

**Prayer:**

The whole of history is leading to a worldwide judgment that will be followed by the kingdom of our Lord. First comes the worst time in history, followed by the best time in history. First, the Tribulation Period – then the kingdom.

The book of Revelation comes with an inspired outline that gives us the general chronological flow of what is coming, as seen in the inspired outline of Revelation 1:19.

**Slide # 1**

***Revelation 1:19 – Inspired Outline***

Revelation 1:19 (NKJV)

19 “Write the things which you **have seen**, and the things **which are**, and the things which will take place **after this**.

- “have seen” – Past (Vision of Christ) – **Ch. 1**
- “which are” – Present (Church Age) – Ch. 2-3
- “after this” – Future (Post-Church Age) –Ch. 4-22
- - Scene in heaven –Ch. 4-5
- - **Tribulation – Ch. 6-18**
- - Second Coming – Ch. 19
- - Kingdom – Ch. 20
- - Eternal State – Ch. 21-22

Revelation 17:1-19:10 is a unit. It essentially is an extended footnote giving further explanation in regard to the 7<sup>th</sup> bowl judgment regarding Armageddon. Revelation 17 and 18 are all about BABYLON being taken down.

Throughout history, ever since the fall in the garden of Eden, mankind has **been rebellious** toward the RULE of God. This rebellion is chronicled from Genesis to Revelation. **What began in Genesis** will be brought to a conclusion in Revelation. Mankind’s rebellion resulted in a **worldwide flood** (Gen. 6-8). Not long after the flood, humanity was involved in unified rebellion against God at the **Tower of Babel** as recorded in Genesis 10-11.

This was the beginning of **Babylon - humanities long term unified rebellion** against God. The tower of Babel signified **unified idolatrous rebellion** against God. That is the crux of what Babylon represents. God then broke up this unified rebellion by confusing the language (Gen. 11:7).

Out of that context, **God chose Abraham** and began building a chosen nation to be His special witness. But the rebellion continued, and because His **witness nation also fell** into idolatry, God allowed them to go **into captivity to Babylon**, the very epicenter of idolatry. **Their rebellion continued** as seen in the crucifixion of the Messiah.

God then **set aside His people**, Israel, for a while, and is **now building His church**. The word church means "called out ones" and when this church family is complete, Jesus will come and take them home to heaven. (Perhaps Today!) Then the concept of **BABYLON will come to complete fruition** as found in Revelation. What started in Genesis comes to full fruition and completion in the book of Revelation.

## Slide # 2

### ***Babylon in the Scriptures***

In Genesis, we have Babylon Idealized (cf. Gen. 11:1-9)

In Daniel, we have Babylon Imperialized (Dan. 1-6)

In Revelation, we have Babylon Globalized (Rev. 13, 17-18)

Babylon is **progressive in history**. Beginning with the tower of Babel, it brings together religion and state in unified idolatry/rebellion.

Babylon represents both a city and a system that develops out of it. The city is the city of Babylon on the Euphrates River that birthed and propagates an idolatrous system that infects and affects the entire world. All the false religions of the world go back to Babylon. In terms of a location, Babylon is the mother of all idolatrous religion in the world.

Babylon is therefore localized ultimately in the **literal city of Babylon**. But Babylon is also globalized in **terms of a system** that spreads out from Babel and influences the entire world.

This is state-sponsored unity that is idolatrous in nature. We see this at the tower of Babel in Genesis, we see it under Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel, and we see it in Revelation in the ultimate sense under Antichrist.

**Freedom of Religion** - free from government interference in matters of worship is truly a GREAT freedom. Babylon stands for the exact opposite.

Babylon represents the state and religion in an idolatrous partnership, resulting in the persecution of God's people.

Babylon, therefore, **signifies corrupt ecumenical religion.**

### **Slide # 3**

#### **BABYLON**

“State-Sponsored, Systematized, Unified, Man-Centered, Idolatry.”

