘debate’ just before I went to bed one night and all six participants, people with powerful positions, some with political ambition was shouting at one another to the point they were red in the face! The presenter was helpless and unable to control them and two people in the audience shouted very loudly indeed for them all to ‘shut up and speak one at a time’! I switched off and went to bed but I felt sick in my heart that these people want to rule the UK but can’t rule their own tempers.

The world is ready for a leader of men one who commands respect, who will have the ear and trust of the people. The Bible teaches that man will be the Antichrist whose power and authority comes from Satan. What applies to the UK also applies to the rest of the world; most of the world’s leadership are at a loss to lead.

One will rise “from the sea” (the mass of people) who will rule and bring the nations together under the mark of the beast and will make all men to bow to Satan under a One World Government.

The One World Economic System

The condition of our banks worldwide is in an appalling state. These great institutions are so large that fines put upon them of billions of pounds are paid up as if they were an

underpayment at a parking meter. While there is a bank on every street corner, and in the end of days distance will not matter to the Antichrist so all banks everywhere all over the world will become a One World Bank controlling a one world financial system probably owned by only a very small group of billionaires. These very rich men will be backed and controlled by the harlot as she has the only solution to the economic disaster. We are told secret plans are set for this to happen now! This means your money may not be your own any more, control will be the order of the day, and there will be no more freedom. Financial restraint, shortage of money will lead to anarchy, neighbour against neighbour, infighting, and lead us into the Tribulation Period.

So back to verse 1. ...*I will show you the judgement of the great whore who sits upon many waters.*

The great Whore refers to all the religions of the world that have ever been. All these religions have been devised by men and backed by Satan. Some have grown into massive worldwide systems with gold encrusted churches and dozens of officials splendidly dressed but there is no sign of Jesus the Son of God being praised, honoured or recognised at all. The biggest and most powerful will bring all the other religions together to make a One World Religion.

The whore is not a political power; she is an unclean spirit-filled being depicted as a woman representing all the organised religions of the world claiming to have a form of religion and a way of salvation but excludes the cross of Christ and His shed blood.

The woman is the great prostitute or the worlds Christ-less blasphemous religion and she sits on and controls the red beast who is the Antichrist, between the two they make up a formidable team opposing the plan of God on every side.

Verse 3 tells us this scarlet coloured beast is full of names of blasphemy, there is no doubt this beast is full of contempt for our Lord. He carries on him and in him so much hatred and ill intent he blindly believes he will bring Jesus down and have the victory over God, His Son and all Christians everywhere.

He also has seven heads and ten horns we are told. This is added to remind the student that Israel has been persecuted by Empires in their past. The last Empire is yet future, the ten horns represent ten nations that will rise out of the old Roman Empire territory to persecute Israel and again that is yet in the future. The ten nations make up the seventh head and also represent the 10 toes of king Nebuchadnezzar's image spoken of in Daniel. Soon the '*Stone not made by hands*' will appear and crush these kingdoms to usher in the return of Christ.

Verse 4

And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

The woman represents the end time One World Religious system decked out in gold and precious stones indicating the wealth of this system and she holds out an inviting golden cup in her hand to all the nations. But the cup is full of uncleanness, spiritual fornication and abominations which she uses to dupe the political powers of the nations.

Verse 5

And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth.

The word Mystery Babylon separates spiritual Babylon from literal Babylon and Mystery Babylon was great in the eyes of the world and her allurements.

Verse 6

And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration.

John saw the woman drunken with the blood of persecuted Israel during the Old Testament up to the time of Christ. These Empires with their false religions backed by Satan and his fallen angels brought wars and troubles upon God's people with the aim to wipe them from the face of the earth. Israel's enemies right up to the present day still have that objective and they are quite open about it.

"...and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" remembers the millions in the Church Age who have given their lives for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This began with the Roman Empire and the persecution of Christians at the time of Christ, probably beginning with Stephen, then followed the Catholic Church under the name of Religion not Christianity.

Verse 7

And the angel said unto me, wherefore did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her which has the seven heads and ten horns.

There are two beings here one is political and the other is religious. The angel tells John he will show him God's plan for these two. The beast or fallen angel who helped the leaders of the Empires of the past and joined forces to destroy Israel *is not* (was not active during the time of John) *and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition*. This powerful fallen angel has been confined to the pit for about 2000 years and there he remains until he is released to assist the Antichrist. ...*And go into perdition and they who dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world.*

All the unsaved people on the earth during the Great Tribulation will be amazed and shocked at what they see the Antichrist do but he will realise his time is getting shorter and shorter and his efforts will get more intense but his time is running out fast.

