



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 74: Religious Babylon

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Review:

- A. We did not have class last week due to adverse weather conditions. We cancelled for safety concerns.
- B. It's been two weeks since we met for our study. Following is a short review:
 1. We completed the Bowl Judgments in our last lesson together, specifically Bowl Judgements #6 and #7.
 2. We saw how chances were strong that the extreme heat of Bowl Judgement #4 will likely cause massive and precipitous flooding due to the sudden melting of ice and snow.
 3. We looked at how the world at this future point is probably one that will be experiencing a global 'nuclear winter' due to all the interference with the sun's normal radiation in all the judgements up to that particular point.
 4. The extreme heat of Bowl Judgement #4 results in massive flooding. However, the inhabitants of the world cannot get to the water they need due to the supernatural darkness that is imposed on the world in Bowl Judgement #5.
 5. Given the extreme flooding of the Euphrates River, God supernaturally dries up that river in Bowl Judgment #6 so that the 'kings from the east' can cross over it towards the west.
 6. This is in preparation for the gathering of the nations for the Battle of Armageddon. We looked at how these events are likely to take place at the very end part of the 7-year Tribulation.
 7. Specifically, we saw that there would be a demonically inspired message of deception coming from Satan, the antichrist, and the False Prophet, to gather the 'kings of the whole world' for this Battle of Armageddon.
 8. Then, we looked at Bowl Judgment #7 and the mother-of-all-earthquakes that this judgment delivers. It will result in every island and mountain disappearing, and the collapse of all the cities of the world. This changes the topography of earth.
 9. Finally, we gave some attention and physics consideration to the 100-lb hailstones that Bowl Judgement #7 will conclude with. The destruction from this event will be huge.

NOTE: That brings us to this week where I want to move now to **Revelation Ch. 17**. This is a very cryptic portion of Scripture that many of your Bibles state is about "religious Babylon."

We've referred to this chapter a good deal in various lessons before this one, so this will feel a bit like a flash review for some of you. For others, it will be new information.

While the book of **Revelation** moves along more-or-less chronologically, there are places in its content where God intends for it to have a “divine pause.” This permits the reader to look around and consider what all has happened. The view looks back a bit and recaps everything up to the present moment.

That was the case with the Two Witnesses in **Revelation Ch. 11**, and it’s the case here with the content of this chapter. This is a moment where God divinely provides some information about events which have taken place prior and up to this moment in the overall sequence of Tribulation events.

I. Overview of ‘religious Babylon’

NOTE: This chapter is about the ancient origin, the onset, and the conclusion of the global false religious system that will rapidly rise in the end times following The Rapture of the Church.

A. John is carried away in a vision in **vss. 1-3** where he sees a dramatic scene that is clearly symbolic.

1. We know it is symbolic because the angel who is with John explains the meaning of each element of the scene to John in **vss 7 and after**.

B. Here is what John sees:

1. An elaborately dressed woman sitting on a strange scarlet beast.
2. The woman is covered in absolute finery: pearls, purple and scarlet attire, gold, and precious gems.
3. She’s holding a golden cup filled with what the Bible calls “abominable filth.”
4. She has a tattoo or message of some sort written on her forehead. It reads as follows: **(vs. 5):**
 - a. *“Mystery Babylon the Great”* – Up until this point, this global false religious system has been unknown. Its origins are from ancient times and from Babylon, which is the source of all false religions.
 - b. *“The mother of prostitutes”* – all false religions and belief systems have been absorbed into this one final global religious deception.
 - c. *“And of the abominations of the earth”* – all past corruption and sin will be embodied within this final global false religious system.
5. She is also noted in **vs. 6** to be *“drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.”*
6. So, this apparition of a woman, whatever she represents, is clearly hostile to the message of the Gospel, to the person and work of Jesus Christ, and to all who state and provide testimony to the truth of God’s Word.
7. John also sees that this woman is sitting on a strange beast. This beast has seven heads and ten horns, and it is covered in blasphemous names.

