

The Two Babylons

REVELATION SERIES VOLUME 13

Gordon Lindsay

Revelation Series Volume 13 The Two Babylons By Gordon Lindsay

This is the thirteenth of the BOOK OF REVELATION SERIES. We have now come to some of the final scenes in the ending of the age. The Bible has a great deal to say about Babylon. In its first chapters it records the building of the Tower of Babel, and the subsequent scattering of the population throughout the earth. Later the Kingdom of Babylon attained power over all the civilized world. After its fall the religion of Babylon continued as a system which exists even to this day. In the Book of Revelation we are informed that just prior to the Battle of Armageddon there will be the destruction of two Babylons. What is the significance of these events? This question and many others such as the following are answered in this book:

Who is the Woman called MYSTERY BABYLON that sits on the Beast of Revelation 17?

What was the significance of the building of the Tower of Babel?

Is MYSTERY BABYLON identified with the Papacy?

What are the seven mountains of the city of Babylon?

Will the city of Rome be destroyed?

What is the other Babylon described in Revelation 18?

Will the original city of Babylon be built again?

These and many other questions are answered in this volume 13.

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Chapter 45, Mystery Babylon the Great

Question: At the pouring out of the Seventh Vial, we are told that “great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath”. (Rev. 16:19) What is the significance of this statement?

Answer: The 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation are devoted to the judgment of Babylon. To understand Mystery Babylon, we must know something of the history of mankind since the days of the Flood. Babylon is represented by a harlot, sitting on a Beast, that had “seven heads and ten horns”. This is the Beast that has been in existence all down through the aces. We shall find that the Harlot has also been in existence throughout the same period.

> ***“And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” (Rev. 18:24)***

262. The Beginning Of Babylon

Question: When did the history of Babylon begin?

Answer: Babylon had its beginnings immediately after the Flood, at the Tower of Babel, and it has had a long and evil history ever since. Let us note what the 17th chapter of Revelation has to say about this Harlot woman who sits on the Beast and is called MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT.

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

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. 17:1-6)

263. Contrast Between Mystery Babylon And The Sun-Clothed Woman

Question: What relation does MYSTERY BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, have with the Woman, clothed with the sun, that appears in Revelation 12?

Answer: In all ways these two women contrast. The Sun-clothed Woman represents the true Church-lsrael, while MYSTERY BABYLON, MOTHER OF HARLOTS represents the false church.

1. Both women have children. The first brought forth the Man-child who is to rule the nations. The second is “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth”.

2. Both are dressed with attire that marks attention. One is clothed with the Sunlight of heaven. The other is decked in purple and scarlet and the gaudy jewels of earth.

3. Both are in a position of influence and power. One has the moon under her feet and wears a crown of twelve stars. The other rides the Seven-headed Beast.

4. Both have great adversaries. One has the Dragon standing before her ready to devour her Manchild when it is born. The ten kings of the Beast turn against the Harlot and destroy her and “burn her flesh with fire”.

5. The first is a holy virtuous woman. The other is a harlot and the mother of harlots.

6. One is hated by the ruling powers of the earth. The other is loved and courted by the world.

7. The one is sustained by the wings of an eagle. The other is supported and carried by the Beast Power.

8. The one gives birth to the Manchild who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. The other is the oppressor of the righteous, and is drunken with the “blood of the prophets and the saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.”

9. One enters the New Jerusalem where she makes her home for eternity. The other comes under the wrath of God and goes down into the night of perdition.

The two women may be said to be set as rivals in history and prophecy. Their interpretation in prophecy must have a corresponding relation. As the Sun-clothed woman is the true Church, the Church of all dispensation of both Old and New Testament times, so this rival is as it were the Bride of the devil, embodying all that is devilish and sensual.

264. The Harlotry Of Babylon

Question: What is the outstanding characteristic of MYSTERY BABYLON, MOTHER OF HARLOTS?

Answer: She is called the mother of harlots, and her outstanding characteristic is her whoredoms, fornication and adultery. Seiss gives an excellent definition of what spiritual harlotry means:

> ***"Harlotry is the standing symbol in the word of God for a debauched worship, idolatry, and false devotion. When people worship for God what is not God or give their hearts to idols, or institute systems, doctrines, rites, or administrations, to take the place of what God has revealed and appointed, the Scriptures call it whoredom, adultery, fornication. (Jer. 3:6-9; Hosea 1 and 2; Rev. 2:22) The reasons are obvious. The breaking down of the divine law's and ordinances necessarily carries with it the dishonour of the marriage institution, and hence all supports of godly chastity and pureness. Accordingly, all false religions are ever attended with lewdness, even in connection with their most honoured rites. Besides the very essence of divine law is that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.***
>
> ***This is Jehovah's due and requirement of all that live. Hence the bestowal of worshipful affection on any other subject, or the putting of anything whatever in the place of the true God is in the very nature of the case, spiritual harlotry; for it is the turning of the soul from its only legitimate object of its adoration, to take into its embrace what has no right to such room and place. And as this woman is a harlot, 'the Great Harlot' and 'the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth', she must needs be the great embodiment, source and representative of all idolatry, false worship, and perversion of the word and institutes of God. This helps to determine her***

character as the rival antagonist of the Woman clothed with the sun, and makes her the symbol of the universal body of the faithless, just as the sun-clad Woman is the symbol of the universal body and congregation of believers."

265. Nimrod —Founder Of Babylon

Question: When did Mystery Babylon have its beginning?

Answer: The beginning of Babylon was in the days of Nimrod. "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one on the earth . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel ... in the land of Shinar." (Gen. 10:8-10) Nimrod was the grandson of Ham. the son of Noah, who came under a curse because of his wickedness. (Gen. 9:22-26) Many traditions have come down to us concerning this man Nimrod. Apparently, he was the first one after the Flood to organize rebellion against God. Arab records tell us that he professed to have seen a golden crown in the sky, and that he put it on his head and thus claimed rule over the earth in the name of Orion or the sun.

"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there . . . Anti they said one to another. 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." (Gen. 1 1 :2, 4)

The avowed purpose of the building of the Tower of Babel was to make a name for the builders. Of this H. A. Ironside says:

"Not surely, as some of us were taught in our childhood, a tower by which they might climb up into the skies to escape another possible flood, but a tower of renown, rising to a great height, to be recognized as a temple or a rallying center for those who did not want to walk in obedience to the word of the Lord. With all the effrontery of our modern apostates, they called their city and tower Babel, 'the gate of God'; but it was soon changed by divine judgment into Babel, 'confusion'.

"The fact that the tower was named. Babel, meaning 'gate of God", hints the inauguration of a new and idolatrous religion. At any rate, it was at this time that the Lord confused the tongues, and the people were scattered abroad on the face of the earth."

