

**The Long War Against God:
"Mystery Babylon -- How Literally Should This Be Taken?"**

Rev. 17:3-6

3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

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:

5 And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

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.

Rev. 18:1-3

1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong [is] the Lord God who judgeth her.

Introduction:

- ***We have recently considered the “Woman” prophesied under the image of “the Great City Babylon” (Rev. 12 & 17). “Babylon ‘the Great city’” is prophesied in the Old Testament to both rise again and to fall again, that is, if we interpret scripture literally! Today we will continue our study in this great book of prophecy, the last book in our Bibles, a book that dovetails so perfectly with Daniel’s also very great book. Soon we plan to return to Daniel to work at finishing up that part of the history of the Long War against God as Prophecy has written it, so many centuries in advance of God’s perfect timing for the fulfillment of these many and detailed foretellings.***
- ***Of course any reference to Babylon, the city, takes us back necessarily to Genesis, the Book of Beginnings, and to the idolatrous city and tower built by Nimrod and his wife Semiramis. You will remember these words well as we have looked so many times now at them and are amazed every time:***

Gen. 11:4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [may reach] unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

- ***We have asked and answered this key question: What about this city of Babylon, and why is it called here by the designation, “a woman”? In Genesis 3, at the very beginning of this book, we found the original prophecy and that regarding quite a different “woman” indeed, the one who would be the progenitor of all of mankind, yes, but more profoundly (and most blessedly, for us who are saved), of the Seed of the Woman, Israel’s Messiah and our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:***
 - ***Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.***
- ***Now, therefore, satan knowing full well this prophecy (and has he for a moment forgotten it, I think not), and being the father of lies, has sought down through history to use another woman in blaspheming this First Woman and her promised Seed, even the INCARNATED SON OF GOD,***

destined from the foundation of the world to transform the history of his chosen people forever. This is the genesis of the Long War Against God and why at the end of the story, in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, satan's counterfeit "woman" would appear along with his counterfeit christ, even the Beast and his antichrist.

- ***Now, it has always been God's work to reveal his workings to those who might seek to know of him who is the creator and the redeemer and to therefore take note of what he has revealed. And he did that even before he gave to Israel the written word through his servant Moses. In fact, as we also have recently seen, God had also given a great revelation in the "heavens".***

- ***In other words, his revelation regarding "the Seed of the Woman" in the heavens was "clearly revealed"!***
 - ***As we have seen in Rev. 12, there is a revelation in the starry heavens concerning the redemptive plan of God. It has been there since Adam and the earliest prophets:***

Rev. 12:1-6

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and [to] his throne.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days.

- ***So the revelation of the redemptive plan of God for sinners (even in the heavenly testimony) is referred to there in the Book of Revelation just before the revelation of satan’s counterfeit “woman” in chapter 13. That the one “woman” is in direct conflict against the other woman is clearly revealed even in 12:6 “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days.”***
- ***In our recent fellowships we considered Rev. 12 in reference to Ps. 19 since that specific Psalm provides a context to those words so well.***
 - ***Remember how in verses 1-6 of Ps. 19 we see how in the heavens themselves God had revealed his redemptive plan for fallen mankind, but the rest of the verses are about the Written Word of God (the Law)?***
- ***We finished up last time by again looking at this heavenly revelation starting with the first sign, Virgo or the Virgin and finishing up with the last sign, that of Leo or the Lion. As we saw last time, and as Ps. 19:1-6 so clearly reveals, this heavenly revelation in the sky was the very first revelation concerning the Redemptive Plan of God for Sinners. It was followed by the written word through Moses. Both provided “speech”, “knowledge”, “language” and a “voice”. Even his “words” are mentioned there and also confirmed so clearly elsewhere in the scriptures:***

Ps. 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by [their] names.

[See also Is. 40:26, Romans 1 & 10 for further references to this revelation in the heavens.]

- ***Then, as we learned last time, this heavenly revelation began with the woman and her seed, just like it did also so much later in the written word. In the starry heavens, the sign of Virgo (the Virgin) is the first while the twelfth sign, Leo (the Lion) is last. This is perfectly parallel (and perfection is one indicator as always that this is the work of almighty God).***

- ***The First Sign is Virgo (the Virgin). This is the starting point just as it is in Genesis 3:15. Here we have the star Al Zimach. Heb. Zemach, meaning “the branch.” All the other stars there have known (even today) and cognate meanings. Not surprisingly, the written word of God given in some cases so many centuries (even in some cases several millennia later) confirms this revelation:***
 - ***Jer. 23:5, 6*** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this [is] his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
 - ***Zech 6:12*** And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name [is] The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: ***See also Is. 4:2 & Zech. 3:8 & 6:12 regarding this “branch”.***
- ***This remarkable heavenly revelation continues in the three constellations included under the sign of the Virgin, the first being COMA - The Desired One. We see here the amazing parallel with the written word as we saw for the first sign itself:***
 - ***Hag. 2:7*** And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.
- ***The Second Sign, LIBRA, continues with this revelation. It signifies the redeemer's atoning work and has three constellations also associated with it:***
 - ***The Constellation CRUX. The Cross endured.***
 - ***The Constellation LUPUS. The Victim slain.***
 - ***The Constellation CORONA. The Crown bestowed.***

