

Revelation 17 - Destruction of Babylon: Religious Branch

IV. After These Things (Rev 4:1—22:21)

(2) During the Tribulation (Rev 6:1—19:21)

(L) The Woman Rides the Beast (17:1-18)

(a) The Vision Concerning Babylon (17:1-6a)

- (i) Her introduction (17:1a)
- (ii) Her judgment (17:1b)
- (iii) Her immorality (17:2)
- (iv) Her influence (17:3)
- (v) Her appearance (17:4)
- (vi) Her title (17:5)
- (vii) Her persecution (17:6a)

(b) The Interpretation Concerning Babylon (17:6b-18)

- (i) The Interpretation Promised (17:6b-7)
- (ii) The Beast & His System (17:8-14)
 - (a) The Beast (17:8)
 - (b) The Seven Heads (17:9-11)
 - (c) The Ten Horns (17:12-14)
- (iii) Babylon (17:15-18)
 - (a) Her Influence (17:15)
 - (b) Her Destruction (17:16-17)
 - (c) Her identification (17:18)

One-eighth of the entire book of Revelation, some 50 verses (out of 404), is devoted to the subject of judgment upon Babylon (14:8-10; 16:17—19:5). Since this is such a large topic, we should understand what Babylon represents, and what it doesn't.

Scholars have put forth various theories about what Babylon represents: some believe it symbolizes the satanic world system that has corrupted history. That the events described in Revelation do not necessarily look for individual or specific fulfillments, rather the symbolism depicts spiritual lessons or principles recurring throughout history, edifying believers in every age.

Another view is that Babylon represents Jerusalem. Those who hold this view are primarily full or partial preterists, who see the events of Rev 4-22 as predicting the Jewish War of

66-70 AD and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Rev 17—19:6 are parenthetic, in that they do not advance the revelation chronologically. They give further supplementary information about matters referred to in the chronological sections.

5 Non-Chronological Parenthetical Insertions

1. 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Rev 7:1-17)
2. Announcement of no more delay; Two Witnesses (Rev 10:1—11:14)
3. Israel's flight (Rev 12); two beasts (Rev 13); six scenes of hope (Rev 14) (Rev 12:1—14:20)
4. Gathering of the nations to Armageddon (Rev 16:13-16)
- 5. Babylon's fall (Rev 17:1—19:6)**

During the 70th Week of Daniel, there will be two distinct religious systems, one in each half of the Tribulation. The religious system of the first half of the Tribulation is described in Rev 17 in terms of "ecclesiastical" Babylon. This will be a unification of all false denominations and false religions into a one-world super-religious system. This system will control the religious affairs of the world during the first half of the Tribulation. Those who do not submit to its religious authority will suffer persecution.

In the middle of the Tribulation, after the Antichrist takes over political control, he will destroy this one world religious system himself. He will then take over the Jewish Temple, seat himself in the Holy of Holies of the Jewish Temple, and declare himself to be the one true god. Thus, the religious system of the second half of the Tribulation will be the worship of the Antichrist. Those who accept him as god must signify it by taking his mark, and will worship his "image." From the middle of the Tribulation until the Campaign of Armageddon, during this period of tremendous Jewish persecution, one man (the Antichrist) will serve as both the one world political ruler and the one world religious ruler. No evangelical doubts that Babylon in the Bible refers to the city of Babylon in history, except some, when they come to 1 Peter 5:13 and the six references in the Book of Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2,10,21). Why would Babylon change to Rome (or for preterists, Jerusalem) between the rest of Scripture and these seven references?

See [Revelation 52/53 Babylon: The Bookends of History - Part 1 \(Rev 17-18\)](#) for additional background and details on the wider context to understand to correctly interpret Rev 17-18.

Revelation 17

- (L) The Woman Rides the Beast (17:1-18)
 - (a) The Vision Concerning Babylon (17:1-6a)

- (i) Her introduction (17:1a)
- (ii) Her judgment (17:1b)

1 Then **one of the seven angels** who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "**Come here, I will show you** the judgment of the **great prostitute** who **sits on many waters**,

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

1 Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls came and told me, "Come, I will show you how the notorious prostitute who sits on many waters will be judged.

1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

- "...one of the seven angels" - Babylon is introduced by one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls

- It's probable that this is the 7th angel who poured out the 7th Bowl, but that is not described specifically

- This chapter describes the "judgment of Babylon" referred to earlier (14:8; 16:19) in more detail

- This is the only vision in which an interpreting angel interprets the significance of aspects of the vision (Cf. 5:5; 7:13)

- "...Come here, I will show you" - *deuro, deixō soi*, the same words used in 21:9 to introduce the bride, the wife of the Lamb

- This is one of a number of contrasts between Babylon (17:1—19:6) and the New Jerusalem (21:9—22:5)

- "...great prostitute" - *pornēs tes megales*, Babylon is symbolized as a prostitute (harlot); her name is Babylon the great (v5), and she is a city (v18)

- As a verb, to "prostitute" something is to take something that has a proper use and use it in an improper way. This is what a harlot does with the sexual act. Sex has a proper use, but it can be used in an improper way.

- Anytime a "woman" or a "prostitute" is mentioned in Rev 17-18, it refers to the city of Babylon

- Since the angel does not use the term adultery (*moicheia*), a more restricted term implying a previous marital relationship, to describe the "woman" she cannot be representative of apostate Israel or the apostate church

- *Pornēs* can include *moicheia* because it is broader, so this "woman" represents all false religion of all time, including those who apostatize from Christianity [Thomas]

- *Pornēs* is the object of *krima* (judgment); the "woman's" corruption comes into view repeatedly (v2,4,5,15,16; 18:3 [2x],9; 19:2). Her existence is a travesty to the worship of the

One True God.

— Babylon's identification as a harlot is not to her spiritual nature but rather on the prostitution of her values for economic gain. It is also interesting to note that the figure of a harlot was never applied to a religious system only. It was always used to describe a city or nation (Jerusalem [Ezek 16:1,15], Israel, Samaria, Nineveh [Nahum 3:4], or Tyre [Is 23:16-17]).

— She leads the world in the pursuit of false religion whether it be paganism or perverted revealed religion. She is the symbol for a system that reaches back to the tower of Babel (Gen 10:9-10; 11:1-9) and extends into the future when it will peak under the regime of the Antichrist.

- "...sits on many waters" - v15 interprets the "waters" for us: "The waters which you saw where the prostitute sits are peoples and multitudes, and nations and languages." So the "many waters" represent the world's population over whom she has control.

— Jeremiah (51:13) calls Babylon the city that dwells on many waters (Cf. Ps 137:1); it was originally built on a network of canals. Babylon is situated on the Euphrates River and had many canals, irrigation ditches, dikes, and marshes surrounding the city.

[OT reference: Ps 137:1; Jer 51:13; Nahum 3:4]

At this point, we know that Babylon will be judged (by the 7th Bowl), but we don't know *how* she will be judged. These details are what the angel is helping John understand. The angel is going to outline the specifics and the mechanics of this judgment.

The angel will explain to John that it will actually be God Himself who will put His purpose to destroy Babylon into the heart of the Antichrist, which will result in Babylon's destruction.

Parallels Between Jeremiah 50-51 & Revelation 17-18		
	Jeremiah	Revelation
Associated with a Golden cup	51:7a	17:3-4; 18:6
Dwelling on many waters	51:13	17:1
Intoxicating the nations	51:7b	17:2
Same name	50:1	17:5
Persecution of the saints	51:49	17:6; 18:24
Stone sinking into Euphrates	51:63-64	18:21
Sudden destruction	51:8	18:8
Destroyed by fire	51:30	17:16
Final, uninhabitable	50:39	18:21
Deserved	50:29	18:6
God's people flee	51:6, 45	18:4
Heaven rejoices	51:48	18:20

Dyer, "The Identity of Babylon in Rev 17-18 (Part 2)," 441-43.

