

In preparation for studying the *Second Angel's Message* that began sounding in A.D.1842, the era of the Advent Movement, we must identify the mysterious world power, spiritually known as **Babylon the Great**. Recall from studies of Daniel chapters 1-5, Babylon was once a mighty Empire that ruled the world and was God's sword of chastisement upon Judah, the Southern Kingdom of Israel. Utilizing the *Literary Tool and Principle* of the **Natural Followed by the Spiritual**, the Bible describes another world power in Revelation Chapter 17, illustrated by a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that is spiritually called **Babylon**. Let us understand the identity of this world power given in vision.

**Q:** Based on our understanding of prophetic symbols, describe the vision shown the prophet John in Revelation 17:3-6.

**A:** John was taken in vision to the *wilderness*, a place of seclusion, where he was shown the event of a woman taking her seat upon a scarlet-colored beast. The beast was said to be covered with names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman, symbolic of a church, assumed her seat upon a beast, a nation or kingdom, having seven heads and ten horns. The latter symbols for the beast, when combined, always point to Rome. Resembling the Beast from the Sea of Revelation 13, this scarlet-colored beast had blasphemous names written upon it, suggesting it assumed upon itself titles, roles, and works belonging only to God. The Beast from the Sea of Revelation 13, also having seven heads and ten horns, received a mortal wound to one of its heads that was in wonder, healed. Based on the details

provided, it is fair to reason that the woman seated upon the beast of Revelation 17 is the *resurrected* beast of Revelation 13, symbolic of the Papal System. The woman sitting atop the Beast, denoting a church controlling a civil authority, gives added evidence of this institution.

**Q:** Comment upon the manner in which the woman is dressed.

**A:** The simple, chaste dress of the woman of Revelation chapter 12, the **True Church, and Bride of Christ**, stands in stark contrast to the woman of Revelation 17. The woman upon the scarlet-colored beast is said to be "*arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls*". Her attire speaks of wealth, power, and prosperity. Purple was the color of royalty. The color red, symbolizing sin (Isaiah 1:18), has historically been scorned in social circles as immodest dress, particularly for its association with this woman in the Bible. The gold, pearls, and precious stones imported by merchants from around the world (the fare of which was acquired at great cost),



adorned the simplest of wares for those of extravagant taste. The Bible here describes the lavish, opulent lifestyle of popes, cardinals, and bishops of Rome. These powerful men of worldly influence profess to follow and represent the lowly Jesus Who once stated, "*foxes have holes, and the birds of the air [have] nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay [his] head*" Matthew 8:20. Popes, dressing in

kingly apparel and their cardinals in red colored robes, profane the selfless and simple lives of Jesus, His Apostles, and the humble early Christian church followers.

The Bible depicts the woman holding a golden cup that is "*full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication*". A very cursory look within the Bible identifies an abundance of works deemed *abominations* to God that historically have been prevalent within this system. Some include:

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|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Use of unclean foods (Leviticus 11) | Graven images (Deut 7:25; 27:15)        | Necromancy / Witchcraft (Deut 18:10-12)    |
| Homosexuality (Leviticus 20:13)     | Worship sun, moon, stars (Deut 17:3, 4) | Froward / Wickedness (Proverbs 11:20)      |
| Unjust weights (Deut 25:14-16)      | Lying Craft (Proverbs 6:16-19)          | Shedding innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16-19) |

The cup in the woman's hand also holds the "*filthiness of her fornication*."

**Q:** What is fornication and how does a church system commit fornication?

**A:** Fornication is any illicit relationship condemned by God in His word, the Bible. The Bible describes however, **Spiritual Fornication**, as a church system's inappropriate alliances, trading, influence, or control over kings and powerful merchants of the earth. Depicted as a woman in prophecy, the church is supposed to be the chaste Bride of Christ, having interests and affections for His word and His Kingdom alone (1 John 2:15-17; Matthew 6:24-34). This church system however, is typified throughout the Bible as having lived deliciously, committing fornication with

merchants of the earth and "beasts", kings and their kingdoms (Rev 18:7, 9; Lev 18:23). The wayward, worldly lifestyle practiced by God's people is called **whoredom** in the Bible. It was first exhibited by Ancient Israel and later perfected by this church system (Jer 3:1-14; Luke 20:19, 20). Foretelling the ultimate destruction of this corrupt church system, the prophet John later wrote:

*"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul [Babylon] lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,"* (Revelation 18:11-15).

