



Empowering People to Change the World

Mystery Babylon Part I

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Introduction:

- Prayer: Lord, we ask that you would grant us the blessing that you promise from this book of the Bible. Father, as difficult as these passages can be, give us some form of wisdom.
- Revelation 17 is one of the most difficult passages in the entire book.
- What we see is that the Anti-Christ in last days will unite the world under one political, economic and religious system.
- This is not in chronological order from chapter 16, but rather a look at the world system under the Anti-Christ.
- **What is “Babylon?”**
 1. It seems to represent an economic power.
 2. It is a spiritual system that has been around since the beginning of time.
 3. It seems to represent a political power.
 4. But it also will be an actual kingdom and city. The eastern capital of the Anti-Christ in the last days of the earth.
- Chapter 17 is about the “spiritual Babylon”

Revelation 17:1

¹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,

- “Come,” this is only the second time in the book that John is told to “come”.

- The other time is in Revelation 4:1 when he is called to heaven.
- The last time this phrase is used in Revelation 21:9 when he sees the holy city of Jerusalem.
- So this is very significant, on the same par as seeing heaven and Jerusalem.
- This is the theme of the chapter: the great judgment of the harlot, the religious system of Satan.
- This “harlot” is seated upon many waters? Now look at vs 15
- **Revelation 17:15**
Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.
- This judgment will come when this system and city are ruling over and influencing the kingdoms of the world.
- Babylon is having a world-wide influence. All of the nations and tongues are worshipping in Babylon.

Revelation 17:2

²with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

- **Revelation 14:8**
And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” NKJV
- Lenin was right: “Religion is the opiate of the people.”

- People are incurably “religious” because God created us all to be worshippers. All people will worship something, if not the true God it will be false religions and false gods.
- Throughout the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, we read of other religious systems that oppose the true and living God, and are called “adulterous,” “intoxicating” and “drunk” luring the people of God into fornication.

Revelation 17:3-5

³ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵ And on her forehead a name was written:

***MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.***

- John is taken out into some wilderness in order to get a view of the harlot and Babylon.
- I want you to notice that the woman is separate from the beast she is riding.
- For example, if you have ever seen someone riding a horse, on the horizon and from a distance, they look to be one unit, not separate.
- The Anti-Christ and the Babylonian System, the Dragon and Satan will all look the same. They will represent the system and all that it embodies.

- He saw “a scarlet covered beast full of names of blasphemy having 7 heads and 10 horns.”
- **Turn to chapter 12:3...13:1**
 - Chapter 12:3 is a fiery red Dragon having 7 heads and 10 horns.
 - Chapter 13:1 is the beast with 7 heads and 10 horns.
 - The Anti-Christ personally embodies the Babylonian system.
 - It is difficult to differentiate these.
- The woman is “holding a golden cup of abominations...” she is involved in the wealth and wealthy systems of this world. She is an idolater and spiritual fornicator.
- The woman is Babylon, see vs.18.
- The Scarlet Beast is the Anti-Christ.

Revelation 17:5

⁵And on her forehead a name was written:

***MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
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- There are 6 chapters in the Bible that talk about Babylon directly: Isaiah 13-14; Jeremiah 51-52; and Revelation 17-18.
- The entire Bible is a kind of Tale of Two Cities: Babylon and Jerusalem.

- Babylon is mentioned 287 times in the Bible (Jerusalem 821 times.)
- The influence of these two cities are very significant to the great spiritual battle for the earth.
- Babylon represents all of the idolatry and rebellion of the earth.

Babylon represents a literal place but also a world-wide system:

- Like “Wall Street” which represents both a place and a system. The Terrorist bombed the World Trade Center because it represented a system that they hated.
- **Look at Genesis 10**
 - Table of nations after the flood.
 - We are of the same ancestors, same blood.
 - The world was repopulated by Noah and his sons.
 - Dr. William F. Albright, not a believer, but world class archeologist and anthropologist has said, “that the table of nations in Genesis 10 is unparalleled and unsurpassed in its accuracy.”
 - This gives us the spread of the nations of the world.
 - In verse 8, Nimrod means “the one who rebels; the rebellious one.”
 - Verse 9 talks of a hunter “against” God which some have said it means he was a “hunter of men.”
 - Verse 10 mentions Babel...ancient Babylon...in the land of Shinar, Mesopotamia, Iraq today!

- In Chapter 11 we see Nimrod building the Tower of Babel in the “land of Shinar.”
- They built a tower to the heavens, meaning that the hosts of heaven were worshipped: astrology. They set up a political and religious center and drawing the world to it.

Babel meaning the “gate of god” in ancient Sumerian religions. But it also means confusion.