C. Here is what the angel explains to John:

1. The beast on which the woman is sitting *“once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go into HIS destruction.”*

2. This is language we have seen before which was used to refer to the antichrist:
 - a. **He was** - His original political appearance and rise, and his physical representation of a former world leader (**Cf. Daniel 9:26-27**).
 - b. **Now he is not** – Possibly a reference to his death by a mortal wound (**Cf. Zechariah 11:17?; Revelation 13:3+**), but certainly a reference to him not being around during John’s time.
 - c. **He will ascend** - His miraculous recovery, and his source as being a figure from the past (**Cf. Revelation 13:3+**).
 - d. **He will go to his destruction** - His destruction at the hands of Christ at the Second Coming (**Cf. Daniel 7:11; 11:45; Revelation 19:19+**).
3. *“The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits.”* This is best interpreted as being a reference to the headquarters of the woman. It is most likely a reference to Rome which was popularly known as the ‘City on Seven Hills’.
4. *“They are also seven kings....etc.” (Cf. vs. 10)* Here we have reinforced what I said just moments ago. The antichrist will be a figure from the past that returns once more in the future.
5. This is why in **vs. 11**, the angel says *“he belongs to the seven.”* In other words, he is one of them.
6. The ten horns are also explained as being ten future rulers who will rule along with the antichrist *“as kings”* for a brief period of time.
7. They are not REAL kings, but they have authority and power *“as kings.”* They have tremendous money, resources, influence, power, and authority in this post-Rapture world which they use to enable the antichrist’s goals.
8. **Vs. 13** describes them as having *“one purpose”* or one obsession. Again, that is to enable the antichrist to establish his global empire.
9. Because of this obsession or singular purpose, the angel tells John that these ten kings *“will make war against the Lamb.”* Given their desires and their singular obsession, they will oppose God, God’s laws, and God’s followers. They will hate the truth in all its forms.
10. The angel then proceeds to describe the woman:
 - a. She is a prostitute. In other words, she deceptively lures people away from what is right and proper to what is false and improper. She is corrupt.
 - b. She is comprised of *“all the peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages”* of the world. Her influence is global and far-reaching.
 - c. Here, we have the fact reinforced that this is a worldwide religious system that is in opposition to God and to the truth of God’s Word.
 - d. The antichrist and his ten kings will hate her. At a key point in time, the halfway point of the Tribulation, they will utterly and violently destroy this false one-world religious system, and the antichrist will then demand self-worship instead.

- e. But until that halfway point, there is an uncomfortable alliance between the political ascent of the antichrist and the establishment of this one-world false religious system.
- f. They will both need each other for this period of time for each to establish their individual objectives. In the meantime, the antichrist and his ten kings secretly hate this one-world false religious system for it keeps them from having FULL and ABSOLUTE control.
- g. Lastly, the angel says quite clearly: *“the woman is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”*
- h. In other words, this future false one-world religious system will be headquartered in one location. Again, I believe that to be Rome. From this location, this global false religion will hold tremendous sway and control over the leaders of earth. (up to a point, as we have learned).

NOTE: Again, those are all just the high points here from **Revelation 17**. We’ve studied much of this before in past lessons. Now let’s take a quick look at some other texts from Scripture that reinforce everything we’ve just reviewed.

II. Rome:

- A. In King Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the great metallic statue in **Daniel Ch. 2**, four great Gentile nations of human history are pictured: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and finally Rome. They are each represented by different metals that descend in value.
 - 1. There are other great Gentile nations in human history, but these four are called out for their role concerning Israel.
 - 2. Rome, in this vision, continues all the way to the very end. In its final form, it is a corrupted version of its original constitution. This is pictured in the ten toes of iron and clay (NOTE: ten toes, ten horns, ten kings, etc. – all are making the same point).
 - 3. IMPORTANT: Rome never went away. The other empires disappeared, but not Rome. It remains today.
 - 4. The military / political entity of Rome in Jesus’ time eventually became known as the Western Leg of the Roman Empire.
 - 5. There emerged an Eastern Leg as well that was headquartered in Constantinople. The Eastern leg outlasted the Western leg by several hundred years. (NOTE the two legs of the vision of the statue.)
 - 6. The Roman Empire became later known as the Holy Roman Empire. The Popes began, then the Holy Roman Catholic Empire, then the Roman Catholic Church and today is simply called The Catholic Church.
 - 7. All along the way, each new phase was just a revamping of the phase before. Again, the Roman Empire never went away; it just morphed into its next iteration.
 - 8. Today, the Roman Empire of yesteryear is represented by the Catholic Church. It is headquartered in Rome within The Vatican, and its lineage of the popes has persevered all the way down through the ages.

