

Prophetical Babylon (Isa 13:1-22; 21:1-10; 47-48; Jer 50-51; Rev 17-18)

The Historical Roots. 17:5

and upon her (the woman's) forehead (METWPON = 8x; all in Revelation; where the Seal of God was placed on the 144,000; and where the Mark of the Beast could be placed) a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF (THE) HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (letter sizes denote size of letters in the Greek text)

C.T./L.T. = And upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Summary:

1. "Mystery" describes the title but is not a part of the title.
2. Since it is labeled a "mystery" analytical thought is required.
3. It is called "Babylon" due to the confusion within it that has been spread to others.
4. It is called "Great" because of the extent of its influence and long history.
5. The fact that Historical Babylon during the period of the captivity of Israel (586-516 B.C.) was one of the seven "heads" (i.e. the 3rd) rules out the possibility of it being the "woman." It can't be both the "head" and the "woman."
6. Therefore, the "woman" is the viewpoint of the Tower of Babel that was passed through the Seven Heads.
7. The "harlots" refer to those who have followed the viewpoint and attacked Israel as a result.
8. This includes Religious and Economic Babylon of the end-times.
9. Nimrod was the first post-flood human to promote this viewpoint.
Cf. Gen 10:8-9
10. Nimrod was the head of ancient Shinar (Sumer) and was known as Etana in their records.
11. His wife Semiramus became the head of a cult that deified Nimrod after his death.
12. According to legend:
 - A. She gave birth to a son named Tammuz. Mentioned in Ezekiel 8:14
 - B. Tammuz was to be a savior.
 - C. Idols were made picturing the baby in his mother's arms.
 - D. These idols exist in all civilizations.
 - E. A priesthood oversaw the rites of the mother-son cult.
 - F. Tammuz also became the husband of his mother Semiramus.
13. From ancient Sumer, the cult spread to many nations:

- A. Egypt–Isis and Osiris
 - B. Assyria–Ashtaroth and Baal
 - C. Babylon–Ishtar and Bel
 - D. Persia–Anahita and Mithra
 - E. Greece–Artemis (Latin: Diana) and Bacchus-Zeus
 - F. India–Isi and Iswara
 - G. China–Shing Moo (Holy Mother) and many others.
14. Israel fell under discipline for following the "Queen of Heaven" which was patterned after this cult. Jer 44:17-18,25; 7:18
15. The original cult spawned other systems of religious harlotry.
16. A summary of the symbols:
- A. Woman = viewpoint of the Tower of Babel
 - B. Harlots = kingdoms accepting that viewpoint
 - C. Great Harlot = focal points of the Babylonian viewpoint in the last generation
 - D. Beast = Dictator of the Revived Roman Empire
17. A power play will pit harlot against harlot.

The Reason for Judgment. 17:6

And I saw the woman drunk (**drinking wine from**) with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her (**having seen**), I wondered greatly.

C.T./L.T. = And I saw the woman drinking wine from the blood of the saints and from the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And having seen her, I wondered a great wondering.

Summary:

- 1. Throughout history the Babylonian viewpoint has persecuted the saints.
- 2. Specifically, that worldview will play a role in the motivation that murders both Church Age and Tribulational saints.
- 3. This woman's "doctrine" dictates this massacre.
- 4. The viewpoint persists through the Revived Roman Empire even after the particular organizational structures of these two harlots is destroyed. Cf. 16:6
- 5. They are killing Believers, often in the name of "Christianity."
- 6. After all, they claim to be the "real" church. After the Rapture, they will be quite angry that they have been "left behind." Cf. John 16:2-4
- 7. John's amazement is at least twofold:
 - A. How this false Christianity could exist.
 - B. The extent and magnitude of the viewpoint.

The Angel's Response. 17:7

And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder (**Aor Act Ind THAUMADZW**)? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

C.T./L.T. = And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns."

Summary:

1. The angel informs John that these symbols can be identified.
2. The Beast carries the Woman, which denotes the human agents that are used in spreading this false doctrine.
3. For a period of time, the Dictator caters to the two harlots.

The Beast's Identity. 17:8

"The beast that you saw (cf Chapter 13) was (IPF Act Ind EIMI = existed prior to John) and is not (OUK + Pres Act Ind EIMI = not contemporaneous with John), and is about to come up (Futuristic Pres Act Ind MELLW = going to come up; a pure future tense is used at the end of this verse) out of (EK) the abyss (ABUSSOS = this beast is in the Abyss now; note that creatures and not kingdoms inhabit the abyss; not Rome as that was in existence when John wrote this; The "abyss" is: the place of fallen angels Luke 8:31, Rev 9:1,2; has Satan as its head Rev 9:11; where the Antichrist comes from Rev 11:7; where the Dragon will spend the Millennium Rev 20:1,3) and to go to destruction (Pres Act Ind HUPAGW = go under the authority of + APOLEIA = ruination). And those who dwell on the earth will wonder (Fut Pas Ind THAUMADZW = contemporaneous with the rising of the Beast), whose name has not been written in the (Lamb's) book of life (cf 13:8; 21:27) from the foundation (KATABOL8 = apart from the disorderly foundation) of the world (COSMOS), when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. (Fut Mid Ind PAREIMI = to exist alongside; the pure Future tense does not leave the previous Present Tense open to interpretation)

C.T./L.T. = The beast that you saw was and is not and is going to come up out of the abyss and is going to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will be caused to wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life apart from the disorderly foundation of the cosmos, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will be present.

Summary:

1. The Beast in view is a man, not a kingdom or Satan.
2. The Revived Roman Empire would not fit this description as that would have to read, "was, is and will be."
3. Satan is not yet in the abyss. Cf. Rev 9:1-2; 20:3
4. Satan is distinguished from the Beast, although he empowers him. 16:13; 19:20
5. The passage says:
 - A. The Beast existed before 96 A.D. and was in the Abyss.
 - B. He was not on the earth in 96 A.D.
 - C. He will literally be present later on the earth.
 - D. He will return to the abyss.
6. These two words for "hell," the "Abyss," and "Destruction," describe his source and final destiny.
7. The amazement is that he is from the past.
8. Therefore, no one born after 96 A.D. is the beast, the Antichrist.