- Unified Idolatrous Rebellion!

This system is on the move and is progressive even today, but will come to a climax in the Tribulation period following the rapture of the Church.

Babylon has **two major climactic aspects** in relation to the Tribulation Period.

**The first aspect** represents an alliance of **counterfeit religion** that will be in place after the rapture. They will be ONE. It will be a RELIGIOUS ECUMENICAL ALLIANCE – not united in truth – but united in **idolatrous ONENESS**. Not only will this amalgamation of religion be in **league with each other**, but they will be in **league with Antichrist** as we will see in Revelation 17.

The language of the text argues that **APOSTATE CHRISTENDOM** will be the **major player** in this ecumenical system. Antichrist comes out of the West (Europe), and by **background, Europe is “Christian”** (so-called) and it is in that context that we have presented this RELIGIOUS HARLOT riding on the beast (Antichrist).

Also, note that the attack against Israel and therefore Antichrist (because they are in a covenant relationship) in the first part of the Tribulation will come from a confederation of mostly Islamic countries, as seen in Ezekiel 38-39. This would argue that most likely this **great harlot so closely united to Antichrist, is probably largely apostate Christendom** from the West, but also representing a wide assortment of religious groups of various stripes that are now in ecumenical league with the apostate church.

**The true Church** is the bride of Christ, and one day Christ will come for His bride and take her back to Father's House for the formal marriage ceremony, which will be followed by the marriage supper of the Lamb!

**However, the false church** remaining behind will (in effect) become the **bride of the antichrist** and will very probably be the major player in the great ecumenical religious conglomeration of the Tribulation Period.

This false church, in league with all kinds of false religion, will initially be in union with antichrist. That is **Babylon – stage one** in the Tribulation!

**Now stage two.** In the middle of the Tribulation, Babylon will progress to its final form – that is, Antichrist will destroy this ecumenical religious harlot and will absorb into his system all that remains of it (cf. Rev. 17:16)

**Note – it is PROGRESSIVE!** It begins in the Tribulation with apostate Christendom and other stripes of false religion in union with each other and in union with Antichrist, but in the Middle of the Tribulation Period, Antichrist will declare himself to be God and destroy this ecumenical confederation as noted in Revelation 17:16.

For the last 3 and ½ years of the Tribulation, **the religion of Antichrist** alone will be tolerated and promoted as seen in Revelation 13. This is **the final form of Babylon,** which is dealt with at length in Revelation 18.

In other words, the **final form of Babylon** is the empire under Antichrist, as a unified religion and unified government will then all center in him.

This **emphasis comes to a climax in Revelation 18.** It will be a religious unity centered in antichrist but also tied to commerce and military power. It will involve a one-world government and a one-world religion. What began in Gen. 11 has now come to be full-grown as seen in Revelation 18.

Following the church age, God will judge the world, as we have seen in Revelation 6-16. Chronologically, chapter 16 brings us to the end of the Tribulation period. However, the last judgment – that is, the **7<sup>th</sup> bowl** judgment (which is Armageddon) has an appendix as seen in Revelation 17-18, which details the climactic **final showdown between God and the rebel system of Babylon that controls the World.**

At this point, **many awesome things will happen in close proximity** to one another. There will be a worldwide earthquake; the cities of the nations will fall; Jerusalem will be split up, and its topography changed; the islands will go under the sea; 100-pound hailstones will fall, the battle of Armageddon will commence, and in this mix, the final form of Babylon will fall. There are a lot of moving parts in conjunction with the 7<sup>th</sup> bowl!

God will deal with Babylon in a very definite, sudden, catastrophic, and final way, as this system represents the **core of idolatrous rebellion** that spread throughout the world from Genesis 10 on.