(iii) Her immorality (17:2)

2 with whom the **kings of the earth committed acts of sexual immorality**, and those who live on the earth became **drunk** with the wine of her sexual immorality."

2 with whom the kings of the earth committed *acts of immorality*, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."

2 The kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and those living on earth became drunk with the wine of her immorality."

2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

- "...kings of the earth" - world leaders, who personify kingdoms (Cf. 16:14); civil governments will join the Babylonian system at the sacrifice of whatever spiritual principles are necessary during the first half of the Tribulation
- This will be the epitome of the unity of church and state
- "...committed *acts of sexual immorality*" - these leaders committed fornication by uniting with the world system that Babylon symbolizes
- This world system is totally incompatible with the worship of the One True God, so it amounts to spiritual prostitution

- "...drunk" - in 14:8 "Babylon made all nations drink"; here, the nations are now in a state of full intoxication ("drunk")
- When someone is "drunk" they are not using their logical rational faculties; they are under the influence of some other substance
- Jer 51:7b refers to Babylon as "a golden cup...intoxicating all the earth"
- The nations of the world, under the influence of Babylon, are going insane because they are no longer under the influence of God, but under the influence of this Babylonian system
- This is why the judgment of Babylon is long overdue; God has let the concept of Babylon go on so long, since Gen 11, intoxicating the kings of the earth
- When people reject the truth, they believe lies (Cf. 2 Thess 2:10-11)

[OT reference: Is 23:17; Jer 51:7]

(iv) Her influence (17:3)

3 And **he carried me away in the Spirit** into a **wilderness**; and I saw a **womansittingon a scarletbeast, full of blasphemous names**, having **seven heads and ten horns**.

3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

3 Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was controlled by blasphemy. It had seven heads and ten horns.

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.

- "...he carried me away" - after the angel's initial speech, he removed John to a different vantage point to give him another perspective on this harlot
- "...in the Spirit" - *en pneumi*, third of four usages in Revelation. In the other three uses, John was on earth (1:10), in heaven (4:1), and on a mountain top (21:10). In this instance, the angel takes John to a place of desolation.
- "...wilderness" - can't describe Rome because Rome isn't located in a wilderness
- Babylon is described as dwelling in the "wilderness of the sea" (Is 21:1,9); the "wilderness of the sea" (Is 21:1) is a reference to the sandy wastes or sea country in the Persian Gulf area, outside Babylon on the Euphrates [Mark Hitchcock]
- From this new perspective, John saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast...
- "...woman" - the city of Babylon
- "...sitting on" - the woman's (Babylon) position on top of (sitting on) the beast (Antichrist) illustrates Babylon's religious influence and power over the beast
- It's important to organize the imagery in order to understand and interpret this chapter. There are two images: a woman (Babylon) and a beast (the Antichrist). This chapter is not about the woman and it's not about the beast, it's about the woman riding the beast.

- The supremacy that the woman is asserting over the beast is the reason why the beast will turn on her and destroy her (v16-17); the beast will desire to destroy the woman because of the prideful way in which the woman is riding the beast.
- For some unknown reason, it appears that the city of Babylon will somehow get an upper hand over the Antichrist; since the Antichrist will desire to be worshipped above all that is called God (Dan 11:36-37; 2 Thess 2:4), he will not stand for this and thus will destroy the woman (Babylon)
- "...scarlet" - symbolizes luxury and splendor (Cf. Matt 27:28-29) as well as sin (Is 1:18)
- "...beast" - the Antichrist, the beast out of the sea from 13:1
- "...full of blasphemous names" - names of blasphemy were on the seven heads in 13:1, but here they cover the beast's entire body
- The Antichrist blatantly and profusely will profane the name of the One True God, but the religious authorities of that day will have no qualms about forging a close alliance with such a ruler
- "...seven heads and ten horns" - the Antichrist and his allies (kingdom)
- The seven heads are the seven consecutive world empires throughout history
- The ten horns (on the last of the seven heads) are ten kingdoms that are contemporaneous with the Antichrist (v12)
- More detailed definitions and descriptions of these seven heads and ten horns are given later in this chapter

[OT reference: Is 21:1; Dan 7:7]

(v) Her appearance (17:4)

- 4 The woman was clothed in **purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold**, precious stones, and pearls, holding in her hand a **gold cup** full of **abominations** and of the unclean things of her sexual immorality,
- 4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,
- 4 The woman wore purple and scarlet clothes and was adorned with gold, gems, and pearls. In her hand she was holding a gold cup filled with detestable things and the impurities of her immorality.
- 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 is seductive; she knows how to promote and market her wares (Cf. Prov 7:18-23,26-27); this is now Satan promotes sin, never giving us the long-term consequences

- Satan is so good at getting our mind fixated on the short-term pleasures of sin that we can indulge in it without almost no thought of the dire long-term consequences
- "...purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold" - purple and scarlet are the two colors used to describe the robe placed on Christ at His crucifixion (Cf. Matt 27:28; Mark 15:17,20; John 19:2,5)
- The woman was bedazzled with the richest ornaments, precious stones, and pearls. Her appearance was like the greatest queen in order to impress and allure her paramours.
- Her adornment contrasts with the appearance of the bride of the Lamb, whose apparel consists of "fine linen, bright and clean" (Cf. 19:8)
- This description of the woman is one of many reasons why Rev 17 and Rev 18 focus on the same city (Cf. 18:16; see chart: **One Babylon** below)
- Many commentators will see these colors and make a direct connection with Roman Catholicism. Instead, they should look to the Book of Daniel (5:7,16,29) for the proper interpretation: Babylon, the same city that Nebuchadnezzar presided over (see chart: **OT Descriptions of Babylon in Rev 17-18 below**).
- "...gold cup" - adds to her royal appearance, but the contents epitomize the depths of her degeneration
- From her perspective, the cup's contents represent her own glory and grandeur, but in reality they are her self-destruction
- The harlot thrives on spreading her filthy vices and corruptions by allowing the earth dwellers to drink from her beautiful, but contaminated, cup
- See note on v2 (Cf. Jer 51:7a; see chart: **Parallels Between Jer 50-51 & Rev 17-18 below**)
- "...abominations" - denotes idolatry (Cf. Deut 18:9; 29:17; 32:16; 1 Kings 14:24; 2 Kings 16:3; 21:2; Ezek 8:6,9,13,15,16; 11:18, et al)
- These are blasphemous activities that God detests, and her cup is full of them!
[OT reference: Jer 51:7; Ezek 28:13]

ONE BABYLON		
	Rev 17	Rev 18
Same name	17:5	18:2
City	17:18	18:10
<u>Same clothing</u>	<u>17:4</u>	<u>18:16</u>
Holding a cup	17:4	18:6
Fornicating with Kings	17:2	18:3
Drunk with wine of immorality	17:2	18:3
Persecuting believers	17:6	18:20,24
Destroyed by fire	17:16	18:8,18
Destroyed by God	17:17	18:5,8

Dyer, "The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17–18 (Part 1)," 311-13.

OT Descriptions of Babylon in Rev 17–18		
	Rev 17–18	Old Testament
Waters	17:1	Ps 137:1
Babylon the Great	17:5	Dan 4:30
Mother harlots	17:5	Gen 11:1-9
Fallen, fallen is Babylon	18:2	Is 21:9
Will not see widowhood	18:7	Is 47:7-9
<u>Colorful attire</u>	<u>17:4; 18:16</u>	<u>Dan 5:7,16,29</u>
Sorcery	18:23	Is 47:9-13

Parallels Between <u>Jer 50-51</u> & Rev 17-18		
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Deserved	50:29	18:6
God's people flee	51:6, 45	18:4
Heaven rejoices	51:48	18:20

Dyer, "The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18 (Part 2)," 441-43.

