

## Chapter 17 and 18: Mystery Babylon

Both of these chapters deal with “Mystery Babylon” and are highly debated by scholars and have been for centuries. Chapter 17 describes a religious system while chapter 18 explains an economic system. During the Roman period, it was common to veil the name Rome by calling it Babylon. One huge note of interest: both the Babylonian and Roman Empires destroyed the Jewish Temple, seized the golden treasures, and took Jewish slaves on the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Jewish calendar, the ninth of Av. There are various interpretations of the woman or harlot riding the Beast. Lets come together on the common points before we delve deeper into all the theories. (Remember, we are going to agree to disagree agreeably!)

- 1) She represents both a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ system
- 2) She has martyred the saints
- 3) She influences both religious and economic world systems
- 4) She is mourned by the world because her great wealth is lost

### The Rome Theory:

Probably the most well taught by tradition, this theory puts the Roman Catholic Church as Mystery Babylon.

- 1) The Woman is clothed in scarlet and purple; colors associated with the RCC cardinals, bishops
- 2) The precious stones and pearls represent the RCC’s wealth (est. between 10\$-15\$ billion)
- 3) The Golden cup represents the communion cup of the Pope
- 4) The blood of the saints represents those Christians and Jews killed by Rome sine Jesus, the Inquisition, the Crusades etc.
- 5) The Seven Hills reference symbolizes Rome because the city was built on seven hills. (more on this later)

- 6) Rome was the political and economic center of the world in John's day
- 7) RCC has been in control of the souls of men with their doctrine of purgatory. (The relatives of a deceased person could pray/pay that person out of purgatory through the prayers of a priest helping them gain God's forgiveness and access to heaven)

#### The U. S. Theory:

There are people who believe that the United States is Mystery Babylon. Believing we are the symbolic Rome John mentions, the U.S. will become the leader religiously and economically influencing governments and controlling world leaders. Without a doubt, the U.S. has potential to fulfill this destiny. However, we don't fit the region of the world Revelation is dealing with. Keep our eyes open for sure and our hearts ready for Jesus' return.

#### The "\_\_\_\_\_ " rebuild Theory:

This theory comes from the geographical proof and historical evidence of a literal rebuilding of the ancient city of Babylon already initiated by several leaders in the Middle East most notably Saddam Hussein. Additional scriptures speak of a time when the "basket of iniquity (represented by a woman) committed by the people will be carried to the country of Babylonia to build a house for it." (Zech. 5:5-11) This theory has gained momentum as scholars have pointed to a Muslim Antichrist. It also fits because of the region it is being rebuilt in. The Antichrist will \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ up a dead ancient empire, making his kingdom the most devastating empire in history.

### The Arabian Peninsula Theory:

This will be new to most. Let's look at scripture again: John is taken into a desert. He is shown a Harlot, riding on Beast with seven heads and ten horns, drunk on the blood of the saints.

- 1) The Beast here is either the Antichrist or Satan himself. Either way, the harlot and the beast are working together, killing the saints, exercising complete control for a time. Notice John sees the Beast carrying her, in other words the Beast is supporting her, until she no longer supports His purpose and he destroys her in one hour.
- 2) There are seven "hills" upon which the woman sits; they also represent seven \_\_\_\_\_, five have fallen, one is, and the other has yet to come. This translation of hills is better translated mountains. Scholars believe this is symbolic of the 7 Prophetic Empires mentioned in previous chapters. Five have fallen (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece), one is (Rome at the time John wrote this), and one empire to come. A rebuilt Babylon, or a rebuilt Rome type, or an Arab coalition not seen since 700 A.D.
- 3) The beast who once was and now is not, is an \_\_\_\_\_ king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. This Beast will unify the ten horns and form an eighth kingdom that will rule for a time. It will be the final kingdom before Jesus returns to rule as King. The ten kings give their kingdom to the Beast in "one "hour, possibly after they see Mystery Babylon destroyed in an hour. (literal or figurative hour, we don't know, some think this will be a nuclear attack because of the time and that she is mourned from afar)
- 4) The waters John saw represent people, multitudes, nations and languages. The Arabian Peninsula has become home to many foreign companies, the city of Mecca alone has over 19 million in it, over 9 million ex-pats from all over.

- 5) The Beast and the ten kings will hate the prostitute. They will leave her naked and in ruin.
  
- 6) The \_\_\_\_\_ is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth. It will be a city both of economic and religious power. Here's the challenges with the Rome and the US theories: neither hold much world religious influence or power anymore. At one point and time yes but not now. We must also remember that the world must be brought under one economy somehow and that economy must be valued on something. Here's the theory: the desert, the religious influence, and the economic power are all present in the right geographic area matching Biblical prophecy.
  - 1) The religious influence is vastly underestimated because up until this week we haven't seen the influence of a united Muslim front. (and no, its not all Muslims) History makes clear in the 600's A.D. through the Crusades' that a united Islamic people can take over and influence the world! Currently there is an estimated 2 billion Muslims worldwide. That's almost 1/3 of the population.
  - 2) The economic influence is simple: oil and gas. The U.S. Geological Survey estimated that the Arabian Peninsula still contains 86 billion barrels of oil and 336 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered natural gas, as well as containing 3 of the world's oil chokepoints meaning if you wanted to cripple, reset, or bankrupt a world economy, oil and natural gas is your number 1. And you have to have a way to move it aside from pipelines. So, shipping would be your number 2. (Consider Mecca, Jeddah, and KAEC) (also the current est. value of the Saudi royal family is 1.5 trillion USD)

Remember that the city is destroyed in an hour by the beast. The system fails the beast in some way and he decides her destruction. Chapter 18 gives us a glimpse

into a type of destruction she will suffer. (vs. 9-20) Merchants will mourn for her loss and no one will be able to profit from her again.