This is so significant that **2 full chapters** in Revelation are devoted to this subject. Revelation 17-18 provides more background detail and history behind the final collapse of the Babylonian system, which has become worldwide in scope. **What was introduced in Revelation 14:8, and summarized in 16:17-21, is now expanded on in Revelation 17-18.**

Revelation 17-18 is one of the most difficult portions in the Bible, and even among conservative dispensationalists, there is disagreement concerning the specifics. So, I don't want to be dogmatic on every detail, but I present to you my studied opinion. And in particular, I am talking about the IDENTIFICATION of Babylon.

I agree with those who see the form of "Mystery Babylon The Great" – the "great harlot" in Revelation 17 as distinct from "Babylon the Great" in chapter 18. The whole category is under the heading of Babylonic, so there are two distinct but related categories in view. And the main reason I hold to this is because "Mystery Babylon" is destroyed at the end of chapter 17, while "Babylon the Great" continues on as seen in chapter 18. In fact, Chapter 18 begins by saying, "**After these things.**" After what things? Well, after the destruction of Mystery Babylon at the end of chapter 17.

"The harlot" (Rev. 17) is the religious system that "the beast" uses to help build his organization. When Antichrist establishes his own religion (Rev. 13:11-15), he will destroy the "harlot" [Rev. 17:16], but it is God who will destroy Babylon [Rev. 18]. – **Warren Wiersbe**

#### **Slide # 4**

### **THE BABYLONIAN SYSTEM**

Idolatrous False Religion  
(Genesis – Revelation)

#### **Revelation 17**

Stage One

A City (Papal Rome)  
"Church" & State in Union  
Mystery Babylon  
Religious Emphasis  
Rides the Beast (Control)  
Destroyed by Antichrist  
1<sup>st</sup> Half of the Trib

#### **Revelation 18**

Stage Two

A City (Babylon Revived)  
Religion & State in Union  
Babylon the Great  
Economic Emphasis  
Controls the World  
Destroyed by God  
2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Trib

I could develop each one of these points, but I will deal with them as I work through the text.

The Babylonish system is both religious and political. The religious system paves the way for the political system. In the beginning, the religious system supports the political system, but in the end the political system supplants the religious one. – **John Phillips**

### **Revelation 17:1–6 (NKJV)**

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

This links back to chapter 16 where the 7 final bowl judgments were poured out. One of those angels who poured out those final climactic judgments came and talked to John. In effect, this angel explained to John in more detail concerning the final judgments of the world, which is governed by the Babylonian system.

John is shown the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters. Verse 18 shows that this great harlot is speaking of a great city that reigns over the kings of the earth.

### **Slide # 5**

#### **Revelation 17:18 (NKJV)**

**18 And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”**

In the Bible, spiritual harlotry speaks of spiritual unfaithfulness consistently in relation to idolatry on the part of those claiming to be God’s people. The major thing in view with Babylon is idolatrous religion. Religious apostasy is often spoken of in the OT in terms of spiritual immorality or spiritual harlotry – so the language of “harlot” here is fitting (cf. Hosea, Ezekiel).

This “harlot” is said to be “the great harlot” in that her scope of influence is worldwide. The system of spiritual unfaithfulness she promotes has a worldwide impact. This is not an obscure movement!

He says this “great harlot” sits on “many waters” which is shown to represent peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

**Slide # 6****Revelation 17:15 (NKJV)**

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

This is a worldwide movement that is unfaithful to God! The true Church is a pure virgin (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7-8), but the false church is a harlot – a great harlot that is not faithful to the truth of God. Four times in this chapter, this false religious system is characterized as a HARLOT (cf. v. 1, 5, 15, 16).

Note that “Babylon the great” in chapter 18 is not called a harlot. Yes, she is immoral and defiling, but she is not spoken of in the same way in terms of “harlotry”, which further argues that this represents a different aspect of the Babylonian System.

When the true Church is taken in the Rapture, what is left behind is a totally apostate Church. The true Church is called “the bride of Christ.” In contrast, the “false church” will in effect become the bride of the Antichrist. After the church is gone, “religion” doesn’t disappear on the earth, rather it partners with Antichrist.