(vi) Her title (17:5)

5 and on her forehead a name was written, a **mystery**: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

5 On her forehead was written a secret name: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND DETESTABLE THINGS OF THE EARTH

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

– "...mystery" – the KJV and NIV translations capitalize this word and use it as part of the title of the city; the NASB does not include it as part of the title of the city (lowercase)

— Many great scholars (Walvoord, FF Bruce, et al) follow the KJV/NIV translation that include "mystery" as part of the title, which then gives them license to allegorize Babylon into something else (i.e. Rome)

— However, the NASB translation is correct based on the fact that the name/title of the city is given 5x elsewhere in Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 18:2,10,21), and every other time it is used, "mystery" is not included in the title. This, along with the fact that *mystērion* has a

parenthetical independence here, favors the appositional relationship giving the sense of "a name written, which is a mystery".

— The NASB interpretation also coincides with v7, where the angels says to John, "I will tell you the mystery of the woman..."

— "mystery" (*mystērion*) denotes new, previously undisclosed and unknowable divine truth (Cf. Col 1:26). According to *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testaments*: "not the mysterious, as with the English word, but that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by Divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those who are illumined by His Spirit."

— So what is the "mystery"? Beginning in Genesis there are two strands of prophetic truth that are developed:

1. The coming forth of the Antichrist in his one-world globalist system (Dan 2; 7)
2. Babylon (Gen 11; Zech 5:5-11; Is 13-14; Jer 50-51).

Both are on the same track, in conflict with each other, and destined to crash at some point. How this tension is resolved, the mechanics and logistics of it, as detailed in Rev 17, is the mystery.

— The woman (Babylon) rides the beast...in some sense, Babylon gets supremacy over the beast (Antichrist); the Antichrist and his allies won't like this, so they will turn violently on Babylon and destroy it (v16). God purposed in the Antichrist's heart to do this (v17), and this is how Babylon will be destroyed.

— See chart: **"MYSTERY" in Harlot's Title?** below for the text of both translations

— "...BABYLON THE GREAT" - the boast of Nebuchadnezzar as he surveyed Babylon and took credit for its greatness and beauty (Cf. Dan 4:30; see chart: **OT Descriptions of Babylon in Rev 17-18** above)

— Babylon was introduced in Gen 11:1-9 and has been a continual theme throughout Scripture, continuing until the closing chapters of the last book. It was a city that continually plagued Israel, the church, and the world. It will once again become the world's leading city religiously, commercially, and politically as history draws to a close.

— It will be the metropolis that will serve as headquarters for the Antichrist's empire. It is a city, but it is also a vast religious system that stands and promotes everything that God does not tolerate.

— Preterists believe that John used Babylon in this passage as a "code word" for Jerusalem, however there is no evidence either in Scripture or outside the Bible that Babylon was ever used as a code word for Jerusalem or Israel, either before or after 70 AD. This doesn't mean such an application is impossible, but the burden of proof rests upon those maintaining this interpretation to prove its allegorical meaning.

- Much of the preterist case for seeing Babylon as a code for Jerusalem comes from Peter's reference to Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13. Because preterists believe that Peter wrote his first epistle from Jerusalem, and because most of Peter's life (in early Acts) was more closely associated with Jerusalem, they contend he used Babylon as a code word for Jerusalem.
- However, these references are all from early Acts (prior to 49 AD), but do not prove definitively that Peter wrote 1 Peter in Jerusalem 15 years later (64 AD). He easily could have traveled to Babylon, which had a large Jewish community during the first century.
- Others see Babylon here as a code word for Rome and the Roman Catholic church
- "...MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES" - "mother" denotes the source; the only source of harlotry (false doctrine) is Babylon (Cf. Gen 11:1-4). She is the fountainhead, the womb that bears all the individual cases of the historical resistance to God's will on earth.
- At Babel, there was a single language, so the sin that was present at Babel (the Mother-Child Cult) was taken from there and spread to the entire world. When God changed the single language into many languages, every nation took a part of that system with them (see chart: **Spread of the Mother-Child Cult** below). This is why you can find the remnants of the Mother-Child cult all over the world.
- Note that the woman is not "a" mother of harlots, but "the" mother of harlots. Babylon is the location where the forces of evil gravitated after the Flood to build the Tower of Babel. This was the origin of nations, as distinct nations and cultures only existed as a result of God's judgment of this event. Thus, Babylon the "mother" began at Babel and subsequently spread into every nation and culture that followed.
- Note the plural: a brothel! She is the fountainhead of many other evil religious systems and everything anti-Christian (Cf. Gen 10:9-10; 11:1-9); these are religions that appear Christian but aren't.
- While it is easy to Scripturally identify Babel (Babylon) as "the Mother of Harlots," it is difficult to shift this designation to Jerusalem (as preterism does). Jerusalem, unlike Babel, did not originate the mother-child cult, but rather absorbed it (Jer 7:18; 44:17-19,25; Ezek 8:14). In fact, rather than identifying Jerusalem as the mother harlot, Ezekiel specifically identifies Judah as a daughter harlot who was guilty of emulating the whorish characteristics of her Amorite, Hittite and Egyptian parents (Ezek 16:3,44-45; 23:2-4).
[Jer 50:1; Dan 4:30]

“MYSTERY” in Harlot’s Title?

**And on her forehead a name was written:
MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER
OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF
THE EARTH. (KJV, NIV)**

**... and upon her forehead a name was written, a
mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER
OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF
THE EARTH.” (NASB)**

We believe that the English translators have misled many by printing (on their own authority) the word 'mystery' in large capital letter, thus making it appear that this was part of 'the woman's' name. This we are assured is a mistake. That 'mystery' is connected with the 'Woman' herself and not with her 'name' is clear from v7, where the angel says unto John, 'I will tell thee the mystery of the Woman, and the beast which carrieth her. [A.W. Pink, The Antichrist, 262.]

Spread of the Mother-Child Cult		
	Mother	Child
Assyria	Ishtar	Tammuz
Phoenicia	Astarte	Baal
Egypt	Isis	Osirus/Horus
Greece	Aphrodite	Eros
Rome	Venus	Cupid
Asia	Cybele	<u>Desius</u>
India	Isi	<u>Aswara</u>
Roman Catholicism	Mary	Jesus
Israel	Queen of Heaven (<u>Jer 7:18; 44:17</u>)	Tammuz (<u>Ezek 8:14-15</u>)

Alexander Hislop, *Two Babylons*

The harlot is also the mother of harlots. In other words, many groups will join together under the one harlot, in a kind of federated church. With the identification in 17:9 and with the interrelation of Babylon and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Roman Church is the harlot. But this is not the whole picture, for the apostate church is not merely the Roman Church. It will include other groups in a family relationship with their mother. The tie that will bind them will be their harlotry. [Ryrie]

This woman is representative of Ecclesiastical Babylon, the one-world religious system that will rule the religious affairs of the first half of the Tribulation. This will be the final form of the apostate church, which began in the United States in the early 1900s and continues to the present day. Ecclesiastical Babylon will be a combination of all false religions, false Protestantism, and the Jezebel element of Catholicism, into a one-world religious system. The ecumenical church has faced a lot of problems. It seems that they have recognized psychological differences in people and that it is impossible to water down theologies and practices to suit everyone. So each group will come into this great world ecumenical system but retain some of its peculiarities. For example, those who want to immerse will

immerse. Those who want to sprinkle will sprinkle. Those who want elaborate ritual will have it, and those who want no ritual will have that. You see, there is going to be more than the mother harlot—there will be a whole lot of harlots, a regular brothel.

Many interpreters have traced the religiously apostate system of worship, begun in Babylon and carried on throughout church history, to Roman Catholicism and the modern Christian ecumenical movement. However, the description here, of Babylonianism, encompasses *all forms* of paganism, including perversions of orthodox Christianity and non-Christian religions. It's a smorgasbord of religions under one roof.