We could continue through all of the twelve, but lets finish up with the last, the twelfth, Leo, because it continues the heavenly revelation all the way to this very critical section of the Long War:

- ***This Last Sign is Leo (the Lion) Messiah's consummated triumph.***
 - *The Constellation HYDRA. The old serpent destroyed.*
 - *The Constellation CRATER. The cup of wrath poured out.*
 - *The Constellation CORVUS. The birds of prey devouring.*

- ***At this point we should be no longer amazed at these parallels. Beginning in Gen. 49 with Jacob's final blessings for his sons as he was dying and ending in Revelation we see in the written word the same themes exactly as in the heavenly revelation. THIS IS GOD'S TESTIMONY, IN THE HEAVENS WRITTEN AND ON THE PAGE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE WRITTEN -- AND IT ALL AGREES WITH ITSELF PERFECTLY, OF COURSE, SINCE IT HAS THE SAME AUTHOR, ALMIGHTY GOD.***

Today we will return to the Book of Revelation and specifically the prophecies regarding the "woman" that will be the creation of satan in that future time. You will recall that we left that to consider why this image of a woman was chosen by the Arch Deceiver and I believe that questions has been answered.

Our thesis today then as we continue in Revelation 17 & 18 is that the prophecy of "Mystery Babylon" MUST Be Taken Literally! This is so critical for our understanding. There are several strong arguments that may be made concerning this:

I. The Prophecy of "Mystery Babylon" in the Book of Revelation is in Total Alignment with Both Old Testament and the Heavenly Revelation

- ***The satanic counterfeit of God's plan for the woman and her seed as revealed in Gen. 3:15 and in the heavenlies has been and will continue to be patterned on those revelations of God. Satan's false revelations and workings in accord with those revelations must correlate and match what God is doing or his "strategems" cannot be successful. His subtleties are documented well in the Bible. Just one reference will be enough for now:***
 - ***Our Lord asked a great question of of some unbelievers one day and that question was this: Will there be faith found on earth when he returns?***

Lk. 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

- ***The necessary conclusion to draw from all of this is that just as satan corrupted the message in the heavens and astrology was the result, he also corrupted the message on earth with beasts and false prophets and antichrists, with miracles and signs sometimes at the very forefront of his deceitful workings. His many prophecies regarding the coming kingdom of God on earth will therefore be counterfeited by this also foretold “new age” kingdom which is called here in Revelation 17:5 “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”***
- ***What I would now like to point out is that these prophetic details found in Revalation correspond precisely with what is written in the Old Testament. So see all of these links would take a very long time, for there are so many. But for our purposes today this list is sufficient including some verses from the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah with their corresponding verses in Rev. 17 & 18:***

<i>Jer. 51:13</i>	<i>Rev. 17:1</i>
<i>Jer. 51:7</i>	<i>Rev. 17:2, 4</i>
<i>Is. 47:5, 7-9</i>	<i>Rev. 17:18; 18:7-8</i>
<i>Jer. 51:25</i>	<i>Rev. 18:8</i>
<i>Jer. 51:45</i>	<i>Rev. 18:4</i>
<i>Jer. 50:15</i>	<i>Rev. 18:6</i>
<i>Jer. 51:63-64</i>	<i>Rev. 18:21</i>
<i>Is. 13:21</i>	<i>Rev. 18:2</i>
<i>Is. 24:8, 10</i>	<i>Rev. 18:23</i>

- ***For now, two examples from this list will suffice:***

<p>[READ] Is. 47:5, 7-9 5 Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms. ... 7 And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: [so] that thou didst not lay these [things] to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. 8 Therefore hear now this, [thou that art] given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me; I shall not sit [as] a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: 9 But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.</p>	<p>[READ] Rev. 17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.</p> <p>[READ] Rev. 18:7-8 7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong [is] the Lord God who judgeth her.</p>
<p>[READ] Jer. 51:63-64 63 And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, [that] thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: 64 And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far [are]</p>	<p>[READ] Rev 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast [it] into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.</p>

the words of Jeremiah.	
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- ***These many and clear parallels force us to conclude that the “city” Babylon (called here in chapter 17, “MYSTERY BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS”) MUST BE THE VERY CENTER OF FOCUS IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION AND THAT THEREFORE AN EARTHY CITY AGAIN NAMED “BABYLON” MUST BE BUILT in the last days. In other words, these prophecies MUST BE LITERALLY FULFILLED! No other reasonable interpretation matches the facts as scripture states them.***

This city will sum up all the workings of satan through the earlier kingdoms starting with the Assyrian and ending with the Roman in the current day. The First Beast of the Book of Revelation will bring all of these together in the Tribulation period as BABYLON “THE GREAT ONE”.

