

# “Mystery Babylon”

(Rev. 17)

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## I. Introduction

### A. The World Council of Churches

#### 1. History

- a. The World Council of Churches (WCC) was formally constituted on Aug. 23, 1948 at Amsterdam by an assembly representing 147 religious denominations from 44 countries. Most of them were liberal Protestants.
- b. The WCC now has a constituent membership of almost one-half the total Protestant and Roman Catholic peoples of the world.
- c. Their motto adopted in Amsterdam when they formed in 1948 is **“ONE WORLD—ONE CHURCH”**

#### 2. It will finally be realized during the coming tribulation

- a. When all the religions of the world join hands
- b. And they will hate Jesus

#### 3. True church will be gone

- a. Raptured!
- b. Tribulation Saints will be underground

#### 4. Appears in Rev. 17 and is given quite a name

*This title was written on her head:*

*Mystery Babylon the Great the Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the Earth. (Rev. 17:5)*

#### 5. Not a name I would choose for a church!

### B. Today, the coming destruction of all false religion

1. Let me take you back to its very beginning
2. ...and let me show you its demise

### **C. Ch. 17 & 18 are near the end of the Tribulation**

1. Give some details regarding the seven bowls of chapter 16
2. Two great systems are described
  - a. *“Mystery Babylon”* in chapter 17
  - b. *“Babylon the Great”* in chapter 18
3. Followed by the Battle of Armageddon in chapter 19
  - a. And the glorious return of Jesus
4. Tapes and CD’s are available

## **III. Text**

### **A. The Rise of the one-world church (v.1-6)**

*One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.”*

1. An angel takes John aside
  - a. Describes what will happen to two major systems
  - b. Begins by telling of the coming one-world church

### **B. The one-world church of the end times (v. 1-6)**

#### *1. All the world’s religions will unite during the Tribulation*

*“the great prostitute who sits on many waters” .....v.1*

- a. The “great prostitute” is a false system of religion
  1. The true church is called the “pure bride”
  2. The false church is called the “great prostitute”
- b. *“many waters”* refers to the people of the world

1. A world-wide system

**2. *She will sell her very soul to the Antichrist***

a. There will be no more separation of church and state....v.2

***(2) With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.”***

b. Kings of earth have slept with her

c. Will use the false church to control the people

1. Like getting a girl drunk

2. This will be a “religious stupor”

**3. *Initially she will have great power over the Antichrist***

***(3) Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.***

a. The prostitute riding on a scarlet beast

b. The prostitute is a world-wide religious system

c. The scarlet beast is the Antichrist

d. Sound familiar? (Rev. 13:1) *“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having **seven heads** and **ten horns**, and on his horns **ten crowns**, and on his heads a blasphemous name.”*

e. Same thing in Daniel 7:7 *“After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had **ten horns**.*

f. The Antichrist

1. Stands inseparable from the system he leads

2. Will explain heads and horns later

g. The Apostate Church is actually leading the Antichrist at first

**4. *She will compromise in order to acquire great wealth***

***(4) The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.***

- a. Arrayed in purple and scarlet
  - 1. Adorned with gold and precious stones
  - 2. The golden cup
- b. ***“filled with abominable things”***
  - 1. The church without a conscience

***6. She will shamelessly murder true believers.....v.5-6***

***(5) This title was written on her head: Mystery Babylon the Great the Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the Earth. (6) I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.***

***7. She will be a direct descendant from the original false religion***

***(5) This title was written on her head: Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the Earth.***

- a. Her origin
- b. Has been in existence for thousands of years
- c. And it all goes back to “Babylon”
  - 1. Have to understand this to understand the rest

## **C. Babylon and the birth of false religion**

***1. It all started with Nimrod***

- a. After the Flood
  - 1. Noah had a son named Ham
  - 2. Ham had a son named Cush
  - 3. Cush had a son named Nimrod

b. Gen. 10:8-10

(v.8)—“Cush was the father of Nimrod, who grew to be a mighty warrior on the earth. (9) He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord.” (10) The first centers of his kingdom were *Babylon*, Erech, Akkad and Calneh, in Shinar.

**2. It was centered in “Babylon**

a. Where Tigris & Euphrates Rivers drain into the Persian Gulf

1. Iraq and Kuwait

b. Other mentions of Babylon

1. The Garden of Eden

2. Hammurabi Code

3. Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar

4. The Birthplace of Abraham

5. The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11)

**3. The Tower of Babel was an early attempt at a one-world religion**

a. Nimrod settled in Shinar (Babel)

b. The Tower (Ziggurat)

c. The confusion

d. (v. 9)—“That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”

**4. All false religions originated from one source**

a. Nimrod married Semiramis

1. The High Priestess of Idolatry

b. The legend of Tammuz

1. Semiramis gave birth to a son, Tammuz

2. She claimed to have been impregnated by a sunbeam
3. Presented him as the world's messiah
4. When grown—he was killed by a wild boar
  - a. She and women cried for 40 days
  - b. Refused to eat
  - c. After 40 days they claim he was raised from the dead

***5. It gave rise to the cult worship of the mother and child***

- a. Satan's fiendish imitation
- b. The cult spread throughout the world

<u>Country</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Child</u>
Babylon	Semiramis	Tammuz
Assyria	Ishtar	Tammuz
Phoenicia	Astarte	Baal
Egypt	Isis	Osiris
Greece	Aphrodite	Eros
Rome	Venus	Cupid