(vii) Her persecution (17:6a)

(b) The Interpretation Concerning Babylon (17:6b-18)

(i) The Interpretation Promised (17:6b-7)

6 And I saw the woman **drunk** with the **blood** of the **saints**, and with the blood of the **witnesses of Jesus**. When I saw her, **I wondered greatly**.

6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.

6 I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. I was very surprised when I saw her.

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.

— "...drunk" - in v2, the woman was making everyone else drunk with her sexual immorality; here, she herself is drunk with the blood of the saints

— The woman causes others to be inebriated because she herself is inebriated; she is under the influence of false doctrine herself, so as the saying goes, deceived people deceive people.

— Being "drunk with blood" indicates a lust for violence, vastness of slaughter, an inclination to savagery

— "...blood" - describes the slaughter of believers during the Tribulation period

— Her crime is a work of persecution, and she will persecute all those who will not join in her harlotries. Those believers living at that time who will not join this one world religious system will be persecuted by it.

— The past has witnessed isolated examples of this degree of persecution, but nothing like what it will be in the future. The reign of the Antichrist will create an environment in which the harlot will martyr saints and witnesses on a universal scale (Cf. 13:7,15).

— "...saints...witnesses of Jesus" - two names for the same group of people; the repetition is for emphasis, not to denote two separate groups

— "Saints" indicates they have kept themselves pure

— "witnesses" shows they have faithfully preached the gospel

- It is not just what the woman promotes that becomes the object of God's judgment, but also what she opposes
- In Jer 51:49 Babylon is described as persecuting the saints (Cf. 18:24)
- Notice that the woman is not drunk with the blood of the *church*...
- "...I wondered greatly" - complete astonishment, marvel, amazement
- The reason why John was amazed is because he saw organized (apostate) "religion" persecuting and martyring believers in the One True God
- John already knows that Babylon will fall, that is OT revelation (Is 13-14; Jer 50-51); what he does not know at this point is how, and what, if any, relevance the woman riding the beast has with Babylon's destruction.

Verses 7-14 is the interpretation of the symbolism of the woman riding the beast. Who is the woman? Who is the beast? How do they interact with each other, and how does that interaction result in the destruction of Babylon?

7 And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the **mystery** of the woman and of the **beast** that **carries** her, which has the **seven heads** and the **ten horns**.

7 And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

7 "Why are you surprised?" The angel asked me. "I will tell you the secret of the woman and the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns that carries her.

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

- The angel promises John, who is greatly astonished at what he sees, an interpretation of the vision that he is seeing (v8-18). He provides an extensive explanation of the beast (v8-17) and a less extensive one of the woman (v18).

— What has been previously hidden (the "mystery") will now be revealed about these two players...

- "...mystery" - notice that the woman is not the mystery, and the beast is not the mystery (see notes on v5)

— The angel promised to interpret these revelations that were so baffling to John, particularly "the mystery" concerning the woman and the beast (Antichrist)

— The mystery is the interaction between the woman and the beast (the woman riding the beast), how these two strands of prophecy that are on a collision course come to a resolution, and how God uses this resolution to fulfill His prophecy of Babylon's destruction.

— More information about the beast follows in v8-14; more about the "woman" in v15-18

- "...beast" - the Antichrist; the same as the fourth beast of Dan 7

- "...carries" - *bastazontos*, a change in verb from v3 (*kathēmenēn*, "sitting") to *bastazontos*, "carries" is significant to understand the relationship between the woman and the beast
- The verb *bastazontos* to describe their relationship portrays that the beast supplies the woman motive and purpose
- "...seven heads" - seven consecutive world empires; these will be explained further in v9-10
- "...ten horns" - represent the ten world kingdoms under the authority of the Antichrist (Cf. v12; 12:3)

[Is 47:7-9]

(ii) The Beast & His System (17:8-14)

(a) The Beast (17:8)

8 "The beast that you saw was, **and is not**, and is about to **come up out of the abyss** and **go to destruction**. And those who live on the earth, whose **names have not been written in the book of life** from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they **see** the beast, that **he was, and is not, and will come**.

8 "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

8 The beast that you saw existed once, but is no longer, and is going to crawl out of the bottomless pit and then proceed to its destruction. Those living on earth, whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, will be surprised when they see the beast because it was, is no longer, and will come again.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- The interpretation the angel gives to John is not about the woman, it's about the beast (Antichrist) and his system. The angel will give to John a composite description of the Antichrist in v8-17, using details from Rev 11; 13 while also adding new information.

- "...and is not" [2x] - this refers to the death of the beast (the individual)

- "...come up out of" - refers to the beast's resurrection from the dead (Cf. 13:14)

— This is the same as his reappearance as an eighth king (v11)

- "...abyss" - *abyssos*, often referred to as the bottomless pit (9:1,2,11; 11:7; 20:1,3), however that is likely not the reference here

- In Rom 10:7, *abyssos* is a reference to death; here, it is a reference to the death of the Antichrist, who later is raised from the dead (Cf. 13:3,14)
- Rev 11:7 states that "the beast from the abyss" kills the Two Witnesses. This indicates that he has already, likely just prior, been miraculously resurrected. Timing is likely just prior to the Abomination of Desolation.
- This is the same "reappearance" referred to in v11
- This verse confirms 13:3ff that the earth dwellers will marvel at the beast, mainly because of his resurrection; this marveling will lead to worship
- They will conclude that he is a divine savior, but will actually be a demonic slaughterer; he will deceive everyone but the elect (Cf. 13:8; Matt 24:24; Mark 13:22)
- Their devotion is directed toward the demonic; they marvel at the accomplishments of the beast
- "...go to destruction" - the beast's final defeat at the hands of the returning Christ, where he is assigned to the Lake of Fire for eternity (Cf. 19:20)
- The beast (and false prophet) are so evil that God skips the first death and sends them straight to the second death, eternity in the Lake of Fire
- God has evil on a short leash; the beast will rule for short time, do many great miracles and deceive many, but his time is short and once it's over, he will go to destruction in the Lake of Fire (Dan 7:11; 2 Thess 2:8)
- Scripture is balanced: it reveals the ascendancy of evil, but at the same time reminding us of Who is in control; evil gets its heyday, but it doesn't last long
- "...names have not been written in the book of life" - their names weren't written in the book of life, so they are unsaved
- "...see" - *blepontōn*, their witness of the beast's miraculous recovery from his death wound will convince the earth dwellers of his invincibility
- "...he was, and is not, and will come" - the description of the beast here is a parody of the name of God in 1:4: "Him who is, and who was, and who is to come"
- "will come" - *parestai*, witnesses to the beast's resurrection will be unaware of his origin (the abyss) or his destiny (perdition/destruction)

[OT reference: Ex 32:32-33; Dan 12:1]

How Satan Imitates God and the Antichrist Imitates Jesus Christ			
NO.	CATEGORY	JESUS CHRIST	ANTICHRIST
1.	World prepared in advance	Gal 4:4	2 Thess 2:7
2.	Revealed at the proper time	Gal 4:4	2 Thess 2:6
3.	Claim of deity	John 14:9	2 Thess 2:4
4.	Heralded by a forerunner	John 1:23	Rev 13:12
5.	Forerunner comes in the Spirit and power of Elijah	Luke 1:17	1 Kings 8:37-38; Rev 13:13
6.	Empowered by a higher source	1 Cor 6:14	Rev 13:14
7.	Member of a Trinity	Phil 1:2; Acts 5:3-4; John 14:9	Rev 16:13; 20:10
8.	Head of a Church	Eph 5:23	Rev 2:9; 3:9
9.	Miracle worker	Acts 2:22	2 Thess 2:9
10.	Resurrection from the dead	1 Cor 15:3-6	Rev 13:3,12,14
11.	Given a throne	Rev 3:21	Rev 13:2
12.	Ruling a political kingdom	Is 9:6-7	Rev 13:5
13.	Ushering in world peace	Is 9:6-7	Rev 6:1-4
14.	Activity in the Temple	Luke 2:41-50	2 Thess 2:4
15.	Putting an end to animal sacrifices	Heb 9:26-29	Dan 9:27
16.	Length of ministry	Over 3 years	Rev 13:5
17.	Sealing ministry	Eph 4:30	Rev 13:16-17
18.	Presentation to Israel as her Messiah	John 1:11	John 5:43
19.	Covenant with Israel	Gen 15:18	Dan 9:27
20.	Reception of worship	Zech 14:16	2 Thess 2:4
21.	Establishing Jerusalem as the center of worldwide worship	Zech 14:17	2 Thess 2:4

(b) The Seven Heads (17:9-11)

9 Here is the mind which has wisdom. The **sevenheads** are **sevenmountainsupon which the woman sits,**

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

9 This calls for a mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is sitting. They are also seven kings.

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

- Verses 9-11 are not part of the vision, but rather a more detailed explanation of the beast...