Christ's just judgment will in time reveal that many of the world's historical and modern atrocities, including the wars of nations, the African slave trade, colonialism, sex trafficking, world financial corruption, illegal drug trade, and the exploitation of people groups are attributable to, endorsed by, or have close ties to this world system.

# Babylon the Great

## Supplemental Study 9 [Based on Revelation chapter 17:3-6]



Lesson 39

Upon the woman's forehead a name is written, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH". Let us explore the great mystery related to this woman, her offspring and her works.

The name Babylon is derived from the ancient city of Babel, founded by the great grandson of Noah, Nimrod. Nimrod is said to have been a "Mighty hunter [of men] before the LORD", suggesting he bore a cruel and wicked disposition. His wickedness is confirmed by the proud and rebellious intent of building both a city and a tower towards the heavens; serving as a means of escape should God again destroy the earth by flood. After the flood, God made a covenant with the earth and its inhabitants that He would never destroy it by water again, and confirmed His promise in the rainbow. Two generations after the flood, men, in defiance tried to make a name for themselves, ignored God's command to disperse and fill the earth, and scoffed at His promises of grace. The name *Babel*, meaning *confusion*, is synonymous with the confusing of languages that God imposed upon the builders of the tower in order to thwart their efforts (Genesis 11:1-9). A city in Bible prophecy is associated with civil authority, whereas a tower, is prophetically symbolic of the church (Proverbs 18:10, Isaiah 5:1-7). That Nimrod sought to build combined, civil and religious institutions to his glory, gives a prophetic allusion to the genetics and spirit behind *Babylon the Great*. Babylon today, is soon to be fully manifested in the triumvirate of *Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet* (Rev 16:13, 14)!

She who commits whoredom with the kings and merchants of the earth is said to be the "Mother of harlots", suggesting that she has children who follow in her harlotry (Isa 57:3-11). That her children are female, imply that she has given birth to other harlot churches. We will better understand the identity of the offspring born to the whore in our next study.

Babylon is said to be the "Mother of Abominations of the earth". The message from a Fourth Angel, given later in the Revelation, states that Babylon has "become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" Revelation 18:2. In essence, any, and all forms of evil can be found in the institution that calls itself the Universal [Catholic] Church of Christ.

Lastly, the prophet John, "saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This fact, when coupled with others previously stated, allows one to conclusively state the era of the vision, and phase of this world-power's existence. Before analyzing these facts, let us unveil one more significant detail.

**Q:** *Who else from our studies of the Revelation appeared in the wilderness in vision, and when? Study Rev 12:6, 13-17.*

**A:** *Recall, the woman of Revelation 12, clothed with the sun and the moon, and having a garland of twelve stars (God's True Church), fled into the wilderness to escape persecutions from this same power, Babylon, for 1,260 years (A.D.538-1798). Though aided by the Lord and hidden by the earth for a time, the whore, Babylon, hunted the True Church mercilessly, discovering it even in the wilderness*

and martyring millions of its adherents. Far from the "modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety", with which the Apostle Paul counseled women of God to adorn themselves, Babylon the whore, has become *intoxicated* with the blood of the saints (Rev 6:9-11, 18:24; Dan 11:32-35).

We began the study by observing the woman, *Babylon the Great*, take her seat upon a scarlet-colored Beast. This act marks a modern historic event spiritually, as the Church of Rome assumed its position upon a nation (a beast), showing the **power**, the civil and military advocacy she once had and lost, has been restored. The fall of Communism in A.D.1989 under the former Soviet Union through the combined forces of the Papacy and the United States was called the **Holy Alliance** by the popular contemporary magazine, **Time**. This alliance of the papacy and the foremost Protestant nation in the world undoubtedly marks that historic event.

Babylon is shown with a cup, full of the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus Christ, indicating the era of the True Church's concealment (1,260 years) had come to its end with the whorish woman prevailing (Rev 13:6, 7; Daniel 7:25). Herein, John was shown the birth of **Modern Rome**, a reinvigorated Papacy that awaits the full allegiance and empowerment by all world governments through an **Image to the Beast**. Once granted, she will wage her last attack upon the people of God through the **Mark of the Beast**. We will continue our study of God's *remnant* people who will stand during this final testing time!