II. The Prophecy of “Mystery Babylon”: It Must Be Fulfilled Literally Due to the Many, Many Details!

- ***This conclusion is easily reached due to the great many details given here. It is even difficult to compare this with the “supposed” “partial” (or, many amillenialists would say, “complete”) fulfillment, since the Babylon of old was not destroyed by Alexander at all. In fact, he married one of the royal women himself and continued living there until the time of his death. Hardly any of those details as we have seen them revealed here became reality in Alexander’s day or in the days following. Even though the city eventually was ruined and has not continued into our present time, in nearly no ways has this corresponded with what has been revealed in the Bible in Daniel’s, Jeremiah’s, or Isaiah’s prophecies, or, here in the Book of Revelation. The “city” Babylon MUST THEREFORE BE REBUILT in the last days and these prophecies shall then BE LITERALLY FULFILLED! No other reasonable interpretation matches the facts as scripture states them.***
- ***This all so powerfully argues against any kind of “allegorical” or “spiritualizing” kind of interpretation. Non-literal interpretations***

simply cannot match up with the details the Bible reveals.

- *Additionally, the many details also make it clear that other events as they occurred historically over the course of time were also themselves not what had been prophesied.*
- *Finally, the many details repeatedly given for emphasis will be critically important for the people of God who will live in the future time when they must know what is happening that they might in total obedience “endure to the end.” This will be our final point today.*

III. The Prophecy of “Mystery Babylon”: The Saints of the Last Days MUST Know These Revelations that they Might Endure to the End

- *The Jews living in the Great Tribulation are told that they MUST NOT RECEIVE THE MARK OF THE BEAST (Rev. 14:9-11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4)*
- *This warning is so “black and white”. It is critical therefore that those saints not be enticed by the threats of their many enemies, whether earthly or satanically spiritual. They may starve to death or be martyred by refusing the Mark, but the Mark and the subtleties of the enemy’s attacks that would lead to taking the mark will require them to identify in detail the powers behind what is happening all around them. These details in the Old Testament and here in the new (including in Matthew and the other gospels) are clearly given for that purpose. If the saints of that day cannot identify those prophesied persons and events, then they will not be equipped for the testings they will necessarily endure. The details of this revelation ensure that they ARE EQUIPPED FOR THOSE CHALLENGES!*
- *And, to underscore this, remember what Daniel wrote at the end:*

Dan. 12:7-10

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which [was] upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that [it shall be] for a

time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these [things] shall be finished.

8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what [shall be] the end of these [things]?

9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words [are] closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

Dan. 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, [even] to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

- *And then, most telling, there are the words of our Lord Jesus regarding those days yet far future (though they did not know this at that time):*

Matt. 24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (see also Mk. 13:13)

IV. WHAT THEN ABOUT ROME AND THE ROMAN CHURCH?

- *As the Reformers universally believed, Rome and its “church” were thought to be surely the fulfillment of all of this. No doubt they were a most corrupt perversion and perhaps even the most corrupt that satan had produced down through the ages until then. But can we say that this system will compare with what he will produce in the second half of the Tribulation, when even “the mother of harlots and of all the abominations of the earth” (Rev. 17:5) will reign as “Queen” over all?*
- *Not to minimize it at all, but the Roman is only “one of many” perversions of the original Babylonian religious system of Nimrod and Semiramis, and though great indeed, and though “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”, it cannot be what is written of by the apostle John here. The fact is that the Roman church is not and cannot reasonably be thought to*

be “the mother” of all of these corruptions down through time as it is described so clearly in the Book of Revelation and in the Old Testament.

Conclusions / Exhortation:

- **Satan’s greatest desire was to thoroughly corrupt the “message in the stars” that God had placed their through prophets so many thousands of years before. And that message was about the Seed of the Woman. So he created an “alternative” message, and perverted the Original Zodiac replacing the names and the message to match his own strategy for victory over God and his Christ, a message that would effectively cancel the entire plan of redemption.**
- **Before the end of satan’s opposition, however, it will all be about the Counterfeit Seed of the Woman: Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots. There are many details that will need to be fulfilled at that time, but the believers of that time will know and understand the signs of the times. Amen and amen.**
- **What about us today? Do we know what God is doing today under grace. I surely hope so.**

2 Thess. 2:7-10

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 [Even him], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.