- "Here is the mind which has wisdom" - an indication that the information that follows is more difficult to grasp and understand. John urges his readers to listen carefully and think clearly about what he is about to reveal.

— This phrase means that it will take some additional mental acuity (eschatological insight) to understand the underlying meaning of this description of the Antichrist

— Evidently many would incorrectly identify these seven heads, including those who believe they represent seven Roman emperors, the seven hills of Rome, or the beast's fullness of blasphemy and evil

— The last time we saw this phrase was in the description of how to calculate the Antichrist's name (13:18)

- "...seven heads" - symbolize seven kings (v10); they are the heads and personifications of seven empires (Cf. Dan 7:17,23)

— This view agrees with the common meaning of "mountain" or "hill" in the Bible (Cf. Ps 30:7; 68:15-16; Is 2:2; 41:15; Jer 51:25; Dan 2:35; Hab 3:6,10; Zech 4:7)

— When the Antichrist's kingdom came to power, it absorbed the seven great anti-semitic kingdoms in world history

1. Egypt
2. Assyria
3. Babylon
4. Persia
5. Greece
6. Rome I
7. Rome II

- "...seven mountains" - oros, another symbol for the seven kings (v10) or kingdoms; these are not seven different kings, but the same kings as described by the seven heads (seven kings = seven mountains)

— Many scholars get caught up that the seven mountains ("hills") refer to Rome, since Rome is a city that famously sits upon seven hills. However, this is not a description of a

city's topography. The point here is not the seven mountains, but the seven kings.

— Others believe that the seven mountains refer to Babylon, however it's important to notice that the description here by the angel is of the beast, not the woman. The seven heads and ten horns belong to the beast, not the woman.

— Thus, these seven heads or mountains really have nothing to do with Babylon at all, or any supposed symbolism representing Rome. It is possible to argue that the woman is still associated with the seven hills because she is sitting on them. However, it is better to see this as referring to the woman's control rather than her location.

- "...upon which the woman sits" - the woman "sits" on the seven kings ("heads") and empires ("mountains") but she is not one of them; she will exercise authority over them

10 and they are **seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come**; and when he comes, **he must remain a little while**.

10 and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

10 Five of them have fallen, one is living, and the other has not yet come. When he comes, he must remain in power for a little while.

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

- "...seven kings" - seven heads = seven mountains = seven kings (kingdoms)

— These are seven anti-Semitic kingdoms:

Five have fallen...

1. Egypt - 400 years of bondage/slavery
2. Assyria - captivity of northern kingdom
3. Babylon - captivity of souther kingdom (70 years); destruction of Jerusalem
4. Persia - Haman; attempted extermination of Jews
5. Greece - Antiochus Epiphanes IV

One is...(at the time of John's writing)

6. Rome I - in power when John wrote Revelation (~95 AD) ("one is")

The other that has not yet come...

7. Rome II - future kingdom of the Antichrist ("other has not yet come")

- There is an interesting verse in Daniel (7:12) that many people just pass over. It says: "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time."

— This means that as each of these successive empires overthrew the one before it, they did so politically but not culturally. Thus, when Assyria overthrew Egypt, there were parts of the Egyptian culture that were adopted into the culture of the Assyrians.

- This continued throughout history, until the original Roman Empire (Rome I), which retained cultural elements of all previous empires. The revived Roman Empire of the Antichrist (Rome II) will thus have some of the cultural elements from each of the preceding empires.
- Thus, the seven heads (v9) = seven mountains = seven anti-Semitic kings/kingdoms are a composite of everything wrong in all of the previous six empires handed down through history, all wrapped up into one and embodied by the seventh empire, the revived Roman Empire of the Antichrist (Rome II).
- Just as each of the previous six empires all were anti-Semitic, always coming against God and Israel, this is what the future empire will be like as well
- "...five have fallen" - when John is writing this (95 AD), Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia and Greece had all fallen
- Each of these kingdoms persecuted God's people: Egypt (Ezek 29-30); Nineveh or Assyria (Nahum 3:1-19); Babylon (Is 21:9; Jer 50-51); Persia (Dan 10:13; 11:2); Greece (Dan 11:3-4). The persecutor of God's people during John's day (1st century AD) was Rome.
- If the mountains refer to Rome, five of the seven hills should no longer be in existence; only one should have been there during John's day, with another mountain to rise in the future! Contextually and logically, the "mountain" symbolizing the city of Rome is an impossible interpretation.
- Some interpret these kings to be Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero. However, to apply the seven kings to Roman history, most interpreters leave out Galba, Otho and Vitellius who reigned briefly between Nero and Vespasian.
- It is also unclear with which emperor the count should begin...Julius Caesar, Augustus or Caligula?
- "...one is" - Rome I was the empire in power in John's day
- "...other has not yet come" - Rome II, the Antichrist Stage of the fourth beast (Cf. notes at the end of Dan 7)
- This empire is the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar's statute (Dan 2) in the feet of iron and clay; it is also the horrific beast with 10 horns (Dan 7)
- This refers to the Antichrist's rise to global power for the last 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation
- "...he must remain a little while" - when the the Antichrist arises to power, it will be brief (3-1/2 years, Dan 9:27; 12:7; 42 months, Rev 11:2-3; 13:5; 1,260 days, Dan 12:6; Rev 11:3; 12:6; 1/2 "week," Dan 9:27)
- This is a limitation of God's will, His sovereign control over the reign and extent of evil. It indicates that the reign of this 7th world empire will be shorter than the six previous empires.

- This factor alone eliminates the possibility of the seven heads/mountains/kings being 1st century Roman emperors

So while both the ten horns and seven heads are representative of kings, there is a difference between them. The ten horns are kings that are contemporary with each other; they all rise and reign at the same time. But the seven heads are chronological or sequential; one follows the other in chronological sequence, and no two are ever contemporary. At the time of the writing of the Book of Revelation, five had already gone into history and were no more. The sixth *head-mountain-king* was present and in control, and there was one more to go. [Fructenbaum] See note: [The Times of the Gentiles](#)

Satan's Seven Super-Kingdoms (Rev 17:10-11)

Rev 12:3: 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.

There have been 7 Super Kingdoms throughout the history of the world...

- Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Rome II
- Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome and Rome II is actually 4 + 1; there are 7 total
 - Rome II is described as the same kind of empire...divided and broken into pieces, then re-assembled (Dan 2)
 - Rome and Rome II are two different empires, but they are echoes of the same

11 The **beast which was, and is not, is himself also an eighth** [horn] and **is one of the seven** [heads], and **he goes to destruction.**

11 The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth [horn] and is one of the seven [heads], and he goes to destruction.

11 The beast that was and is no longer is the eighth king [horn], but it belongs with the seven kings [heads] and goes to its destruction.

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth [horn], and is of the seven [heads], and goeth into perdition.

- This is the most difficult verse in Revelation to interpret, and may be the most difficult verse in the entire Bible. Two possible interpretations are given here: Note: "seven" refers to the heads, while "eight" refers to the horns.