**2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”**

This apostate religious system, with its many idolatrous prongs, was involved in intercourse (spiritually speaking) with the kings and people of the earth.

People are by nature religious! Everywhere in the world, people **have some form of religion**. Statistically, there are very **few atheists** in terms of the percentage of people in the world.

Every week at Prayer Meeting, we pray for a different country in the world. Almost never does the research present a statistical category for atheists. There are all kinds of various religions, but relatively very few atheists.

In the last days, people will be **wicked, yes, but still religious** – they will still go to church even though they don’t order their lives according to the Bible.

**Slide # 7****2 Timothy 3:5 (NKJV)****5 having a form of godliness but denying its power.** And from such people turn away!

**Even after the rapture,** unsaved people are going to continue to be **very RELIGIOUS**. In fact, they will probably get a little more religion! But the trend will be to tie into this **BIG ecumenical** religious system that is here called the great harlot.

So great will the influence of this harlot be that she will have intimate relations with the kings of the earth. Her political influence will be great!

And the inhabitants of the earth will be intoxicated with the wine of her fornication, which is a way of saying they will be under the influence of her idolatrous ways. Karl Marx said, "***Religion is the opium of the people.***" He would have been right had he qualified that by saying, "false religion." The truth sets you free, but false religion is binding and debilitating.

Have you ever tried to **talk sense to someone who is drunk?** Almost invariably, that is an exercise in futility. The world will be greatly swayed, influenced, and intoxicated with this religious idolatry. So much so that it will be like the world is in a **spiritual stupor**. The world is largely in this condition even now.

Two things are emphasized here in the first two verses regarding this woman.

**Slide # 8**

***Spiritual Harlotry:*** Giving yourself to spiritual unfaithfulness, idolatry, apostasy, for what you can get out of it.

***Spiritual Fornication:*** Spiritual intercourse with false religion.

The kings of the earth are involved in an unholy alliance with this harlot (system of unfaithfulness), emphasizing the union of church and state. This amounts to the kings of the earth having a political affair with this apostate religious system.

The inhabitants of the earth have imbibed deeply of her false teachings. The whole world is swayed by this harlot, both kings and inhabitants.

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

“The wilderness” denotes a deserted, lonely, desolate wasteland – perhaps in keeping with the spiritual condition of this great spiritual harlot. Being in the wilderness in the Bible is often synonymous with being out of the will of God and wandering from God. The Jews wandered for 40 years in the wilderness in their condition of unbelief (cf. Isa. 21:1).

In this place, he saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast. Note the woman at this point (which evidently is in the first half of the Trib) is in the sitting or riding position. She is on top, indicating she has sway over the beast, who in Revelation 13 is shown to be the Antichrist.

This woman, representing false religion, going into the Tribulation, has incredible power and influence, which is worldwide in scope, even to the point that she is initially dominant over the beast.

Note how she is presented as being in UNION with the Antichrist. It is like hand in a glove – they are working together.

However, they apparently both have their own power agendas. I think this woman wants to use the beast to her ends, and the beast wants to use the woman for his objectives. We find that when the beast gets stronger, he will throw off the woman and destroy her, but initially, they work together in what seems like a mutually beneficial arrangement! This is a marriage of convenience – but divorce comes at middle of the Tribulation Period.

We know at that point the Antichrist will go into the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and declare himself to be God above all (2 Thess. 2:4). At that point there will no toleration for any other religion.

### **Slide # 9**

#### **Revelation 13:4–7 (NKJV)**

**4** So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

**5** And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

**6** Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.  
**7** It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And **authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.**

So it makes sense that this union with the beast takes place in the first half of the Tribulation. On top of that, in 17:16, we find that Antichrist's key supporters totally destroy this woman.