The great apostasy that took place at Babel is undoubtedly the one that the Apostle Paul speaks about in Romans:

> ***“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became tools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." (Romans 1:2 1-23, 28)***

266. Abraham Separated From Babylon

Question: After the confusion of tongues, what happened to Babel or Babylon?

Answer: The people were obliged to disperse, and their intentions of building the Tower were thwarted. However, the seed of evil that had been sown, survived. The ancient writings are replete with stories of the spread of the cursed Babylonian religion. It was during that period that the many Greek and Roman gods had their origin in mythology. The idolatrous worship of Babylon became almost the universal religion of the ancients. Even Terah, father of Abraham, served idols in the land of Shinar. (Joshua 24:2) That was why God called Abraham to leave his home and his native land and journey to Canaan.

Question: We are to understand that God’s call to Abraham was to separate him and his seed from Babylon, its customs and its religion?

Answer: Yes. Abraham’s descendants, the children of Israel, were strictly forbidden to have anything to do with Babylon or anything that had the mark of Babylon on it. This is evidenced in the judgment that fell upon Achan and his family. Achan had found a Babylonish garment in Jericho after its fall, as well as some wedges of silver and gold, and despite the stern warnings of Joshua that everything in Jericho was accursed, he, nevertheless, hid the stuff in the earth inside his tent.

> ***“When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." (Joshua 7:21)***

As a result of his disobedience, Achan was stoned as an object lesson to Israel.

Question: Nevertheless, in the course of time, Israel yielded to idolatrous worship of Babylon and served other gods?

Answer: Yes, time and again, Israel lapsed into idolatry, and suffered severe chastisement. During the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, the Babylonish religion gained ascendancy to the point that the worship of Jehovah was actually outlawed.

Question: What was the result of Israel's apostasy and worship of the Babylonian gods?

Answer: The Northern ten-tribed kingdom went into Assyrian captivity as a result of her idolatry, and later Judah was carried away, out of her land, into a 70-year Babylonian captivity. The Book of Daniel gives us several glimpses into the nature and character of this pagan religion of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar made a golden image, six cubits broad and 60 cubits high. (Daniel 3:1) At the sound of the music, he commanded everyone to fall down and worship the image, on penalty of instant death in the fiery furnace. Later King Belshazzar went so far as to profane the vessels of the house of God by requisitioning them for a drunken orgy. During this blasphemous carousel, there appeared a man’s hand, writing the words, "Thou are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting.” (Dan. 5:27) That night Belshazzar was slain, and the kingdom passed into the hands of Darius the Mede.

267. The Rise Of Mystery Babylon

Question: When the kingdom of Babylon fell, did MYSTERY BABYLON fall with it?

Answer: It has been mentioned that Mystery Babylon, after an apparent demise, came to prominence again after Pagan Rome became nominally Christian. As Rev. Alexander Hislor has brought out in his classic work, The Two Babylons, almost all the religious rites of ancient Babylon have been adopted and practiced in the Roman Catholic church. The Medieval Church found it much easier to “Christianize” the heathen tribes by allowing them to continue their old Babylonian practices and merely merging them with the rituals of the Catholic Church. Roman Catholicism, therefore, is actually a mixture of Christianity and heathenism. Paganism and Papalism and apostate Protestant Christianity are all an integral part of MYSTERY BABYLON. It represents the sum total of false religion that exists on the earth. It is Satan’s substitute and counterfeit for true Christianity.

268. History Of Babylon

Question: Could you give us a more detailed history of Mystery Babylon?

Answer: H. A. Ironside in his book, Revelation, traces the history of Babylon:

> ***"Ham begat a son named Cush 'the black one', and became father of Nimrod, the apostate leader of his generation. Ancient lore now comes to our assistance and tells us that Nimroud-bar-Cush was the infamous Semiramis the First. She is reputed to have been the foundress of the Babylonian mysteries and the first high-priestess of idolatry. Thus Babylon became the fountain head of idolatry, and the mother of every heathen and pagan system in the world.***
>
> ***"From Babylon this mystery-religion spread to all the surrounding nations as the years went on, and (he world was populated by the descendants of Noah. Everywhere the symbols were the same, and everywhere the cult of the mother and the child became the popular system . . . The image of the queen of heaven with a babe in her arms was seen everywhere, though the names might differ as language differed.***
>
> ***"Linked with this central mystery were countless lesser mysteries, the hidden meaning of which was known only to initiates, but the outward form was practiced by all peoples. Among these were the doctrines of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless sacraments such as priestly absolution, sprinkling with holy water, the offering of round cakes to the queen as mentioned in the book of Jeremiah, the dedication of virgins to the gods, which was literally sanctified prostitution, weeping for Tammuz for a period of forty days, prior to the great festival of Istar . . .***

Jezebel

> ***"From this mystery religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by the divine call; and with this same evil cult the nation that sprang from him had constant conflict, until, under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess,, it was grafted onto what was left of the religion of Israel, in the northern kingdom in the days of Ahab, and was the cause of their captivity at last.***

Babylonish Worship When Christ Came

> ***"When Christ came into the world, the mystery of iniquity was everywhere holding sway, save where the truth of God as revealed in the Old Testament was known. Thus, when the early Christians set out upon the great task of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, they found themselves everywhere confronted by this system in one form or another; for though Babylon as a city had long been a memory, her mysteries had not died with her. When the city and the temples were destroyed, the high priest fled with a company of initiates and their sacred images and vessels to Pergamos, where the symbol of the serpent was set up as the emblem of the hidden wisdom. From there they afterwards crossed the sea and emigrated to Italy. There the ancient cult was propagated under the name of the Etruscan mysteries, and eventually Rome became the headquarters of Babylonianism. The chief priest when established in Rome, took the title Pontifex Maximus, and this was imprinted on his mitre.. When Julius Caesar had become the head of state, he was elected Pontifex Maximus, and this title was held henceforth by all the Roman emperors down to Constantine the Great, who was at one and the same time, head of the Church and high priest of the heathen. The title was afterward conferred upon the bishops of Rome, and is borne by the Pope today, who is thus declared to be not the successor of fisherman-apostle Peter, but the direct successor of the high priest of the Babylonian mysteries, and the servant of the fish-god Dagon, for whom he wears, like his idolatrous predecessors, the fisherman's ring.***

269. Mystery Babylon In Rev. 17

Question: At what particular time in history is the vision of MYSTERY BABYLON fulfilled, as she appears in Revelation 17?

Answer: As we have shown, Mystery Babylon has been in existence throughout the whole age, beginning with the Tower of Babel, just as the Dragon and the seven-headed Beast has been in existence and manifested in one form or other throughout the whole age. However, the Harlot Woman as we see her in Revelation 17, represents MYSTERY BABYLON as she exists at the end of the age. This is just before the time that the Ten Horns, or the ten kings, of the Beast

kingdom turn against the Woman to destroy her. The continuity of the Book of Revelation, requires that the 17th chapter of Revelation, be fulfilled during the Seventh Vial, which is at the very end of the Age, just before the Lord appears at the Battle of Armageddon.