***6. The headquarters moved to Rome***

- a. To await the true church
  1. To add legend to the truth
- b. The mother of all false religions
  1. Hinduism
  2. Buddhism
  3. Zoroastrianism
  4. Shintoism
  5. Islam
  6. Confucianism

***7. Some of the trappings of Babylonian Mystery Religions remain***

- a. The Mitre (Crown)
  - 1. Fish head (Mitre)
  - 2. For Dagon the fish god
    - a. The keeper of the bridge between man and Satan
- b. Title of High Priest
  - 1. “Pontifex Maximus”
  - 2. Later used by Caesars and then Popes
  - 3. The changes in 313 AD (Constantine)
    - a. Christianity blended to fit paganism
- c. The “Queen of Heaven”
  - 1. Semiramis – not Mary
  - 2. (Jeremiah 44:15-19)
    - a. Burning incense to the “Queen of Heaven”
- d. Forty days of Lent
  - 1. For Tammuz
  - 2. Prior to the Ishtar (Assyrian name for Semiramis)
  - 3. Ishtar = Easter
- e. The symbol of Ishtar
  - 1. An “Ishtar Egg”
  - 2. Exchanged painted eggs
  - 3. Easter eggs
- f. The sign of the cross...the Tau
  - 1. The Tau of Tammuz
  - 2. Crossed themselves

- g. Had virgin priests and priestesses
- h. Repetition of prayers with prayer beads
  - 1. The Rosary
- i. A place similar to Purgatory
- j. Prayers for the dead
- k. Sprinkling of Holy Water

***Sound Familiar???***

- 1. For more, read *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
- 2. Note this is more than Roman Catholicism
  - a. Existed prior to Roman Catholicism
  - b. It will be truly world-wide
    - 1. Babylon spawned all false religion
  - c. And will bring them together in the Tribulation
    - 1. She is the mother
    - 2. She will bring them back to that tower
    - 3. With one language
    - 4. For a short season anyway
  - d. Note the great assault on the believer

***(6) I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.***

- 1. John was “awe-struck”
- 2. Has occurred throughout the ages
- 3. The Inquisitions, etc.

**D. The players surrounding the one-world church (v. 7-13)**

### 1. The "Beast".....v.6-8

*When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. (7) Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns. (8) The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.*

- a. The Antichrist will die and be brought back to life
  - 1. Theories
    - a. Nero
    - b. Hitler
    - c. Kennedy
    - d. Judas
  - 2. Or a leader of that day
- b. Why everybody will be so astonished
- c. Will coincide with Satan being booted out of Heaven
  - b. Cast out of Heaven
    - 1. Will ascend from the Abyss to possess the fallen world leader
    - 2. Turns him into a world ruler and the world marvels
- c. The Beast, Satan, and the World System are used synonymously and interchangeably in places

### 2. The seven heads on seven hills....v.9

*(9) This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits.*

**\*\*\*\*\*stop\*\*\*\*\***

- a. May be referring to a specific location
- b. Many believe it is Rome
  - 1. Vatican

2. Characteristics of the harlot
3. “The Holy Roman Empire”
3. The revived Roman Empire
4. The City that sits on Seven Hills (v. 9)

2. All know Rome was built on seven hills

c. Strong arguments!

d. But it may be referring to a government based on what’s next

### **3. *The seven kings.....v.10-11***

***(10) They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while. (11) The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.***

1. Viewed from John’s perspective writing in 90 AD
2. **The Seven Kings...Seven Crowns...Seven Heads**

***“Five have fallen”***

1. **Egypt**
2. **Assyria**
3. **Babylon**
4. **Persia**
5. **Greece**

***“One is”***

6. **The Old Roman Empire**

***“The other has not yet come”***

7. **The Revived Roman Empire**

***“And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth”***

8. **The Antichrist**

### **4. *The ten kings....v.12-13***

*(12) The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. (13) They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast.”*

- a. His supporting cast
  - 1. The ten horns
  - 2. Ten-king federation
- b. Given a short time of authority
  - 1. Give power and authority to the Beast
- c. They will eventually go to war with the Lamb
  - 1. And lose!
  - 2. Why?
    - a. “King of kings” and “Lord of lords”
- d. But—before that happens
  - 1. The Beast will turn on the woman
    - a. The Antichrist will betray the one-world church
  - 2. After the middle of Tribulation
    - a. After Satan comes to earth
    - b. Satan will want to be worshipped

## **E. The destruction of the one-world church (v. 14-18)**

### ***1. The one-world church will be betrayed and destroyed by the Antichrist***

*They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is the Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers. (15) Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. (16) The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.*

- a. The 10 kings will assist the Antichrist

1. Will help him destroy the one-world church
  2. They were only using her
  3. The truth is they will hate her
- b. The Beast destroys the Woman
    1. Jealous
    2. Satan in the Beast
  - c. Won't need her anymore

***2. It will all be part of God's sovereign plan***

***(17) For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule until God's words are fulfilled.***

- a. Prepared the 10 kings
- b. His tool of destruction

***3. The one-world church will be identified with a city***

***(18) The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."***

- a. Often identified as Rome
  1. Rev. 17:9 ***"This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits."***
- b. Roman Catholicism and the blood of the saints