

Mystery Babylon

Revelation 17-18

I. The Woman = Mystery Babylon

- A. Babylon is personified as a harlot riding a scarlet-colored beast (17:3).
- B. She is referred to as the “great whore” (17:1)
- C. Clothed in “scarlet” color, the color depicting sin (Isa. 1:18).
- D. She holds in her hand “a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication” (17:4).
- E. She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (14:8; 17:2).
- F. She is referred to as the “mother of harlots and abominations of the earth” (17:5).

➔ **What is Mystery Babylon?**

- 1. The world’s system that operates in open rebellion against God.
 - Pictured at the Tower of Babel — mankind uniting against God
 - Illustrated in the paganism of our day (idolatry, immorality, arrogance)
 - Represented by the world powers throughout history
- 2. Likely a specific city that serves as the headquarters for AntiChrist’s kingdom and ultimately experiences God’s certain and final judgment.

II. The Beast = AntiChrist

- A. Seven Heads = Seven Mountains, that is “kingdoms” (17:9-10)
 - ➔ In Scripture, “mountains often refer to world powers (i.e. Isa. 2:2; Jer. 51:25; Dan. 2:35; Zech. 4:7).
 - 1. Five are Fallen: Egypt (Pharaoh); Assyria (Sennacherib); Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar); Persia (Haman); Greece (Antiochus Epiphanes)
 - 2. One is: Rome
 - 3. One is Yet to Come: AntiChrist’s kingdom
 - ➔ AntiChrist is the eighth king; but comes up of the seven (17:11).
- B. Ten Horns = 10 Kings (17:12-13)
 - 1. They have received no kingdom as of yet.
 - 2. They receive power as kings one hour with the beast (“a short period of time”).
 - 3. They work in unison to support the beast.
 - 4. They contribute their resources and military might to the beast.
 - 5. They make war with the Lamb, but are ultimately overcome
 - 6. They hate the city that the AntiChrist is allied with, and they destroy it (17:16; 18:2).

NOTES

III. Mystery Babylon

➔ Characteristics of this City

- A. It is the “capital city” of AntiChrist’s kingdom – the woman directs the beast (17:3).
 - Likely the place of AntiChrist’s ethnic origin.
 - Serves as his headquarters, perhaps orchestrating the activities of AntiChrist behind the scenes.
 - The resources of this city likely fuel AntiChrist’s advance militarily and economically toward world domination.

- B. It is a “great city” (14:8; 16:19; 17:1, 5, 18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21)
 - “Great”: used at least 14x in reference to “mystery Babylon”
 - Significant in wealth, influence, and wickedness

- C. It is a desert city (17:3).

- D. It is a city with fabulous wealth — “clothed in purple; decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand” (17:4)

- E. It is morally depraved city (17:1-5; 14:8).
 - “a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication” (17:4)
 - “She made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (14:8; 17:2)
 - “she is referred to as the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth” (17:5)

- F. It is a city that zealously persecutes followers of Christ (17:6).

- G. It is a producer of wealth for other nations (18:3).

- H. It is an arrogant city (18:4-8)
 - “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow” (18:7)
 - God will judge the proud city (18:4-6, 8).

- I. It is a port city (18:17, 19)
 - Shipmasters, sailors, and sea traders mourn the loss of their wealth when this city is destroyed.

IV. Final Destruction

- A. God’s judgment will be swift (18:8).
- B. God’s judgment will be severe – “utterly burned with fire” (note the response of the surrounding Gentile nations – 18:9-17).
- C. This city will be “found no more at all” (18:21). What does Babylon represent in Scripture?