Question: Would you explain how you identify Mystery Babylon as existing throughout the ages of history since the flood?

Answer: We have noted that MYSTERY BABYLON rides the seven-headed Beast.

> ***"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 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." (Rev. 17:9-10)***

We have already seen that the seven heads of the Beast represent the seven successive world empires of history. Notice that the Harlot sits on all seven heads. MYSTERY BABYLON has, all down through the ages, been supported by these empires. Seiss says:

> ***"By these seven great powers, then, filling up the whole interval of this world's history, this great Harlot is said to be carried. On these she rides, according to the vision. It is not upon one alone, nor upon any particular number of them, but upon all of them, the whole seven-headed Beast, that she sits. The seven powers, each and all support the Woman as their pride and joy; and she accepts them and uses them, and sways their administrations, and rides in glory by means of them. They are her devotees, lovers and most humble servants; and she is their patronizing and most noble lady . . . But to say that the Roman Papacy was carried, nurtured, and sustained by the ancient empires of Greece, Persia, Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt, would be a great lie on history."***

The Harlot Woman represents the idolatrous religion of the false church as it has existed from the days of Nimrod and the Tower of Babel down through the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Media-Persian and Grecian Empires into the era of Rome. She then rides the Roman Beast until her destruction, as narrated in Revelation 17. As Jezebel of the Thyatira Church of prophecy (or the papacy), she has occupied a dominant role during the New Testament age.

270. Mystery Babylon And The Papacy

Question: You have shown how Mystery Babylon has been in existence since the days of Nimrod. That it began in Babylon and spread throughout the world. That during the Church Age its capital was transferred to Rome, and that the Harlot Babylon was represented in the Papacy. Would you sum up the reasons for which you identify Mystery Babylon with the papacy?

Answer: Well, there are many reasons. The description given in Revelation 17, could refer to only one situation in existence during the Church Age — the Roman Church. (We are indebted to “Revelation Simplified” by F. J. Dake for much of the information below.)

1. The Roman Catholic Church is identified as Mystery Babylon by her history. In the days of the Early Church, Christians were distinguished from members of other religions by their brotherly love, their purity and holy living. They were hated for these differences and the first great persecution by Rome occurred during the days of Nero. This and nine other major persecutions sorely tried but failed to overthrow the Church. In those days there was no general organization of churches. There was just one universal church, each congregation more or less managing its own affairs. The apostles exercised a certain control; it was more on the spiritual level rather than administrative. Paul turned men over to Satan when they did evil or injured the church, or preached heretical doctrines. (1 Tim. 1 :20) That was God’s way of enforcing discipline in the Early Church. No papal inquisition was needed.

Then in the Fourth Century, Constantine made Christianity the state religion. Christ’s messages to the Church at Pergamos and Thyatira speak prophetically of the rapid decline of spirituality in the Church, after the pagan emperors became its patron. Soon an hierarchy within the Church sprang up. The next step was the elevation of the office of the Bishop. Then certain bishops, five in number, were given the highest rank and these were called “patriarchs”. In the course of time, the Bishop of Rome was raised to supreme rank. He then proclaimed himself head of the Church by divine right, and as lawful successor of Peter. Pope Leo I, asserted this authority in strong terms, and began giving orders to bishops throughout Christendom.

From that time on, the Popes took advantage of every opportunity to exalt their office as the supreme authority of all Christendom. Hildebrand, in the Eleventh Century, conceived the idea that the Pope should be the supreme temporal ruler of the world as well as head of the Church. The Pope began crowning kings and

deposing them at will.

When the Pope crowned Charlemagne, the latter assumed temporal rule over what is called the Holy Roman Empire, an odd political institution which existed for over a thousand years. All did not go smoothly, however. At one time there were as many as three “infallible popes” each elected by the college of cardinals, and each hurling anathemas against the others. In the 19th Century, Napoleon entered Rome with an army and annexed the Papal states. The Pope was made a prisoner for a time, but after the fall of Napoleon, he recovered some of his authority.

In 1870, the Vatican Council met and gave the Pope unlimited power in all the activities of the Church of Rome, and proclaimed him infallible in defining the doctrines and morals of the Church. But the same year, the King of Italy added the Papal states to Italy. The Pope, in protest, became a voluntary prisoner in the Vatican, until, 60 years later, his claims were again recognized and his sovereignty restored. In 1929, Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty, which ended the conflict between Italy and the Pope. Following the signing of the concordat, the Pope became temporal ruler of Vatican City, having his own government, and flag. He now coins his own money and prints his own postage stamps and possesses all the appurtenances of a sovereign government. From the Vatican, the Pope sends out his ambassadors and envoys to many of the countries of the world.

Thus has the Roman Catholic Church, during the past centuries, assumed and exercised power over the rulers of the world. Romanism accurately fulfills the prophecy of the Mystery Babylon of Revelation 17, and is the only institution which does.

2. The second identification is found in the word “Mystery”, as applied to Babylon. The Roman Catholic Church is shrouded in mystery. There is the mystery of baptismal regeneration, the mystery of miracles by departed saints, the mystery of the bread and wine, literally being changed into the actual blood and flesh of the Lord, the mystery of the holy water, the mystery of its rites and ceremonies. Paul foresaw this mystery in his day and said the “mystery of iniquity doth already work”, but would be hindered until time for its revelation. (2 Thess. 2:7) The Catholic Church, with all its pagan mysteries, is clearly identified as Mystery Babylon.

The true Church is called a “mystery”. So also is this false religious system. Babylon is called a “mystery”, though its mysteries came from the Babylonian Cult, initiated by Nimrod.

3. Let us note some of the mysteries of ancient Babylon, which have been adopted by the Roman Catholic Church.

(1) The Roman Pontiff has been made supreme in the Catholic Church as was the Babylonian Pontiff. History shows the title, Pontifix Maximus, descended directly from the Babylonian High Priest.

(2) The worship and veneration of images as decreed in the Second Council of Nice 787 A.D., is purely pagan and came from Babylon.

(3) Private confession to a priest was a practice of ancient Babylon. It was declared a basic practice of the Catholic Church by the Council of Trent in the year 1551.

(4) The “sign of the cross” had its origin in the mystic “Tau” of the Babylonian cult. It came from the letter “T”, the initial letter of Tammuz. (Ezek. 8:14)

(5) The rosary is of pagan origin, and was used in the Babylonian mysteries.

(6) The order of monks and nuns was borrowed from the Babylonian cult. The latter is an imitation of the “Vestal Virgins” of pagan Rome, and copied from Babylon.