Scarlet in the Bible is sometimes identified with the color of sin, as seen in Isaiah 1:18. The beast was of a scarlet color and full of names of blasphemy.

The beast is full of irreverent names. This is what the beast is identified with, and the woman is identified with the beast. They are all in the same blasphemous camp.

Having seven heads and ten horns. This same idea is brought out in Revelation 13:1.

These heads apparently represent 7 great world powers that have oppressed Israel throughout history. The antichrist builds on and is the capstone of this history of infamy.

### **Slide # 10**

#### ***Seven Heads of History*** (Jewish Oppression)

- Egypt
- Assyria
- Babylon
- Medo-Persia
- Greece
- Rome
- Revived Rome

These heads are the devil's tools throughout history and also the building blocks on which the antichrist will build and bring to a climax the greatest time of trouble the Jews will ever know (Jer. 30:6-7).

Furthermore, this beast (Antichrist) had 10 horns.

Daniel 7 also mentions 10 horns in relation to the coming antichrist as seen in Daniel 7:7, 24. Revelation 17:12 tells us that these 10 horns represent 10 kings who form the nucleus of the Antichrist's kingdom.

### **Slide # 11**

#### **Revelation 17:12 (NKJV)**

**12** “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

“The second and third angelic announcements in chapter 14 implied a close association of this beast with Babylon (14:8-11) in that the doom of Babylon entailed the doom of those who worship the beast. Here that relationship becomes explicit.” – **Thomas Ice**

What we see in this verse is *worldwide ecumenical false religion in UNION with the government of antichrist*. This is mystery Babylon (the woman) in union with political Babylon. The first will give way to the latter, but initially they are in union. Antichrist is smart in that he leverages false religion to ascend to world power!

**4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.**

Wow! This harlot woman is really something to look at. She represents beauty, wealth, extravagance, but also incredible wickedness! Prostitutes dress to draw attention to themselves, and this harlot is no different. She is portrayed as both outwardly attractive and very wealthy!

The description of the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls is all too familiar to one acquainted with the trappings of ecclesiastical pomp today and especially of the high officials in the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. – **John Walvoord**

In terms of assets, the Roman Catholic Church is considered by far to be the wealthiest institution on earth.

Purple often stands for royal authority (cf. Jn. 19:2-3), and scarlet for luxury and splendor. Interestingly, scarlet (dark red) is a KEY color in Roman Catholicism, especially in relation to the garb of the cardinals.

### **Slide # 12**



In her hand was a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

The cup used in the Roman Catholic Mass is known as a **chalice**. It is plated with precious metal—most commonly gold or silver—to hold the wine that supposedly becomes the Blood of Christ. The Church holds this instrument as sacred since it holds the actual blood of Christ.

### **Slide # 13**



This truly is a blasphemous abomination before God because the Bible is clear that Christ by ONE offering has perfected His people forever (Heb. 10:14). It is FINISHED! (Jn. 19:30) whereas the Roman Catholic Church teaches it is a continuation of Christ's sacrifice. They still have Jesus on the cross. But in Roman doctrine, the priest has the power to turn the wine into the blood of Christ. This is called transubstantiation.

The process of changing it from wine to blood is called "**The Consecration.**" When the priest says, "***This is my blood***", according to Catholicism, this causes the change. Likewise, he turns the bread into the body of Christ. And then he bows before it because this is his God. It is pure idolatry. Actually, the entire system through and through is idolatrous!

In his book ***The Faith of Millions***, John O'Brien, a Catholic priest, explains the procedure of the mass.

When the priest pronounces the tremendous words of consecration, he reaches up into the heavens, brings Christ down from His throne, and places Him upon our altar to be offered up again as the Victim for the sins of man. It is a power greater than that of monarchs and

emperors: it is greater than that of saints and angels, greater than that of Seraphim and Cherubim. Indeed it is greater even than the power of the Virgin Mary. While the Blessed Virgin was the human agency by which Christ became incarnate a single time, the priest brings Christ down from heaven, and renders Him present on our altar as the eternal Victim for the sins of man—not once but a thousand times! The priest speaks and lo! Christ, the eternal and omnipotent God, bows His head in humble obedience to the priest's command.

