



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 75: Commercial Babylon

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Review:

- A. Last week, we did an overview of **Revelation Ch. 17**. I say 'overview' since we have explored parts of that chapter multiple times at various points in this study series to date.
- B. Here are some basic takeaways from last week's lesson:
 1. The Empire of Rome never really disappeared. Unlike the Gentile empires which were pictured and conquered before it in **Daniel Ch. 2**, Rome continued to morph and evolve to become something different over the passage of time.
 2. The Empire of Rome historically had two legs: The Western Leg and The Eastern Leg. The Eastern Leg outlasted The Western one by several hundred years.
 3. Note the historical sequence of Rome: The Holy Roman Empire > The Holy Roman Catholic Empire > The Roman Catholic Church > (and today): "The Catholic Church."
 4. The lineage of the popes can be traced all the way back to the very earliest stages of The Holy Roman Empire. Today, the Catholic Church remains headquartered in The Vatican, in Rome.
 5. The Catholic Church has representation in basically all nations of the world today. It's influence and wealth are vast.
 6. Its history of persecution against Jews and against the true saints of God is also abundantly clear from historical records.
 7. There is very little about the Catholic Church of past and present which holds to a proper respect and interpretation of Scripture.
 8. "The Dark Ages," was a lengthy medieval period of time in which the Roman Catholic church ruled, the common man did not have ready access to the truth of the Word of God.
 9. In fact, most of the Catholic leadership today takes a clear stance AGAINST some of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, just as much as they SUPPORT the tenants of the Radical Far Left.
 10. The current pope, as we know, advances globalism, pushes socialism, despises Israel (but supports Israel's enemies) pushes 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 is doing all he can to promote what will eventually become the antichrist's deceptive agenda.
- C. Looking ahead to what **Revelation Ch. 17** is saying from an 'end times perspective,' we have learned that:
 1. Most of the Catholic followers will probably be left behind in The Rapture.

2. I personally believe, as do other prophecy scholars, that the Catholic Church, headquartered in Rome, will become the seed or start of a global false religious system that will surge massively and rapidly after The Rapture.
3. A key objective of this false worldwide religious system will be to deny the truth of the Bible, and specifically the truth about The Rapture.
4. The basic Satanic tenants of this future false global religious system will find their roots and origins in ancient sources and places. Therein, the description of “mystery Babylon, etc.”
5. This goal to deny the truth of Scripture will be assisted by the return of fallen angels and the rise of the antichrist. **Second Thessalonians** tells us this will be a process aided by Satan’s counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders.
6. We learned that the antichrist and this global false religious system will need each other in their early phases. This is why **Revelation Ch. 17** shows the harlot (representing this false religious system) riding on the scarlet beast (representing the antichrist).
7. However, according to **Revelation Ch. 17**, the antichrist and his ten kings around him, secretly hate this false global religious system; they despise this co-dependent arrangement.
8. And so, at the halfway point of the Seven Year Tribulation, they orchestrate an abrupt and violent end to this global false religion. The latter part of **Revelation Ch. 17** describes this.
9. We know from other passages (such as **Revelation Ch. 13**); that it’s at this point that the antichrist demands self-worship instead. Also, at that point the Mark of the Beast is implemented.

NOTE: Now, we come to **Revelation Ch. 18**. Many of your Bibles have a heading for **Ch. 17** that read; “Religious Babylon.” Also, many of your Bibles have a heading for **Ch. 18** that suggests this chapter is about “Commercial Babylon,” or something like that. It seems to be the assumption of many Bible scholars that these two chapters are about two very different things.

NOTE: As with the last lesson, I am going to do a basic overview of this chapter. I’ll hit some of the high points, but I encourage you to do your own study of this cryptic portion of God’s Word.

I. The various views concerning this chapter:

- A. This is a chapter that is pure allegory; nothing in it is meant to be taken literally as it is all symbolic. Therefore, we cannot be expected to fully understand it.
 1. This is a ridiculous premise, and it goes against the basic truth of **2 Timothy 3:16** that states: ALL Scripture is God-breathed and intended for our benefit and growth. That is not possible if we simply write off that much of Bible Prophecy as symbolic.
 2. Then there is the “first cousin” of this symbolic stance: **Revelation Ch. 18** is about New York, London, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, etc.