Interpretation #1:

- Probably the better interpretation is that the beast "was," then he died ("and is not"), then he rose again as "an eighth" (king/kingdom), but "is one of the seven"

— "an eighth" is the Antichrist *after* he rises from the dead, but he is still "one of the seven" because he is still the king of the revived Roman Empire (Rome II)

- So as one of the seven, the beast is a kingdom, but as an eighth, he is the king of that kingdom who sustains the wound and ascends from the abyss after his wound (Cf. v8).
- When this occurs, he is king over an eighth kingdom because his reign following his ascent from the abyss will be far more dynamic and dominant than before. This is the sense in which he is one of the seven, but also an eighth.
- It is clear that the eighth is an eighth king or world ruler, not a distinctly different kingdom from the seventh head. He is distinct from his predecessors in that he subsequently has received supernatural powers from Satan after his rise from the dead.
- Making the eighth a fusion of the raised beast and the empire over which he rules is the only way to meet all the criteria of the passage

Interpretation #2:

- "...beast which was, and is not" - an allusion to the "little horn" (Dan 7:8,20-26; 8:9-14)
- "...he himself also an eighth" - the Antichrist's position is "the eighth," but he is "of the seven"
- He is "of the seven" in that there are seven heads, and the Antichrist is the seventh head. The heads are chronological and sequential, and the Antichrist is the last to appear in the final period of the history of the seven heads.
- But he is also "the eighth" in his relationship to the 10 horns. The 10 horns represent the 10 kingdoms that come out of the One-World Government. The 10 kings are contemporary and ruling together.
- As seen in Dan 7:24, when the Antichrist begins to take control, he uproots (kills) 3 of the 10 horns, leaving 7 kings for the remainder of the Tribulation. The Antichrist is contemporary with these seven, making him an eighth. He is an eighth contemporary king ruling over the seven other kings, who have submitted to his authority. Yet he is "of the seven" since he is the king of the 7th world empire (Rome II).
- "...is one of the seven [heads]" - the beast is "one of the seven" in the sense that his first kingdom is on the same level as the seven major empires just mentioned
- "...he goes to destruction" - reminds us that this king (Antichrist) does not "fall" like the kingdoms before him, but meets his destiny at the hands of the Lord Himself (Cf. v8)

Satan's Seven Super-Kingdoms

- Egypt
- Assyria
- Babylon
- Persia
- Greece
- Rome
- Rome II
10 Horns
- The 11th Horn

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.

Revelation 12:3

And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

Revelation 17:10

And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition

Revelation 17:11

Daniel 7:8, 20-26; 8:9-14

Daniel 2:31-35, 40-45; 7:7-8, 19-25
Revelation 13:1-2; 17:3, 7, 12-18

(c) The Ten Horns (17:12-14)

12 The **ten horns** which you saw are ten kings **who have not yet received a kingdom**, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for **one hour**.

12 The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

12 The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom. They will receive authority to rule as kings with the beast for one hour.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

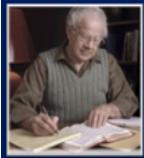
– "...ten horns" - a ten king confederacy that will arise to power simultaneously with the beast; they are kings, but without kingdoms at the time John wrote

— These are the allies of the Antichrist, who rule under his delegated authority over ten regions of the world

— The Antichrist will at some point "subdue" three of the ten kings, leaving seven remaining (Dan 7:24)

- Many Christians have been taught for years that the ten horns represented an alliance of European countries (the "European Common Market"). However, Dan 7:23 states that these kings will devour "the whole earth and tread it down and crush it."
- Today's pre-eminent globalist organization, the Club of Rome, already has a map (see below) segmenting the world into ten regions. While there may be twists and turns on this map before the time it is implemented, it's interesting that the world being ruled by ten kings already exists in the minds of fallen humanity.
- "...who have not yet received a kingdom" - these ten kings are without a kingdom at the time John wrote; they cannot be identified with any historical figures, thus are future (Cf. Dan 7:7)
- The fact that these kings had not yet received a kingdom rules out them being identified as Roman emperors of the first century
- If we understand the passages in Dan 7:7,20, three of the 10 object and are put down, leaving seven kings
- Whomever these "horns" (kings) are, they will be allies of the beast and serve under him in his worldwide government during the final 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation (Dan 7:23-24)
- Each of the 10 kings will rule a different kingdom simultaneously, with one another and with the beast (Cf. Dan 7:7-8,24; Rev 13:1-2)
- "...one hour" - *mian hōran*, an adverbial accusative of time; could mean 60 minutes, but is often used to describe a "short age" (Cf. 1 John 2:18)
- Sometime after the Antichrist will begin his 3-1/2 year superhuman reign, he will grant authority to these 10 kings and they will reign under his delegated authority until their war with the Lamb at His return (v14)

[OT reference: Dan 7:24-25]



J. Dwight Pentecost

Things to Come, Page 321-22

“(3) From among those ten kingdoms there will arise one individual who will have control over the whole dominion of the ten kings (Dan. 7: 8, 24; Rev. 13: 1-10; 17: 13). In gaining his authority three of the ten kings are overthrown. (4) This final authority over the empire is wielded by one who is marked by blasphemy, hatred of God’s people, disregard for established law and order, who will continue for three and one-half years (Dan. 7: 26). (5) **This final form of world power will have world-wide influence (Dan. 7: 23).**”



Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Footsteps of the Messiah, Page 36

“This stage was seen in both Daniel 2 in the ten toes and in Daniel seven in the ten horns...**the One World Government will divide into ten kingdoms that will cover the whole world – not merely Europe.** It has become common today to refer to the ten kingdoms as being in Europe only, especially the Former Common Market, now the European Union. But the text does not allow for this kind of interpretation. At the very best, the European Union might become one of the ten, but it could hardly become all of the ten.”

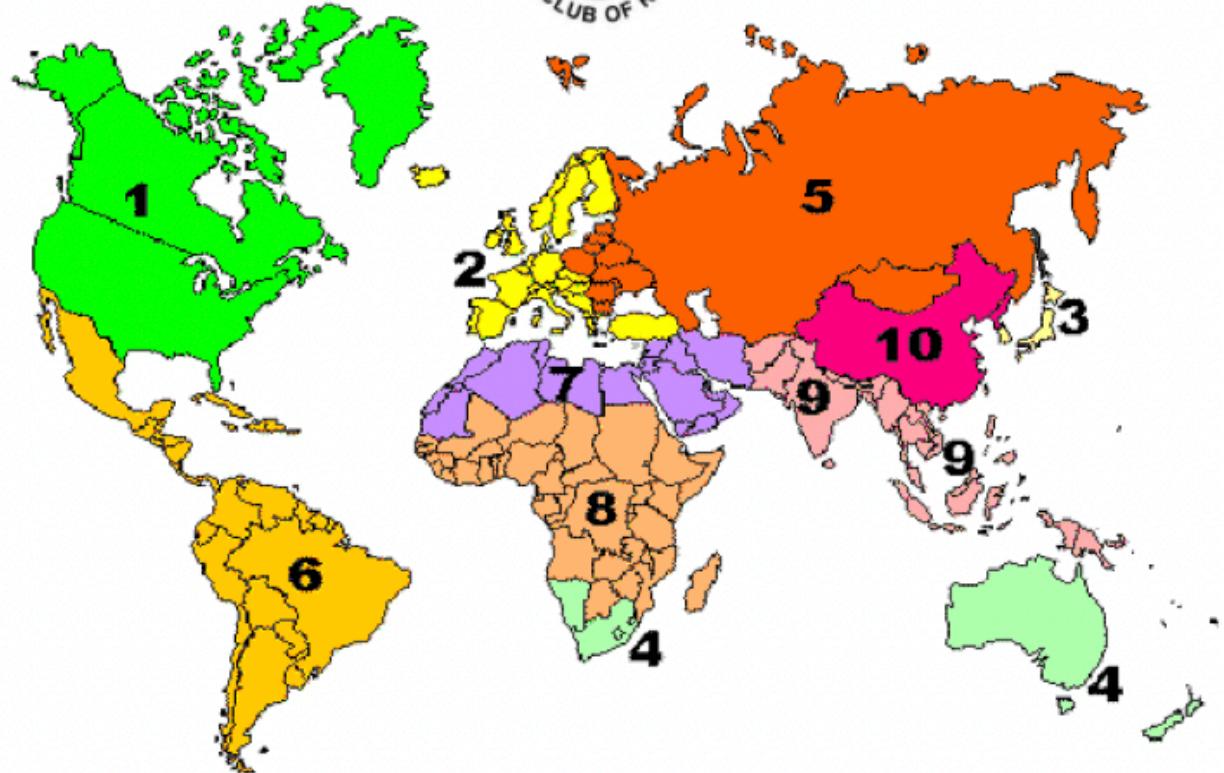


Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Footsteps of the Messiah, Page 36