4. Mystery Babylon is called “mother of abominations”. She mothers and shelters the doctrines and practices of pagan Rome. The term “abomination” is especially associated in the Scriptures with idolatry. (Ezek. 8) The worship of images, one of the most prominent features of the Roman Catholic Church, identifies her with Mystery Babylon.

5. She is called the “great whore . . . with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication”. (Rev. 17:1-2) The terms “fornication" and “adultery” in the spiritual sense, refer to illicit and idolatrous pagan ceremonies that appeal to the religious nature. The terms refer to not only physical but spiritual harlotry, of which image worship is its most striking and flagrant feature. (Rev. 2:21-22; Jer. 3:6-9)

6. The Mystery Harlot of Babylon is “arrayed in purple and scarlet color”. (Rev. 17:4) Scarlet is the color of Romanism. The cardinals who are princes of the Roman Catholic Church, acquired their name from the color of their garments. The inner surface of the Popish cloak is scarlet. So is the carpet upon which the Pope treads. Purple is also a papal hue, as indicating his authority and dignity.

Mystery Babylon is “decked with gold and precious stones and pearls”, reminding us of the coronation of the Pope, at which time he wears a vest covered with pearls, and a mitre adorned with gold and precious stones.

7. Mystery Babylon is drunk with the blood of the saints. (Rev. 17:6-7) Certainly this describes Papal Rome as nothing else. Who has not heard of the Spanish Inquisition or St. Bartholomew’s Massacre, in which 100,000 innocent men, women, and children were slaughtered in one day, and for which event the Pope struck a medal. It has been estimated that over fifty million martyrs have been slain by this system over which the Pope rules. This may be an over-estimate, but when as many as 100,000 died in a day, the number must be very great.

271. The Seven Hills Of Rome

Question: Verse 9, states that “the seven heads are the seven mountains on which the Woman sitteth". Does this refer to the seven hills on which Rome is built?

Answer: As we have brought out on previous pages, the “seven mountains” symbolize the seven successive world kingdoms. “And there are seven kings; live are fallen and one is, and the other is not yet come ...” The live empires that had fallen were, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece. The kingdom then in existence was Rome.

However, prophecy often has a way of making its symbols serve a double purpose, as is here indicated in the text. Rome is “the city that reigneth over the kings of the earth”. There are also seven hills on which the city of Rome is built. These symbolize the seven kingdoms of history over which the Harlot Woman, Babylon reigns. It is interesting to note that the term “city of the seven hills”, is inseparably connected with Rome. In Encyclopedia Americana, Rome is introduced with the words: “Rome; known as the City of the Seven Hills, and the Eternal City.” It seems quite evident that the seven hills of Rome are another identification of that city that is symbolized by THE HARLOT WOMAN OR MYSTERY BABYLON.

272. Mystery Babylon In The Wilderness

Question: The Harlot Woman of Revelation 17, is seen in “the wilderness’’. (Verse 3) What is the meaning of the term “wilderness" as used here?

> ***“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." (Rev. 17:3)***

Answer: The term “the wilderness” is used in only one other occasion in the Book of Revelation. This is in the 12th chapter, in which the Sun-clad Woman is said to have “fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days.” (Rev. 12:6) In the 14th verse of the same chapter, it is added that the Woman received two wings of a great eagle, “that she mightily into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and a dividing of time, from the face of the serpent”.

1. The wilderness then, is a place prepared of God beforehand, so that the Sun-clad Woman would be protected during the three and a half years of the Great Tribulation.

2. Now in the 17th Chapter, we are shown this wilderness again. But the Sun-clad Woman is not seen. Why?

Well, the harvest of her seed has already taken place, except for the 144,000 Israelites who are sealed against judgment. Does the fact that the Beast is now in the Wilderness indicate that in the closing days of the Tribulation, the armies of the Antichrist have penetrated the areas in which saints have taken refuge and have destroyed many of them? The words of Jesus keep coming to mind, “Except those days be shortened no flesh shall be saved. But for the elects’ sake, those days shall be shortened.”

3. In her place in the wilderness, is now the Harlot Woman. Long, the pride of the Beast which she has ridden through the ages, the hour has come when the persecution that the Beast meted out against the saints of God (Rev. 13:7) is now directed against the Harlot Woman. For, she does profess to worship God, albeit it is a false worship. But the Beast cannot bear any kind of worship other than adoration of himself. The ten kings which give their power to the Beast now turn on the woman to destroy her.

> ***“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. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” (Rev. 17:16-17)***

The fact that the Harlot is in the wilderness, means that she is not in her normal place which is in that city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. (Verse 18) We cannot give “the wilderness” another meaning than it has elsewhere, where the term is used. The Harlot Woman realizes that her time has come, that evil is

determined against her and she, as did the Sun-clad Woman, seeks the wilderness in a hope of saving her life.

4. The wilderness, however, is a place specially prepared for the Sun-clad Woman only. The words, “The wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God”, and “that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time times and a half time”, indicate that the wilderness was essentially her own place of protection. It was not intended to be a protection for the Harlot Woman.

This reminds us of Joab, who after he joined the insurrection against Solomon, the heir of the kingdom, fled to the tabernacle and took hold of the horns of the altar. But the altar of mercy was no place of protection for a rebel, and they took him and put him to death. (1 Kings. 2:28-31)

5. For three years and a half, the Sun-clad Woman was protected in the Wilderness from the Dragon and the Beast. But that time is past, the wilderness is no longer a place of protection. The Beast coming into the wilderness now sets himself to destroy the Harlot Woman. We are told that the Ten Horns of the Beast turn on the Harlot and burn her with lire. That the Ten Horns representing the Beast kingdom, are mentioned as active in this slaughter means that in every part of the world, which is under the sway of the Beast, the emissaries of the Antichrist seek out and destroy the devotees of MYSTERY BABYLON.

273. The City Of Babylon — Revelation 17

Question: It is apparent that all these things identify the Harlot Woman, during this dispensation as representing the papacy and apostate Protestantism as well. Would you explain the 18th verse?

> ***“And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” (Rev. 17:18)***

Answer: There is only one city of which it can be said, during the past 2,000 years, that it has reigned over the kings of the world — that is Rome. To what other city could such universal dominion be attributed?

After the wane of the Grecian Empire, Rome rose rapidly to power. During the military campaigns of Julius Caesar, nation after nation, tribe after tribe, was defeated by his conquering legions, and became tributaries to Rome. In the year 27 B.C., just a few years before the birth of Christ, Rome was proclaimed an empire under Augustus Caesar. One hundred years later when Revelation was written, Rome was at the very zenith of its power. Thus it continued for several

centuries. Then after a process of internal decay, imperial Rome fell.

Now a miracle took place. Rome still continued to exercise rule over the kings of the earth, not through emperors, but through the papacy, which in the 5th century rose to power.