- It is in ancient Babylon that we have the first ancient worship and ancient system of rebellion against Yahweh, El Shaddai.
- Now, Babylon is the Fount-head of a religious system of rebellion against God on the earth.
- Tradition has it that Nimrod was the leader who built the Tower of Babel, and it is said to have taken a wife, Simeramas, and she took upon herself a godlike image, and called, “the queen of heaven.”
- Supposedly she had a son by miraculous birth whom she named Tammuz, identified with the sun god.
- Tammuz was supposedly gored and after 3 days (some say 40 days) he was resurrected...and the sign of the cross became the symbol of Tammuz because of the Tau, the first letter of his name...So we have the mother/child cult developing.
- Because Satan knows that he is cursed in Genesis 3 and that this curse would involved a virgin birth that would destroy him. Here we have a mother/child cult to imitate God’s way.
- This is the oldest counterfeit religion. You see Satan knows if you can’t beat’em join’em by counterfeiting’em.

- Babylon is the mother of the religious harlots of the earth! It all started here!
- 180 shrines to the god Ishtar.
- The mother/child cult of the Madonna and child with the halos over their heads goes back to the Sumerian religions of Babylon.
- There are mother/child cults in Egyptian religions. In Rome it was Venus and Cupid, all coming from the fountainhead of Babylon.
- As we look at the religious system of radical Islam today, we are only seeing the ancient religions of Babylon in a new form.

Revelation 17:6

⁶ I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

- This Babylonian religious system has murdered Christians and persecuted the church.

Revelation 17:8

⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- I think this is both the Anti-Christ and his government about to be destroyed.
- I have wondered if the “ascension from the pit” possibly means a kind of resurrection of some great historical figure?

Revelation 11:7

7 Now when they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. NKJV

- But it could also be of the demons and Satan coming up out of the pit of hell.

Revelation 17:9

9 “Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

- By the way, any Christian in John’s day would have thought this was Rome, because Rome was known as the city on the 7 hills or mountains.
- But John does not leave it there.

Revelation 17:10

10 There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

- We know ancient Babylon was the mother of these kingdoms. Born out that religious system were the religious systems of Egypt, Syria, Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon, Mesopotamia, Greece and of Rome.
 - 5 had fallen in history at this time: Egypt, Syria, Babylon, Mesopotamia and Greece.
 - One is Rome in John’s day.
 - The one to come will be the kingdom of the Anti-Christ.
- This is the flow of ancient history and now a reviving of a Babylonian Empire.

Revelation 17:11-12

11 The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

- I believe this will be 10 regions of the world.
- I do not think it will be 10 nations in Europe, but 10 regions of the world.
- The Anti-Christ and his kingdom will become that 8th kingdom and force the world to worship him. Read Daniel 7 about it.

Revelation 17:14

14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

- The Dragon is always at war with us! Here is wisdom: Christ is the overcomer working within you. Christ overcomes, the Lamb overcomes. You are not the overcomer, He is.
- Lord of lords, Lord over all overlords and under-lords. He is Lord over your job and your boss.
- He can be Lord over the lord of any addiction. Sin and addiction is a cruel Taskmaster. Jesus can be Lord of that lord! Surrender it all to Him. Repent, turn away and He becomes Lord of lords in your life.
- Jesus is the King over all kings; the Beast, over the Dragon, over the False Prophet.

- He is the King over all kings. Jesus rules over Donald Trump. Jesus rules over the Democratic Party, the Republican Party.
- We triumph with Christ by reminding ourselves daily that we have three key things that are true of us:

1. We are called.

Most of us are never going to be called to full-time vocational Christian work, that is not what it means. It means you are called to be His beloved. You are called to belovedness—Christ says you are beloved, you are loved.

2. We are chosen.

Out of billions on the earth today, out of hundreds of thousands in Colorado Springs, you've been chosen by God, adopted into His family. He chose you because He wants you in His family.

3. We are faithful.

He is saying that He sees us as faithful. Remarkable to read in Hebrews 11 the accolades given to the men and women of faith and yet if you go back and study their lives, they messed up often. Divine editing.

Revelation 17:15-18

¹⁵ Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on^[d] the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸ And the woman

whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."

- Interesting picture: this woman is a spiritual influence that will influence all of the world with a demonic presence that is counter to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- This woman represents all that opposes God: MTV, Dungeons and Dragons, computer games, pornography, greed, pride, materialism and anything that steals our heart away from the true and living God. This is the Woman riding the scarlet beast.
- Do you hear what I am saying? The "woman, the harlot" is upon us today! And has been on the earth since the Garden.

Let's look at a very interesting passage in Zechariah:

Zechariah 5:8-11

⁸ then he said, "This is Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. ⁹ Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. ¹⁰ So I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?" ¹¹ And he said to me, "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base."

- A stork was considered unclean, note a "woman" (like our passage.)
- Land of Shinar once again is current Iraq, ancient Babylon.
- For more than 1,000 years Babylon was one of the world's most celebrated cities, where King Nebuchadnezzar II built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The city 50 miles south of Baghdad declined and fell into ruin after it was conquered by the Persians under Cyrus the Great around 538 B.C.

- Saddam Hussein prided himself for what he called “the rebuilding of Babylon” for over 25 years.
- Untold billions of dollars went into this from Saddam Hussein.
- After Desert Storm, we have been pouring millions of American dollars into rebuilding it through PRT’s or Provincial Reconstruction Teams.
- More on that next week.