“A careful reading of the Daniel passage states that once the Fourth Empire rules the whole world, then this One World Government will split into ten kingdoms. **This requires the ten kingdoms to cover the entire world, not just the territory known as Europe.** It would be a mistake to make too much of the European Union as being the Ten Division Stage. It would be far more consistent with the text to view it as possibly one of the ten, but not the entire ten. More consistent with Daniel's prophecy is the recommendation of the Club of Rome that the world be divided into ten administrative districts to avoid a world economic collapse.”

THE CLUB OF ROME



The Environmental Handbook was released in 1970, on the first Earth Day:

The Environmental Handbook (1970)



“...let's look at a few "root" mistakes the old-timers are about to make in the context of their new eco-concern. I use 'old timer'...to indicate anybody—regardless of age—whose frames of reference are products of OLD TIME, i.e., the industrial revolution phase of history...They are about to initiate massive programs within old frames of centralized authority of the nation. Nations are such an artificial construct from an ecological point of view that any further energies poured into them are almost certain to do more long-term harm than good. **Nations...must be phased out as quickly as possible and replaced with tribal or regional autonomous economies**...Boycott the words "national" and "international."

Keith Lampe, "Earth Read-Out," in The Environmental Handbook: Prepared for the First National Environmental Teach In, ed. Garrett De Bell (New York: Ballantine Books, 1970), 6.

Regionalism



“The contemporary quest for world order will require a coherent strategy to establish a concept of order *within the various regions and to relate these regional orders to one another.*”

Henry Kissinger, *New World Order* (New York: Penguin, 2015), 371.



Open Borders

“In a private, paid speech to a Brazilian bank on May 16, 2013, Hillary Clinton said: ‘My dream is a hemispheric common market, with open trade and open borders, some time in the future with energy that is as green and sustainable as we can get it, powering growth and opportunity for every person in the hemisphere.’ This secret speech was released as part of the Podesta emails obtained by Wikileaks.”

<http://www.breitbart.com/live/third-presidential-debate-fact-check-livewire/fact-check-yes-hillary-clinton-wants-open-borders/>

- 13 These have **onepurpose**, and **they** give their power and authority to the beast.
- 13 These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.
- 13 They have one purpose: to give their power and authority to the beast.
- 13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.
 - "These...they" - the ten horns (kings) (Cf. v12)
 - In the Antichrist's rise to power and getting control of these ten kings and kingdoms, three of them will not comply and will be "subdued" (Dan 7:24)
 - Evidently, three "puppet" kings will replace them, who will give their power and authority to the beast
 - Satan is very adept at putting "puppet" rulers into power: Nebuchadnezzar did this during his first two sieges of Jerusalem, so that it was actually Nebuchadnezzar ruling over Judah, but the people thought they were still an independent, sovereign nation.
 - "...one purpose" - the sole purpose of these kings and kingdoms is to submit to the Antichrist's power and authority in order to rule the world. This is according to God's sovereign plan (Cf. v17).

- They are united with the beast in their hatred of God. Their unity of purpose relates to warfare with the Lamb (v14). They have the same unity of hatred and opposition to the harlot (v16).
- Just as the dragon had given power and authority to the beast (13:2), these kings will do the same (although in quite a different way)

14 These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

14 These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

14 They will wage war against the lamb, but the lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those who are called, chosen, and faithful are with him."

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 that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

- "These" - the ten kings/kingdoms

— They are among or identical to the "kings of the earth" (19:19) who go down in defeat along with the Antichrist

— "...wage war against the Lamb" - these kings will fight against Jesus Christ as He returns to earth at the Second Coming (Cf. 16:14,16; 19:19-21)

— This is one of the most astonishing passages in Scripture: the hatred that the world has for God is at a fever pitch, and they go to war against Him

— Ps 2 describes the conversation among the Trinity about the hatred of these kings

— You often will not get much pushback with talk about God, because "God" is a name that could mean different things to different people. But as soon as you mention the name "Jesus" all bets are off. The name of Jesus immediately sparks a reaction from people, either good or bad. In the case of the Antichrist and his ten kings, it will be a bad reaction: they will wage war against Jesus (Cf. 19:19).

1 John 4:3: and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit of the antichrist*, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world.

- "...the Lamb will overcome them" - described in 19:21; the reason the Lamb will overcome them is because He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, omnipotent and Almighty God

- "...because" - *hoti*, introduces the reason for His triumph

- "...Lord of lords and King of Kings" - He is the sovereign over all who rule the earth

— Paul applies this title to God the Father (1 Tim 6:15). In Revelation the Son frequently has the same titles as the Father.

- The title "Lord of lords" occurs earliest in Deut 10:17 as a title for God. Dan 2:47 quotes Nebuchadnezzar as calling Daniel's God "a Lord of kings" (Cf. Ps 136:3; Rev 1:5).
- These two titles marking the Lamb as supreme over all earthly power recur in 19:16 where at His return to earth in triumph, the name appears on part of His cloak that covers His thigh
- "...those who are with Him" - raptured Church Age believers, martyred Tribulation believers, and angels (Matt 25:31; Cf. Jude 14)
- "...called...chosen...faithful" - three words to describe the "armies" who will accompany Christ at the Second Coming, the Church (along with the angels)
- These are three names for believers, not three different groups of believers; they do not describe the angels (they are a separate group)
- The three terms increase in specificity: God "called" everyone to believe through the preaching of the gospel, but only those "chosen" for salvation are elected (predestined) by the Father (Cf. Eph 1:4-5). They are also the "faithful" because they respond to God's grace by faithfully believing in Him.

(iii) Babylon (17:15-18)

(a) Her Influence (17:15)

15 And he *said to me, "The waters which you saw where the prostitute sits are **peoples and multitudes, and nations and languages.**

15 And he *said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.

15 The angel also told me, "The bodies of water you saw, on which the prostitute is sitting, are nations, multitudes, nations, and languages.

15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

- This verse interprets the "many waters" reference in v1, describing the woman/prostitute/Babylon

— In the OT, "water" is a common symbol for people (Ps 18:4,16; 124:4; Is 8:7; Jer 47:2)

- "...peoples and multitudes, and nations and languages" - four plural nouns; when these four nouns are used together elsewhere, they refer to global influence (Cf. 5:9; 7:9; 11:9; 13:7)

— The harlot's position is "sitting on" many waters (v1). She controls the lifestyle of the mixed populations of the world through their voluntary submission to her.

— The global influence that the woman/prostitute wields is what makes the beast jealous (v16); the woman is *riding* the beast

(b) Her Destruction (17:16-17)

16 And the **ten horns** which you saw, and the beast, these will **hate the prostitute** and **will make her desolate and naked**, and will **eat her flesh** and will **burn her up with fire**.