The Roman Pontiff began to exercise vast temporal power during the centuries that followed, crowning and disposing kings at will. In modern times, the pope's temporal power has been stripped away. Notwithstanding, Rome, through the papacy, continues to exercise tremendous power over half a billion subjects. Other cities have exercised great authority in the earth for limited periods, such as Babylon and Nineveh, but their time was comparatively brief. Judgment fell upon them, and their very locations are known today, only by heaps of ruins. Because Rome still maintains and exercises this power over the nations, she is called the "Eternal City".

274. The Sun-Clothed Woman And Mystery Babylon

Question: Some teach that the Sun-clad Woman apostatized in the wilderness and became the Harlot Babylon.

Answer: Before we leave the subject of the identification of Mystery Babylon, we must take note of this novel theory that proposes that the Sign-Woman, while she is in the Wilderness, apostatizes and becomes Harlot Babylon. The reasons given for this belief, are:

1. It is argued that when the Tribulation rapture occurs, all the godly seed are taken from the Sign-Woman and only apostate professors are left. That those which are left are Mystery Babylon, the Harlot Church.

2. That the Woman had fled to the Wilderness, and when John is taken into "the wilderness", after the Tribulation, he sees the former Sun-clad Woman now as Mystery Babylon, Mother of the Harlots sitting on the seven-headed Beast. The conclusion is that the Sun-clad Woman has apostatized and is now riding the Beast!

Plausible as the above interpretation is, we can hardly believe it to be the correct one, for the following reasons:

1. We have already seen that Israel is included in the symbol of the Sign-Woman, and certainly her future is far from that of becoming Harlot Babylon.

2. Indeed, God's people are told to come out of Babylon. "Come ye out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) There are still God's people on earth, who will go through

the Millennium.

3. The Sign-Woman, as we have seen, represents the godly seed of Israel, not its apostates. This seed must include the 144,-000 sealed Israelites, and no doubt, many more. Her seed cannot include the harlot daughters of Babylon.

4. God gives the Woman “two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and a half time, from the face of the serpent”. (Rev. 12:14) Do we then find her riding the Beast in deep apostasy at the end of this short period of three and half years?

5. Mystery Babylon has been in existence a long time, not a few short months. She has existed and practiced her whoredoms through the ages. She does not come into existence overnight. She has been contemporary with the Sign-Woman through centuries and the latter is her hated rival. Surely the Harlot Woman does not appear on the scene at the final end, as the Sign Woman’s successor. There is no evidence that the Sign-Woman apostatizes and enters into a compact with the Dragon and the Beast— that is, rides the Beast, as does the Harlot Woman.

6. The description of the murderous Harlot Woman in Revelation 17:6, could not apply at all to the Sign-Woman whose seed are those “who keep the commandments of Jesus Christ”. The seed of Mystery Babylon are harlots.

> ***“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 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. 17:5-6)***

7. Why is the Harlot Woman in the wilderness? She realizes that her day of reckoning has come and she cannot escape the Beast. The wilderness is not a haven prepared for her. The Ten Horns (Kingdom of the Beast) hate her and destroy her. Mystery Babylon has fled into remote areas of the wilderness, and all ten nations of the Beast pursue her and her seed to destroy them.

> ***“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.” (Rev. 17:16)***

Chapter 46, The Judgment of Commercial Babylon, The Angel of Revelation 18

Question: Who is the angel spoken of in Revelation 18:1?

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." (Rev. 18;1)

Answer: Evidently Christ is the one referred to. The earth was lighted up with His glory. Such language is nowhere used in the Scriptures, of created beings, but it appropriately describes the glorified Son of God. Isaiah 6:1-3, in the vision of the exalted Messiah, speaks of the cry of the seraphim, “The whole earth is full of his glory”. Ezekiel, beholding the glory of the Lord coming from the way of the east adds, “and the earth shined with his glory”. (Ezek. 43:2)

Here in Revelation 18, we see the Lord, Himself, descending to give Babylon the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

275. The Points Of Similarity Of The Two Babylons

Question: Both the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of Revelation speak of the destruction of great Babylon. Do these two accounts refer to the same event or are there two Babylons that are destroyed?

Answer: The eighteenth chapter of Revelation is considered by some as the most difficult chapter in the book. There is obviously a destruction of Babylon described in both the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. And in several points there is a marked similarity between the two Babylons.

1. Both commit fornication with the kings of the earth; one in a religious way, the other in a commercial way (Rev. 17:2; 18:3, 9; 19:2).
2. Both Babylons have shed the blood of the saints (Rev. 17:6; 18:24).
3. Both Babylons have a cup of abominations (Rev. 17:4; 18:6).
4. Both Babylons are called a city (Rev. 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19-21).
5. Both are burned with fire (Rev. 17:16-17; 18:8).
6. Both are called “Babylon the Great” (Rev. 17:5; 18:2).

At first glance, it would seem that these similarities are sufficient to prove that the two Babylons are identical. However, closer examination shows that there are also many points of irreconcilable contrasts which make it practically impossible to identify the two as the same Babylon.

276. Points Of Contrast Between The Two Babylons

1. One of the seven angels of the Seven Vials showed John the Mystery of the Harlot Woman. (Rev. 17:1) An altogether different angel describes the judgment of the other Babylon. (Rev. 18:1)
2. The Woman and the Beast are symbolic. (Rev. 17:1-18) Apparently nothing in the eighteenth chapter is symbolic.
3. Everything in the seventeenth chapter is explained. Everything in the eighteenth chapter being literal does not need explanation.
4. In the seventeenth chapter the angel said, “I will tell thee the mystery of the woman.” (Rev. 17:7) Why did not the angel continue speaking to John in chapter eighteen, if it concerned the same Mystery Babylon?
5. The Babylon in Revelation 17, is called, “The Woman”, the “great whore”, etc. The other is not.
6. One is on a scarlet colored beast. (Rev. 17:3) The other is not.
7. Names are written on the forehead of one, but not the other.
8. John wonders “with a great admiration” over the one. (Rev. 17:6-7) He does not wonder over the other. He had never heard of Mystery Babylon, but he did know about the literal city of Babylon. (1 Pet. 5:13)
9. No merchants are enriched by the commerce of the first, while there are of the second. (Rev. 18:19)
10. Men do not stand afar off for fear of destruction in the case of one, but they do of the other. (Rev. 18:8)
11. Merchandise is not described in the first. It is of the second.
12. A period of time is required for the destruction of the first, which involves the co-operation of the ten kingdoms. (Rev. 17:16)
13. In the second, the destruction took place in one day. (Rev. 18:10)
14. God puts it into the hearts of the ten kings to destroy Mystery Babylon. This is not true in the case of the other.
15. The ten kings rejoice over the destruction of Mystery Babylon. (Rev. 17:16-17) They mourn over the destruction of the other. (Rev. 18:9-19)

Proof seems overwhelming that the seventeenth chapter of Revelation refers to and completes the description of the destruction of Mystery Babylon. The eighteenth chapter begins with the words, “After these things”, and describes the fall of something else altogether. The first Babylon is a religious system. The Second Babylon is evidently a commercial system.