9. The current pope: advances globalism, pushes socialism, despises Israel, but supports Israel's enemies, touts green energy, embraces the fallacy of multiple genders, chafes against national borders, supports homosexuality, denies the person and work of Jesus Christ, believes that aliens will soon arrive on earth, and he is doing all he can to promote what will eventually become the antichrist's deceptive agenda.
 10. The Catholic Church today is present in all of the nations of the earth. It wields extraordinary power and influence. It also possesses vast resources and wealth, therein the extravagant garb of the harlot of **Revelation Ch. 17**.
 11. It does not embrace the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, but rather it advances many premises of socialism, globalism, and multiple false doctrines.
- B. My belief, from studying Scripture and from studying the facts of history and present events, is that most Catholics will be left behind in the Rapture.
1. The Catholic denomination is not a denomination which holds to the truth of God's Word. In fact, for much of history, they have persecuted those that do.
 2. In many respects, the Catholic denomination fights against God, against God's Word, and against those laws and values which find their origin in the Bible.
 3. This is all very clear in the posture and statements of the current Pope.
 4. In fact, the current Pope believes that aliens will soon arrive on planet earth, and he believes it is the responsibility of the Catholic Church to baptize them and welcome them into the Catholic faith.

NOTE: That leads me to my second point. Here we need to glance at some other texts that reinforce everything we just reviewed from **Revelation Ch. 17**.

III. THE lie:

- A. Let's stay in **Daniel** for just a moment, and recall what **Daniel 2:43** says concerning the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's statue (which represent the very end of time during the Tribulation): *"they will mingle themselves with the seed of men."*
1. The *"they"* and the *"seed of men"* are positioned as two different sources. This means Daniel is describing the blending of genetics from two different entities.
 2. In turn, this recalls the original prophecy in **Genesis 3:15** that says the *"seed of the Serpent"* will be at enmity with *"the seed of the woman"* until Satan is finally crushed.
 3. That endpoint is the end of the Millennial Kingdom when Satan is cast into Hell. Until then, he's still going about like a *"roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"* (**Cf. 1 Peter 5:8**).
 4. So, until that future point, the Bible makes the case that the Nephilim of **Genesis 6:1-4**, in one form or another, will constantly make appearance on planet earth in order to disrupt God's prophetic plan.
 5. That's probably partly what Jesus refers to when He said in **Matthew 24:37**: *"as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."*

6. Jesus, in effect, is saying exactly what **Daniel 2:43** is saying: There will be a mingling of two sources of genetic composition up to the point of His return. This is the ongoing battle between the two “seeds” of **Genesis 3:15**.

B. Let's expand this premise:

1. **2 Thessalonians 2:9** says the coming of the antichrist will be “*in accordance with the work of Satan, displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders.*”
2. Within the context of this last passage, we are told in repeated fashion that God will send to those who missed The Rapture a powerful deception that constitutes THE lie.
3. This is a reference to a singular event that will be so convincing, so deceptive, and so utterly compelling, that folks who are left behind will believe IT rather than the plain truth of God's Word. (Seeing is believing...)
4. We have a further clue as to what this deception is when we read in **Revelation 6:8** that Death and Hades will wield power OVER ¼ of the earth to kill BY sword, famine, plague, and “*the wild beasts.*”
5. The “*wild beasts*” is the Greek term “*therion*” which is also used to describe the antichrist.
6. The takeaway is: whatever these wild beasts are, they are not Fido or Fifi gone rogue. Instead, they are entities which can be controlled, which serve a deliberate purpose and agenda, and which have personal will.
7. I believe these ‘wild beasts’ are some form of Nephilim which serve the rise of the antichrist on the world scene. That is the plainest reading of Scripture.