16 And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.

16 The ten horns and the beast you saw will hate the prostitute. They will leave her abandoned and naked. They will eat her flesh and burn her up with fire,

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

- Eventually, the ten horns (kings/kingdoms) will turn against the woman (the dominant religious system)

— False religion will use its hold over the beast to gain a greatness of her own, but suddenly the tide turns and the charm of the woman disappears, and the attraction for the harlot turns to hatred toward her.

- "...ten horns" - ten king confederacy under delegated authority of the Antichrist

- "...hate the prostitute" - why do they hate the prostitute? because she becomes too powerful and influential; she becomes too influential over the beast's system

— This is what is described by the woman riding (dominating) the beast (v3). Evidently somehow the woman becomes more popular and influential than the Antichrist and his ten kings, compromising the beast's world system, and he isn't in the mood to play second fiddle to anyone (Cf. Dan 11:36-37; 2 Thess 2:4).

— In the end, Satan's kingdom will divide against itself, signaling that its demise is near (Cf. Mark 3:23-26)

— Here, the 10 kings and the beast hate the harlot, but 18:9 records the kings weeping over the harlot; see note on 18:9 for the difference between the kings referred to here (the 10 kings) and the kings of 18:9 (leaders who are united with Babylon).

- "...will make her" - the Antichrist and his ten king confederacy will destroy Babylon; it is the beast and his system that turns on the woman/Babylon and destroys her

— This is the "mystery" (v5): the mystery is not the fact that Babylon will be destroyed, but rather the "who" and "why" of her destruction:

— Who? The Antichrist and his ten king confederacy.

— Why? Because of jealousy of the woman's power and influence, and because God put it in their hearts to execute His promise (v17).

- "...desolate" - *ērēmōmenēn*, plunder her wealth

- "...naked" - *gymnēn*, expose her moral corruption to public view

- "...eat her flesh" - what wild beasts do to corpses; a vivid way of describing utter dismemberment and destruction (Cf. Ps 27:2; Jer 10:25; Micah 3:3; Zeph 3:3)

- "...burn her up with fire" - predicted in Jer 51:30 and fulfilled here; this destruction is also described in 18:8,18

- It speaks of utter destruction of a system of false religion that will have reached its peak in the days just before its destruction
[OT reference: Lev 21:9; Jer 51:30]

17 For God **has put** it in their hearts to execute His **purpose** by having a common **purpose**, and **by giving their kingdom to the beast**, until the words of God will be fulfilled.

17 For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled.

17 for God has placed within them a desire to carry out his purpose by uniting to give their kingdom to the beast until God's words are fulfilled.

17 For God hath 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 sovereign purposes of God are fulfilled in the internal strife within the kingdom of evil...

— The Antichrist and ten kings turn on the woman riding the beast and destroy her. God will put into the hearts and minds of the ten kings and their leader to turn against the religious structure which they feel no longer serves a useful purpose for them.

— All the while, the ten kings and the beast believe they are fulfilling their own plans, but in reality they are blindly fulfilling God's sovereign plan

— This is not the only time when God uses the forces of evil for His purposes of judgment. He used Babylon to judge Israel (Jer 25:9-11). He also used Israel's enemies to destroy themselves (Cf. Judges 7:22; 2 Chr 20:23; 1 Sam 14:20; Ezek 38:21; Haggai 2:2; Zech 14:14).

— God can take the most wicked of the wicked, and as they pursue their wicked agenda, they actually fulfill God's will

— God can take the poor choices of people and use them for His own purposes. As these rulers turn on Babylon out of jealousy, they are actually fulfilling everything God intended with the 7th Bowl judgment.

- "...has put" - *edōken*, aorist tense (in contrast to the future tense of "will..." in v16 [4x] is proleptic, adopting the perspective after the events take place

- "...purpose" [2x] - *gnōmēn*, same word used in v13. There it is the entertainment of that purpose ("they have"), but here it is the execution of that purpose ("to put into practice")

— The 10 kings and the Antichrist are unaware they are carrying out God's design. They think they are fulfilling their own plans, but in reality they are blindly following divine counsel.

- "...by giving their kingdom to the beast" - it is obviously sinful for these kings to give their kingdoms to the beast, so how can God, who is absolutely righteous in all His ways (Ps

145:17) be a party (the origin) of this sinful activity?

— This seeming contradiction of this verse to the character of God can be understood in the outworking of His plan. God allows the existence of evil, but He is not in any sense the author of evil (James 1:13). He does not put it into the hearts of the kings to make war with the Lamb, but to give their kingdom to the beast. He now allows that evil to run its course in bringing this creation to its inevitable end as the kings decide on their own to make war with the Lamb.

(c) Her identification (17:18)

18 The woman whom you saw **is** the **greatcity**, which **reigns over the kings of the earth.**"

18 The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

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

18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

- "...is" - *estin*, present tense, but not present in the sense of John's time of writing at the end of the 1st century; rather, present at the time the beast will have attained his power

- "...great city" - *polis*, a city (Cf. v5; 18:10), referring to Babylon

— For some unknown reason, many commentators and scholars leave this verse out of their interpretation of the woman. They are trying to make the Bible fit into their own preconceived interpretation rather than allowing Scripture to interpret itself.

— This verse couldn't be more clear on the identity of the woman: the city of Babylon

— It is true that the identification can go beyond the city to the system it controls. However, the interpretation given to John focused only on the identification of Babylon as a city. Babylon also has a religious aspect (she persecutes believers), but this does not argue against it being a literal city.

- The imagery of a harlot (17:1,2,4,15,16; 18:3,7) has led many interpreters to the conclusion that Babylon is a false religious system, because infidelity is frequently used in Scripture to depict man's rebellion against God (Is 1:21; Jer 2:20; Ezek 16; 23)

— However, harlotry is also used in Scripture to personify individual Gentile cities in rebellion against God. The OT uses such imagery to portray the spiritual rebellion of Tyre (Is 23:16-17) and Nineveh (Nahum 3:4).

- Preterists contend that since the first reference to a "great city" in Revelation is Jerusalem (11:8), and since Babylon is called a "great city" in this verse, then Babylon must be a code word for Jerusalem. However, that identity does not fit the context of this passage (11:8; 14:20; 16:19). It also doesn't even interpret 11:8 correctly (Cf. "spiritually").

— The argument of "the great city" of Rev 17-18 is identical to "the great city" of Jerusalem in 11:8 is a hermeneutical error known as "illegitimate totality transfer," where the meaning

of a word or phrase as derived from its use elsewhere is automatically read into the same word or phrase in a foreign context.

- Thus, the woman also represents a city, specifically the city where this religion will be headquartered: Babylon
- "...reigns over the kings of the earth" - *gē*, earth; can have a local context referring to the land of Israel (1 Sam 13:19; Zech 12:12; Matt 2:9); the word can also have a universal meaning, referring to the entire earth (Gen 1:1)
- The meaning of the term depends on the context in which it is used. The global emphasis of the immediate context (17:15) argues for a global rather than local understanding.
- Rev 1:5, which describes Christ's universal, political reign is practically identical in the original Greek with the description of Babylon's reign here. Since 1:5 pertains to Christ's universal political reign, consistency mandates that Babylon's reign must also be universal and political.
- If the "great city" symbolizes Jerusalem, as preterism believes, when did Jerusalem rule over the kings of the earth? Far from ruling over the world, first century Jerusalem was trampled down by various Gentile powers (Luke 21:24) and under Roman occupation. In fact, the influence of Jerusalem was at its lowest in the two centuries preceding its destruction in 70 AD. Babylon's demise in Rev 17-18 is an immediate fall from great power and prosperity.

E.W. Bullinger

The Apocalypse or "The Day of the Lord", 509

"It is indeed surprising how any mistake could have been made in the identification of this woman. For the Holy Spirit first shows us her very name upon her forehead. Then, in verse 18, He tells us as plainly as words can tell anything, that 'the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reignest over the kings of the earth', and 16:19, as well as 17:5, identifies this city with Babylon. **God says it is a 'city.'** **He does not say a system or a religion, but a 'CITY.'**"