The fact is, the most formidable, relentless, and deceptive enemy in the devil's long war on truth has been Roman Catholicism. It's an apostate, corrupt, heretical, false Christianity – a thinly veiled façade for the kingdom of Satan. – **John MacArthur**

### **Slide # 14**

**Jeremiah 51:7 (NKJV)**

**7 Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand, That made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged.**

Abominations in the Bible consistently represent idolatrous worship, which is spiritually filthy (defiling) and spiritually compromising!

Her cup is full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. This is the language of saturated Idolatry as seen in the Scriptures. It denotes blasphemous activities that God detests, and her cup is full of them.

Note the contrast between her outward beauty and her gross wickedness!

**5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**

In Bible times, Roman prostitutes commonly wore headbands that designated them for what they were. This woman on her head had inscribed "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT."

"**Mystery**" in the NT consistently refers to something that previously was not known but is now being revealed by divine revelation.

Since the true church is also called a mystery (Eph. 5:32), this apostate church is a counterfeit. – **Charles Ryrie**

The true church is a mystery in that it was not revealed in the Old Testament (Eph. 3:1-9). The anti-church, designated here as a harlot, is a mystery in that it was not revealed until John wrote Revelation 17. – **J. Vernon McGee**

And part of the mystery is that God is showing us that all false idolatrous religion ultimately is traced back to Babylon, has been developing throughout history, and now finds ultimate fulfillment in the Tribulation period in connection with this great harlot – the false church.

Without this revelation we would not know this. After the flood, the first organized rebellion was at Babel. Out of it came all the organized false religions of the world. The roots of them all tie back to Babylon – without exception.

The Bible teaches that the Babylonian system, rooted in Genesis, is central and mother to all the false religions of the world and that it comes full circle in the end times, as seen for example in Isaiah 13-14, Jer. 50-51 and Zech. 5:5-11.

**Nimrod** was the grandson of Ham, the unworthy son of Noah. Nimrod was the founder of the city of Babel or Babylon. According to ancient writings, the wife of Nimrod was Semiramis. Supposedly, Nimrod died and became the sun god. He then miraculously impregnated Semiramis by a sunbeam. She had a miraculously born son named Tammuz. One day, he was out hunting and was killed by a wild boar. Semiramis supposedly wept for him for 40 days, and he came back to life. You can see how this counterfeit religion mimics the truth of Christ throughout.

Semiramis was known as the High Priestess of the Babylonian Mystery religions, which involved all sorts of idolatrous practices, including astrology, magic practices, occult practices, and many things that relate to New Age Practices today.

Thus began a **whole system of counterfeit religion** with the major identifying MARK being a **mother and son religion**. She became known as the Queen of heaven, etc. Throughout the land, idols of the mother and the babe in her arms were common.

The **names and the places changed**, but the **same mother and son** religion that started in Babylon began to infiltrate throughout the world. In Egypt, Semiramis was named Isis and her son Osiris. In Assyria, she was Ishtar and her son Bacchus. In India, it was Isi and her son Iswara. In Asia, she was Cybele and her son Deoius. In Greece, she was Aphrodite and her son Eros. And in Rome, she was Venus and her son Cupid.

IN the OT Jeremiah condemned Israel for worshiping Semiramis the Queen of heaven.