277. What Is Commercial Babylon?

Question: What is this commercial Babylon?

Answer: The term Babylon as here used is a symbol of world commerce, and the concentrated accumulation of wealth. Babel or Babylon, was the first city built after the flood. There Nimrod and his descendants sought to organize people into undertaking projects inspired by human pride, and, in defiance of God. The Lord, taking notice of the building of the Tower of Babel said, “And now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.” (Gen. 11:6)

Wealth, trade, gold and silver have become the gods of this world. Men willingly risk their lives in their pursuit of the mammon of commerce. Gold largely controls and rules this world. James speaks of the rich heaping together treasure for the last days, while the poor are oppressed and trodden down, without pity. This is especially true in foreign lands. In many heathen countries a man’s wage may be fifty cents or less for eight hours of work. Yet, a small piece of land in that same country, where he could build a home, might cost more than he could make in a lifetime. Thus it is in many of these nations; a few control the wealth, while the masses eke out a living in squalor and poverty. No wonder the people, in desperation, are prepared to accept the nostrums of Communist propaganda. No wonder they fall for a system which craftily proposes to take the property of the rich and divide it with the poor. Communism in contrast has proved, wherever it has gone, that it has no love for the common people. It merely gives them false hopes while the wealth is shifted into the hands of Communist masters, who in turn exploit the masses to their own selfish purposes. Witness the inhumane communes in China into which the helpless people are herded and made to toil like slaves. The spirit of Babylon which greedily seizes and hoards the wealth of this world by grinding down the poor, is mentioned by the Apostle James in the fifth chapter of his epistle:

> ***“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the cars of the Lord of sabaoth.” (James 5:1-4)***

278. Commercial Babylon And The Number 666

Question: Is the Antichrist associated with this commercial Babylon?

Answer: Yes. Daniel tells us that “through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper”. (Dan. 8:25) The Beast is identified with the number 666. (Rev. 13:18) it is interesting to note that the number 666 is associated with only one other thing in the Scriptures — gold! Solomon in the days of his great prosperity received 666 talents of gold a year into his treasury!

> ***“Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold.” (2 Chron. 9:13)***

It seems plain that the reference to this sinister number in connection with gold, is not accidental. Gold is the god of this world. As such it is associated with commercial Babylon and the Beast whose number is 666.

Question: Revelation 18 speaks of. this Commercial Babylon coming under the judgment of God. What does the Bible have to say about this system of world commerce?

Answer: The Scriptures have much to say about it. It is interesting to note that God planted the Children of Israel in a land in which there were few harbors, a circumstance which prevented them from becoming a great maritime nation. God is against the spirit of commercial Babylon. He warned Israel against seeking undue material wealth, against the multiplying of horses and silver and gold. (Deut. 17:16-17)

The great world trading centers have been notorious for multiplying wickedness and have brought upon themselves terrible judgment for their sins. Tyre and Sidon, the famous maritime centers of the earth in ancient times, came under the severest judgment of God. (Ezek. 26-28) Tyre's trafficking with Israel in the days of Solomon and Jehoshaphat resulted in the corruption of the chosen people. International commerce promoted in equity and justice, might well alleviate the poverty and suffering of mankind, but it has a tendency to regiment the race for evil purposes, in the same spirit in which Babel was built. Wealth, instead of inducing spirituality, often results in a spirit of covetousness and greed. Thus Jesus said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven.”

We know that there are godly businessmen, who have used their money for the glory of God. On the other hand, too often “business'’ is a common excuse for

not serving God. In Revelation 18, we see commercialism reaching its natural consummation during the reign of the Antichrist, when no man can buy nor sell, save he has the Mark of the Beast. Commercialism today, has driven men into a rat race. It is when spurred by the rivalries of commerce, that men fall into the most diabolical and ungodly practices. Recent events in America, such as the fixed television quizzes, the manipulations on the stock market, the clandestine agreements between prominent business officials to circumvent laws against monopoly, are only a few of the notorious examples of the duplicity and wickedness of a society corrupted by the spirit of commercialism. Men gamble all for the wealth of this world, forgetting that they have at best but a few years on the earth, and then they must stand before God and give an account to Him of their greed and inhumanity to their fellowman.

279. City Of Babylon — Revelation 18

Question: Revelation 18 speaks of Babylon as a great city. What city is this; is it Rome?

Answer: Revelation seventeen relates the destruction of Rome and therefore the eighteenth chapter must speak of something else. Many Bible scholars believe that the ancient city of Babylon is to be rebuilt and used as a capital by the Antichrist. We are cautious in accepting this interpretation. There are, however, a number of circumstances that point to this possibility, which we will discuss presently.

Question: Can you describe the ancient city of Babylon and its place in history? This will give us a background to know what to expect in the future.

Answer: Babylon's history goes back to the days of Nimrod. (Gen. 10:10) It was a city of importance in the days of the patriarchs, but it was during the time of Nebuchadnezzar, that it became the greatest city in the world. Herodotus describes it as being fifteen miles square, surrounded by a brick wall eighty-seven feet thick and at least a hundred feet high. On the wall were 250 towers, and the top was a roadway, wide enough to allow six chariots to drive abreast. Magnificent avenues, 150 feet wide, crossed the city from East to West, and from North to South. Superb engineering, remarkable for the times, was involved in building the bridges and underground tunnels that crossed the river within the city.

Near one of the palaces, stood the Tower of Bel with a winding stairway to its summit which, according to records, is said to have approximated an overall height of some 666 feet. The sacred utensils of the palaces alone were estimated

to be worth $200,000,000.

Babylon's greatest attraction, however, was the famous Hanging Gardens, which were reckoned as one of the "Seven Wonders" of the ancient world. This structure was arranged in terraces, laid one above the other to the height of 350 feet. Made of brick and stone and asphalt, it was covered with earth and planted to shrubbery and trees. The whole, had the appearance from a distance of being a forest-covered mountain. History records that Nebuchadnezzar built this mountain to please his wife, who came from a mountainous country, and had become tired of the plains. Whether this colossus made her contented is not certain.

Question: What has been the history of the city of Babylon, since the days of Nebuchadnezzar?