IV. **The overall conclusion:**

- A. The Rapture will be an event which is witnessed by millions. We are not going to disappear in a flash leaving our dirty underwear, hip replacements, and dentures on the floor.
 1. We will be physically changed from mortal into immortal in a flash, “*in the twinkling of an eye*” as **1 Corinthians 15:52** makes clear. However, we will ascend into the clouds in a manner that is witnessed by many, as per the Rapture types we see with Elijah and The Two Witnesses.
 2. This will reinforce the truth of God's Word, however, Satan does not want that. So, he will counter with a deception that will be convincing to many, including those “in the church” that have long ridiculed and dismissed Bible prophecy, who have given themselves over to doctrines of demons, and who have missed the Rapture.
 3. I personally believe the Bible reinforces the case that fallen angels will return to earth in physical form soon AFTER The Rapture. They will convince many millions that they were the ones to take the Christians away.
 4. This, in fact, is the message that is being given already to occultic leaders by demons and spirit guides.

5. They are already saying that there will be this sudden disappearance of millions of people and that they are the ones who will do this. These occultic leaders believe these spirit guides to be aliens from other galaxies.
 6. Recall that the pope already believes aliens will return to planet earth soon. All over the world, many 'woke' people believe that Christians are standing in the way of the planet's interests and needs, and the pope is reinforcing this.
- B. THE lie after The Rapture will be that aliens took the Christians out of here, that aliens have returned to planet earth to save it, and that all people from every nation, tribe, and language need to line up together in one belief system to get the world back on track.
1. This will serve the globalist agenda like nothing before has done. Because the Catholic church, 'en masse,' will remain behind after The Rapture, and because so many so-called "Christians" will be left behind in the churches they had long attended, the notion that the Biblical Rapture actually took place will be actively disbelieved and mocked.
 2. People will believe THE lie because the "aliens" (AKA fallen angels) will physically be here once more as they were in **Genesis Ch. 6.**, and once again, "seeing is believing." It will be a powerful delusion!
 3. These fallen angels will "*mingle themselves with the seed of men*" as **Daniel 2:43** says, and the world will be convinced that the believers in Jesus Christ were wrong and that they all need to line up behind a new one-world religious system, and the paranormal will reign once more.
 4. It is within this "stew of deception" and seeking answers that the antichrist will arise. Also, if we read and interpret the Seal Judgments responsibly, the things we are already starting to see in our time will gain full and unhindered fruition then:
 - a. Embracing globalism: this is Seal Judgment #1. It is within this passion that the antichrist will appear on the world scene and make his political ascent.
 - b. Wars and bloodshed: it is most likely that this is the timeframe (between The Rapture and the start of The Tribulation) that conflicts like the War of Gog and Magog take place. There is a supernatural component to this great conflict. This is Seal Judgment #2.
 - c. Planned famine, and economic ruin: these are already the agenda items of the globalist elite (consider the news about "pandemic X" from the World Economic Forum). That is Seal Judgment #3.
 - d. Planned mass genocide through sword, food supply disruptions, and a host of natural and unnatural followers. This is Seal Judgment #4.
 - e. Persecution, murder, and martyrdom of anyone that does not conform to the false one-world religious system. That is Seal Judgement #5.
 - f. You can clearly see that the early signs of events and processes taking place in our world today are efforts by the dark side to bring about the antichrist's reign.

- g. However, **2 Thessalonians 2:2** says that time will not come until “*the restrainer is taken out of the way.*” That is the presence of the Holy Spirit working through the true body of believers known as the church. This element is removed in The Rapture.

CONCLUSION: **Revelation Ch. 17** is a pause in the chronology of **the Book of Revelation** that looks back to the onset, activities, and impact of the false global religious system that will quickly rise and dominate immediately after The Rapture.

It describes the dysfunctional, but necessary, relationship between the antichrist and his ten kings on one side, and the leadership and agenda of this false religion on the other. They both need each other for a period of time which is why we see the woman riding on the scarlet beast.

However, there will come a point 3 ½ years into The Tribulation where this arrangement is violently discontinued by the antichrist and his cohorts. It is at that point that this false one world religious system meets its end.

After that point, after 3 ½ years of The Tribulation, the antichrist will set himself up as ‘God’ to be worshipped. The Mark of the Beast will be implemented at that point, and everything becomes more depraved and worse in the last 3 ½ years, the timeframe in which the Bowl Judgments take place as we’ve recently studied.