### **Slide # 15**

#### **Jeremiah 7:18 (NKJV)**

**18** The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes **for the queen of heaven**; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. (cf. Jer. 44:15-30; Ezek. 8:14-15)

“After the Persians took over Babylon in 539 BC they discouraged the continuation of the mystery religions of Babylon. Subsequently, the Babylonian cultists moved to Pergamus, where one of the seven churches of Asia Minor was located (cf. Rev. 2:12-17). [In Rev. 2 Jesus said that Pergamos was where Satan’s throne was located.] Crowns in the shape of a fish head were worn by the chief priest and the Babylonian cult to honor the fish god. The crown bore the words “Keeper of the bridge,” symbolic for the bridge between man and Satan. This handle was adopted by the Roman Emperors who used the Latin title Pontifex Maximus which means “Major keeper of the Bridge”. And the same title was later used by the bishop of Rome. The pope today is often called the pontiff, which comes from pontifex. When the teachers of the Babylonian mystery religions later moved from Pergamum to Rome, they were influential in paganizing Christianity and were the source of many so-called religious rites which have crept into ritualistic churches.”

– ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

For example, the Babylonian Mystery religions had a system of priests; they used holy water, candles, etc. The 40-day commemoration of Semiramis weeping for Tammuz was now transformed into the 40 days of Lent. The mother and son emphasis was now transferred to the church with all kinds of corresponding relics and idols.

“Mary- worship, saint-worship, image-worship, and relic-worship. In one word, it is a huge organized idolatry.” – **J.C. Ryle**

Or to put it another way, it is the fulfillment of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT. It is not the final form of Babylon, but it paves the way for it. The final form is the religion of Antichrist. Mystery Babylon in league with Antichrist makes way for the ultimate final form of idolatry centered totally in Antichrist.

The woman of Revelation 17 is a great harlot called “MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT.” She is a part of the overall Babylonian System and yet is distinct from the final form of “Great Babylon” in Revelation 18.

It is clear from chapter 17 that “MYSTERY BABYLON” is linked to Rome religiously and politically, but it would seem from chapter 18 that Babylon may be rebuilt. – **David Levy**

This great harlot is apostate Christendom. It involves a city (headquarters - Rome) and a system. It is rooted in the Babylon of old and perpetuates the Babylonian idolatrous system. It emphasized organized idolatry and unified false religion. In the Tribulation Period, all organized false religion will coalesce around her. This false church will be in union with Antichrist, and all the false religions of the world will unify under her umbrella to form a one-world ecumenical religion. Religious unity will finally be achieved – only to find out it is a Satanic unity in league with Antichrist.

The Babylonian system that originated in Genesis will now have come to full fruition as developed in the apostate Church.

Note, she is the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth. All manner of false religion spawns from and is associated with her. Ultimately ALL organized, idolatrous religion ties back to the Babylonian System, of which Papal Rome has become the nucleus.

Rome is in bed with every false religion. The connection with Islam is Mary. In fact, a whole chapter in the Koran is dedicated to Mary (chap 19). For years, Rome has called for ecumenical unity between those connected with what is called “**The Abrahamic Faith**,” involving Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Years ago, Pope John Paul called together the leading figures of 12 of the world's religions to promote ecumenical unity. He said, “The challenge of peace... transcends religious differences.”

Just a few days ago, during a historic visit to the Grand Mosque of Algiers on April 13, 2026, Pope Leo XIV referred to the Islamic mosque as "**a space proper to God**". During his so-called Apostolic Journey to Algeria, the Pope removed his shoes, toured the facility, and emphasized interfaith dialogue, calling the mosque a "**divine and sacred space**".

### **Slide # 16**



Christendom is the largest religion in the world, and Roman Catholicism makes up the largest portion of it. It is the wealthiest institution in the world, and in terms of spiritual harlotry, the most idolatrous. My view is that Mystery Babylon the Great is the city of Rome and that she is the propagator of the Babylonian System that leads the whole world in the matter of Babylonian idolatry.

This eventuates in union with Antichrist and thereby sets the stage for the final form of Babylon, with its city being restored Babylon on the Euphrates and its system being the religion of Antichrist. Thus, Mystery Babylon under Rome will give way to Great Babylon under Antichrist, and it will all come crashing down under the judgment of God.