Answer: Babylon was captured by Cyrus in the Sixth Century B.C., as predicted by prophecy 125 years before. (Isa. 44:28;45:1) That was when the hand of a man wrote on the wall telling King Belshazzar that he had been weighed in the balances and found wanting. The Medes had diverted the river, and that night they poured into the city through the gates on the banks of the Euphrates. Over a century later, Alexander the Great captured the city, planned to restore its glory, but his sudden death, the result of his intemperance, prevented the carrying out of his plans. A rival city, Seleucia, sprang up and drew off many of the inhabitants of Babylon. It was still a city in the days of the apostles, and Peter apparently wrote an epistle from there. (1 Peter 5:13)

From then on, Babylon declined until 1,000 years later it was only a small village. Today it is totally deserted, marked only by debris and ruins. The only habitation in the area is the nearby city of Hillah.

280. The Judgment Of Ancient Babylon

Question: Is this desolation of Babylon a fulfillment of prophecy?

Answer: Yes. Its destruction was prophesied in dramatic language by the Prophet Isaiah in the 13th chapter:

> ***"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their***

> ***houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." (Isaiah 13: 19-22)***

Question: Was this destruction of Babylon the whole fulfillment of the prophecy?

Answer: Here is where a difference of prophetic interpretation enters in. Many believe that the prophecy has been completely fulfilled. Certainly, the ancient city of Babylon is today in a state of desolation, and has been for many centuries. However, Isaiah 13, seems to refer also to a special judgment on Babylon at the end of the age. The chapter begins with the announcement of judgment on Babylon, then it associates this judgment with that which occurs at the time of the Great and Notable day of the Lord:

> ***"Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty . . . Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." (Isa. 13:6, 9-10)***

Read the rest of the chapter, and see how world judgment (Verse 11) ties right in with the judgment on Babylon.

Question: Since ancient Babylon has been completely destroyed, it would seem that there could not be another judgment upon it in the Day of the Lord, unless it were rebuilt?

Answer: Precisely, and that is why many Bible students believe that Babylon will be rebuilt. Jeremiah the prophet, whom God especially anointed when Judah went into captivity, when predicting imminent judgment on Babylon, apparently foreshadowed another judgment at the end of the age:

> ***"And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.***

Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth. Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary. Then shalt thou say, O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. 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: 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 the words of Jeremiah." (Jer. 51:37, 41-45, 49, 53, 58, 62-64)

Notice the similarity in the predictions in Jeremiah made against Babylon to the words of Revelation 18; especially such verses as 45, 49 and 63-64. Compare the above with the following verses:

"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. 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. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and east it into the sea, saying,

Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. 18:4, 8, 21, 24)

The similarity of the prophecies are too striking for them not to have relation. There is definitely a judgment on Babylon at the end of the Age.

281. Will Babylon Be Rebuilt?

Question: Does this prove then that Babylon will be rebuilt by the Antichrist, to he later destroyed during the judgments of the Day of the Lord?

Answer: The proof is not absolute. The judgment spoken of certainly refers to judgment on Babylon in its world-wide ecclesiastical and commercial systems. The prophecy, however, may not necessarily refer to a rebuilt city. Certainly there have been no important developments yet in this direction. In fact, there has not been the slightest move thus far to rebuild the city.

Nevertheless, there is nothing in the prophecies that we can see that would preclude the rebuilding of the city of Babylon. We only say that at the present moment, the prophecies are not clear enough to dogmatically state that ancient Babylon will be rebuilt. It is a subject worthy of close watching. Events of the immediate future may cast further light upon the subject.

Question: If Babylon is rebuilt, what kind of a city would we expect it to be?

Answer: Clarence Larkin, in his Dispensational Truth, gives a colorful description of such a city:

> ***"Babylon the Great will be an immense city, the greatest in every respect the world has ever seen. It will be a typical city, the London, the Paris, the Berlin, the Petrograd, the New York, the Chicago of its day. It will be the greatest commercial city of the world. Its merchandise will be of gold and silver, and precious stones and pearls, of purple, and silk, and scarlet and costly wools. Its fashionable society will be clothed in the most costly jewels. Their homes will be filled with the most costly furniture of precious woods, brass, iron and marble, with the richest of draperies, mats and rugs. They will use the most costly of perfumes, cinnamon, fragrant odors, ointments and frankincense. Their banquets will be supplied with the sweetest of wines, the richest of pastry, and the most delicious of meats. They will have horses and chariots and the swiftest of fast moving vehicles on earth and in the air. They will have their slaves, and they will traffic in the 'souls of men'. That is, women will sell their bodies, and men their souls, to gratify their lusts.***

> ***"The markets will be crowded with cattle, sheep and horses. The wharves will be piled with goods from all climes. The manufacturers will turn out the richest of fabrics, and all that the genius can invent for the comfort and convenience of men will be found on the market. It will be a city given over to pleasure and business. Businessmen and promoters will give their days and nights to scheming how to make money fast, and the pleasure loving will be constantly planning new pleasure. There will be riotous joy and ceaseless feasting. As it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, they will be marrying and giving in marriage, buying and selling, building and planting.***
>
> ***"The blood will run hot in their veins. Money will be their god, pleasure their high-priest, and unbridled passion the ritual of their worship.***
>
> ***"It will be a city of music. Amid the noise and bustle of its commercial life will be heard the music of its pleasure resorts and theatres. There will be the sound of 'harpers and musicians, of pipers and trumpeters' (vs. 22). The world's best singers and players will be there. Its theatres and places of music will be going day and night. In fact, there will be no night, for the electric illumination of the city by night will make the night as bright and shadowless as the day, and its stores and places of business will never close, night nor day, nor Sunday, for the mad whirl of pleasure and the absorbing desire for riches will keep the wheels of business constantly moving. And all this will be easy because the 'god of this world' — Satan, will possess the minds and bodies of men, for we read in verse 2, that Babylon at that time will be 'the Habitation of Devils, and the Hold of Every Foul Spirit, and the Cage of Every Unclean and Hateful Bird'.***

The city will be the seat of the most imposing 'OCCULTISM', and mediums, and those desiring to communicate with the other world, will then go to Babylon, as men and women now go to Paris for fashions and sensuous pleasures. In that day demons, disembodied souls, and unclean spirits will find at Babylon the opportunity of their lives to materialize themselves in human bodies, and from the atmospheric heavens above, and from the Abyss below they will come in countless legions until Babylon shall be full of demon-possessed men and women, and at the height of its glory, and just before its fall, Babylon

will be ruled by SATAN HIMSELF, incarnate in the ‘Beast' — ANTICHRIST.”

This is one man’s conception of what the city of Babylon will be like, if it is rebuilt. As we have said, we do not have sufficient evidence as yet, to state categorically that this will take place.

282. The Two Women And The Ephah

Question: Do any other Old Testament prophecies lend support to the idea that the city of Babylon may be rebuilt?

Answer: The fifth chapter of Zechariah has a curious prophecy relating to this subject. The Book of Zechariah uses prophetic imagery, similar to that of the Book of Revelation. Moreover, its prophecies in general relate to the Day of the Lord, when God is pouring out His judgments upon the earth.