Verse 8

When they see the beast who was, and is not and yet is.

Here is a tongue twister indeed! Talking about the fallen angel who was active in helping the leaders of past Empires like Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and so on who was the enemy of Israel, he says *who was*. Then he says *and is not* was not functioning in John's day when this was written *and yet is* in God's time he will be released from the bottomless pit to help the Antichrist.

...*whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world*. We have talked a lot about this since we started studying Revelation. And it is interesting to note this subject is in all the books of the Bible so it is obvious it is important to Father God. I just wonder what thoughts will go through the minds of some of those watching these end-time events unfold. Yet we read that still men will refuse the gospel. Just before these events God sent four angels to go through the earth to warn people for the very last time and we read that even then they refused God. As you read these studies what are your thoughts about your

Salvation and your future? Are you sure that you will spend eternity in heaven with Jesus, if you're not sure you can be.

Verse 9

The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

The seven mountains symbolise the seven kingdoms and their kings. Mountains often symbolise kingdoms in the Bible (Psalms 30: 7. Isaiah 2: 2. Jeremiah 51: 25). These seven kingdoms are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome all controlled by false religion or demon spirits. The name of this woman is the Great Whore. False paganised religion influenced all these Empires and the woman was seated on them all. The Bible tells us *the other is yet to come*. This refers to the ten nation confederation symbolised by the ten horns which had not yet come in John's day and not shown itself yet in our day either, so that ten nation confederation is yet to come believed to be under the authority of the Antichrist.

Verse 10

And there are seven kings, five have fallen and one is not yet come and when he comes he must continue a short space.

These seven kings refer to the seven heads referring to the leaders of these Empires that have fallen. Five of these Empires were fallen in John's time, the one 'who is' refers to the Roman Empire which was existing in John's day. The one which has *not yet come* refers to the ten nation confederation symbolised by the ten horns and by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. Daniel 2. The Antichrist will control these ten kingdoms who will persecute Israel during the last 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation. It is during the persecution of Israel that the Stone which was cut out of the mountain and not made with human hands will come and smash the toes of the image, made of iron and clay and defeat the ten nation army (Dan:2;45).

Verse 13

These have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast

This ten nation confederation making up the seventh head will all be in agreement and join with the Antichrist and his plans because they see his power, backed by Satan so they give their powers and strength to the beast bringing the Antichrist into his full power.

Verse 14

These shall make war with the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them for He is Lord of lords and King of kings and they who are with Him are called the chosen and faithful

And they shall make war with the Lamb! How futile, what a big mistake to declare war against Jesus and all the hosts of heaven. Satan has hated Israel for many reasons; the one reason is that Israel is God's chosen people. Another reason is that Jesus went to the cross to redeem mankind back to God and make a way for man to have eternal life through Jesus' death. At the command of God Christ will come back in all His splendour with every saint who has ever lived both Jew and Gentle and fill the sky with a song of praise and a shout of victory and the Lamb shall overcome the Antichrist and his followers and because of what Jesus did at the cross, to Him will be given the right to administer judgment and justice.

Verse 15

And he said unto me, the waters which you saw where the whore sits are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. 16. and the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

This explains the fact that the ten nations under the Antichrist will create and carry out a campaign of elimination of all religions held by the whore, who they all hate, to be replaced by the worship of the beast introducing The One World Religion.

Verse 17

For God has put in their hearts to fulfil His will and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled.

The ten kingdoms will get together to bring about the will of the Antichrist but God will use the plans of these ten leaders to bring about His will and purpose. The power and authority the Antichrist has will only be his for a very short time

Verse 18

And the woman which you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.

As we said earlier all this began in Genesis and it will end here in Revelation. These nations will be totally destroyed at the battle of Armageddon, Daniel 2: 34 – 35.

This is the Stone we also spoke about earlier, verse 34 says the Stone was cut without hands and smote the image (of Nebuchadnezzar) upon his feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. This was done in the absence of all or any human endeavour. All and every manmade religion will be done away with and Jesus will set up His kingdom of righteousness with Israel being the predominate nation in the world.

The woman John saw is the great city referring to rebuilt Babylon which will be one of the greatest commercial centres of the world The Antichrist destroys all religions leaving the world to worship him and him only. But God has other ideas!

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Be Blessed

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