Those given over to idolatry, historically, are haters of the truth and haters of God's people who stand for God's truth. Thus...

**6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.**

The saints and the martyrs are the same people. It is stated twice for emphasis. Saints means "**set apart ones**" in the sense that they have kept themselves pure in their devotion to God. Martyrs is often translated as "**witnesses**." These faithfully stood for the gospel of Jesus and were killed for it.

This woman, the catalyst for false idolatrous religion, has been no friend to God's people. She killed them. She was drunk with their blood. The qualifier of her being drunk with the "martyrs of Jesus" clearly identifies this harlot as being an identity following the time of Christ.

The fact that she sheds the blood of the martyrs of Jesus aids in her prophetic identification, for certainly ancient Babylon did not shed the blood of Christian martyrs. – **John Phillips**

Again, this argues for a spiritual application of "Mystery Babylon" that is centered in Rome.

Throughout the Church Age, the Roman Catholic Church has mercilessly killed the saints. The crusades, the inquisitions, the Dark Ages, tell a story of horrific treatment of God's people by the false church. And in league with the Antichrist, it will build to a climax as those who stand for Jesus will be slaughtered by her.

And when John saw her, it was SHOCKING to him. He marveled with great amazement. John saw the beginning of the Church. He saw her earlier development, but to now see that there is a whole segment of the professing church that will become totally apostate, in league with Antichrist, and full of vitriolic enmity towards God and His people was SHOCKING! And it should SHOCK us too!

George Orwell wrote a book titled *1984*. In it, he tells the story of a man writing in his diary about an encounter he had with a prostitute. One evening, he spotted a prostitute near a train station. "She had a young face," he writes, "painted very thick. It was really the paint that appealed to me, the whiteness of it, like a mask, and the bright red lips. In a society where abject fear and loneliness are the norm, he craved intimacy. But as he goes into this woman's apartment and lies with her, he turns on a lamp, casting a bright light on her face. And immediately, he sees that the appearance of beauty was a lie. "What he had suddenly seen in the lamplight was that the woman was old. The paint was plastered so thick on her face that it looked as though it might crack like a cardboard mask. There were streaks of white in her hair; but the truly dreadful detail was that her mouth had fallen a little open, revealing nothing except a cavernous blackness. She had no teeth at all."

Initially, what he found appealing and attractive was all found to be a lie. And so it is with the false church. The aura of her greatness and outward beauty is appealing, but in truth, she is an unfaithful harlot who, in the end, is shown to be grotesque and vile!

In Matthew 24 when the disciples asked Jesus about “last things” the very first thing Jesus said was...“Take heed that no one deceives you.” (Matt. 24:4). He then said...

**Matthew 24:5 (NKJV)**

**5** For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

The true Church consists of those who hold to the true gospel. For them, Jesus is LORD and SAVIOUR, and nothing can substitute for this reality. For the true Church, “***It’s all about Jesus.***” For the false church its all about idolatry, it's all about idolatrous rituals, sacraments, all kinds of other mediators, priests, penance, Mary, the saints, the Pope, the Church.

One day, I was talking to a man who is Roman Catholic. I asked him what the difference was between Roman Catholicism and Evangelicalism. He said that the Roman way was more direct! I countered that Catholicism had all these hoops, the priests, the mass, the sacraments, purgatory, etc, whereas I, in contrast, had a direct route to God through Jesus Christ ALONE!

The Bible is clear there is only ONE mediator between God and men – the Man Christ Jesus Who gave Himself to be a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5-6). Any other way is a form of idolatry. Any addition to Jesus is idolatry. For the true believer, it's all Jesus all the time. There is nothing else to help us onto God.

Who is Jesus to you? Is He your ONE mediator? He is the bridge to life. He is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no other way!

What makes you a member of the TRUE CHURCH (the true family of God)? Faith in Jesus! We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone!

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!