The fifth chapter opens with the vision of the Flying Roll, which we are told is a curse that goes out upon the earth. (Zech. 5:3) After this, an angel showed Zechariah another vision of the woman and the ephah. The angel interpreted the vision by saying, “This is wickedness.” Two women then come into view and they take an ephah (a large measure) and carry it as by wings of a stork (an unclean fowl) into another land. When Zechariah asked where they carried the Ephah, he is told that it was “to build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.” (Zech. 5:11)

Now it is evident that this vision of Zechariah of the women and the ephah is telling us something important. One woman (the Sun-Clothed Woman) in the Book of Revelation, represents the true Church; another, represents the false Church. An evil woman would appear to represent a false religion. These women in the vision are moving the location of their operations to the land of Shinar, which is the land of Babylon. (Gen. 11 :2) Now what does this mean? If Babylon should be rebuilt, then it can be well understood that these women represent the two Babylons — the religious and the commercial.

Question: Revelation 18:2 speaks of “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. Does this repetition have a significance?

Answer: In Revelation 8:13, we hear the words of the angel, “Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth ...” This repetition indicates, that there are actually three woes. (Rev. 9:12) Hence, we believe that the repetition of the words, “Babylon is fallen”, refers to the overthrow of the two systems of Babylon (which we have described) and perhaps to the two cities— Rome, and literal Babylon — if the latter is rebuilt.

283. God’s Warning To Those In Babylon

Question: What is the meaning of the words, “Come out of her my people, that ye be not a partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”? (Rev. 18:4)

Answer: The prophecies of Revelation have direct application to the time of the end. However, the purpose of all prophecy is to convey admonition, instruction and warning to God’s people of every generation. Since, as we have seen, Babylon has indeed been in existence throughout the whole age, the words have a warning applicable to every period of Church history. The anti-Christian spirit of Mystery Babylon and commercial Babylon has been operating during the whole period of the Church Age, and therefore, there has never been a time when this warning was not needed and timely.

Many of God’s people have been caught in the toils of Rome, which is Mystery Babylon. God’s call to Martin Luther, to the reformers, and to His people since that time, has been for them to save their souls, by coming out of that wicked and ungodly system.

But alas, that there is a spirit today in certain circles in apostate Protestantism desiring to return to Rome. This would be a calamity indeed. To go back to Mystery Babylon would mean only to share the terrible judgments that are about to be visited upon her.

Likewise with commercial Babylon. God would have His people to separate themselves from this corrupt system marked by idolatry and greed of gain. Far better to make a modest living and have the blessing of God, than to become entangled in the snares of commercial Babylon. Any business for that matter, that hinders one’s spiritual life, in the slightest, should be immediately given up, as tainted by the spirit of Babylon.

284. Babylon And The River Euphrates

Question: The Book of Revelation speaks of prophetic fulfillment elsewhere in the land of Babylon, does it not?

Answer: Yes. In the 9th chapter, we saw that four evil angels were loosed which had been bound in the River Euphrates. (Rev. 9:15) Upon this development, an army of some 200 million infernal horsemen came into action with the avowed purpose of destroying one-third of the population of the earth. (Verse 16)

Again in Revelation 16, we are told that the Sixth Angel pours out his vial of wrath “upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that

the way of the kings of the east might be prepared". (Rev. 16:12)

These Scriptures seem to indicate unusual activity at the end-time by the spirit-world in Babylon. Babylon is certainly represented by the symbol of the River Euphrates. Babylon seems to be a rendezvous of the forces of darkness with intent to do great evil, although restricted, nevertheless, in their activities to fulfilling the eternal purposes of God.

> ***"For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. 17:17)***

Satan's first foul activity on this earth was in the Garden of Eden in Babylon, where he tempted Eve. There, at his instigation, the first murder took place. In Babylon, the apostate ante-diluvian civilization sprang up and flourished. And after the flood, the first kingdom arising in rebellion against God, was the Kingdom of Babel. There the tower of Babel was built in defiance of Jehovah. And from the seed sown by Satan at that time, has come all the evil of mystical and commercial Babylon.

Babylon has become the hold of every foul spirit. And in her was found the blood of the righteous of all ages.

> ***"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. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. 18:2, 24)***

We feel that we should emphasize that we are not dogmatic about the rebuilding of the city of Babylon on the River Euphrates. But as far as we can sec, such a development would be in harmony with the general scheme of Bible prophecy. It would certainly be appropriate, that at the very site at which Satan began his subversion of the human race, a judgment should come upon the city and its evil genius, Satan.

Recently, there have been important events that have taken place in Iraq, which is the modern name of Babylon. A revolution has recently occurred that has pulled that country out of the pro west orbit, although apparently Iraq has not yet gone Communist. These occurrences could portend developments of world-wide importance. Whether or not those events are preparing the way for the rebuilding of the city of ancient Babylon is something to watch carefully.

285. The Destruction Of Commercial Babylon

Question: By what means will commercial Babylon be destroyed?

> ***"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. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come." (Rev. 18:8-10)***

Answer: If we assume that Babylon is a literal city, its burning could be by atomic destruction. The desolation of great cities even under terrific cannon fire (Stalingrad for example), took weeks, and even months to totally destroy. However, this city is destroyed in one hour. Either atomic destruction or fire from heaven, as upon Sodom and Gomorrah will be the cause of the holocaust.

> ***"For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!" (Rev. 18:17-18)***

Notice that those who watch Babylon's burning, stand afar of! as if they were afraid of fall-out coming from the desolated area!

Question: Is it certain that this city of Babylon in Revelation 18, does not refer to Rome?

Answer: Commercial Babylon cannot be Rome. Here are a few of the reasons:

1. Apparently Rome is already destroyed as recorded in Revelation 17.
2. Rome has never been a great commercial city. Certainly nothing to compare with the description of Babylon found in this chapter.
3. The kings of the earth hate Mystical Babylon, which reigned over the nations of the world, and they burn her with fire. By contrast, they weep over the destruction of commercial Babylon, with a great lamentation.
4. Verse one, of the eighteenth chapter, speaks of the events of that chapter being after those of the Seventeenth. "And after these things I saw another angel ..." Hence, they can hardly be the same events. It is notable that we do

not find unnecessary words in the Book of Revelation.

Babylon once burned the city of Jerusalem; now she herself is to be destroyed by tire. “I will render unto Babylon, and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea, all their evil that they have done in Zion.” (Jer. 51:24) And thus it is spoken in Revelation 18.

> ***“Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled to her double.” (Rev. 18:6)***

As Isaiah says, Babylon will be as Sodom and Gomorrah, which cities the Lord overthrew by fire:

> ***“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” (Isaiah 13:19)***

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