3. There are numerous folks out there that insist the Bible is talking about cities, things, and places that it is not. Many of these people insist upon finding America in the Scriptures where it simply is not.
 4. They partly hold to this view because the Bible does occasionally refer to certain OTHER cities by other well-known names. For example, Jerusalem is called “Sodom” in **Revelation 11:8**. However, it is clear from that passage that this is a figurative description.
- B. Another view concerning this chapter is: literal Babylon, the city from ancient times, will be completely rebuilt at its original location at some point in the near future, so that event will fulfill this chapter’s details.
1. There are a bunch of prophecy folks (some notable, like the late Tim Lahaye) who hold to this view. Several books have been written to support this position.
 2. During the original Gulf War of the early 90’s, this view gained a lot of popularity as Saddam Hussein had imagined himself to be “like Nebuchadnezzar,” and one of his goals was to rebuild Babylon entirely.
 3. Folks were convinced that this was a fulfillment of **Revelation Ch. 18**, but none of Saddam Hussein’s goals were realized and many basic arguments within those books and their authors never came to pass.
- C. Another view that is gaining some steam as of late is: This is a reference to the state-of-the-art urban concept under construction in northwest Saudi Arabia, called Neom.
1. This is a linear city – literally. It is designed to be 170 kilometres (110 mi) long, 500 meters high, and 200 metres wide. It is one continuous structure with an entirely glass mirror exterior. It is expected to cost somewhere around \$500 billion to construct.
 2. Given this city’s location, and its many green, sustainable, and leftist ideals, some folks feel this will be the city that is referred to in **Revelation Ch. 18**. I don’t believe this idea holds any water.

II. What I think is the proper interpretation of **Revelation Ch. 18**:

- A. The last verse of **Revelation Ch. 17** concludes by describing the woman as being “*that great city.*”
1. Though the woman, the harlot, is the first thing mentioned in that chapter, her interpretation is left until the end. So the mention of “*that great city*” then naturally leads on to the account of its destruction.
 2. The account of its destruction then becomes the focal issue or subject of **Revelation Ch. 18**.
 3. **Ch. 18** details the description of the previously announced “*judgment*” or “*punishment*” of the prostitute (**Cf. Revelation 17:1**).
 4. While the Scriptures are inerrant and God-breathed, it is important to remember that the commentary notes in our Bibles are not. Suggestions

that **Revelation Ch. 17** is about one thing, and **Revelation Ch. 18** are about something entirely different are far from being sound.

B. Having said all that, now let's observe SOME OF the similar language and descriptions given to this "great city" in each of these two chapters. We'll see from doing this that chances are stronger that each chapter is referring to one and the same.

1. In **Revelation 17:1, 15 et. Al** describes the woman, or the great city as a 'harlot or prostitute." In **Revelation 18:3 and 9** the city is described as the one "*the kings of the earth committed adultery with.*"
2. In **Revelation 17:4**, the woman is noted to be clothed in "*purple and scarlet, glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls.*" In **Revelation 18:16**, this city, noted as "she' and "her," is mentioned as being dressed in "*fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls.*"
3. In **Revelation 17:15**, the great city there is mentioned as having influence over all "*peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.*" **Revelation 18** mentions the city as influencing "*all the nations and the kings of the earth*" in **vss. 3 and 9**, and "*all the nations*" in **vs. 23**.
4. In **Revelation 17:5**, the occultic origins and purposes of the harlot city were exposed. In **Revelation 18:2**, the great city is noted to be "*a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit.*" Also, in **vs. 23**, she is also noted for her "*magic spell.*"
5. The woman in **Revelation 17:4** has a cup. In **Revelation 18:6**, she has a cup.
6. In **Revelation 17:16**, we read the antichrist and his 10 kings will "*burn her with fire.*" In **Revelation 18:8**, the city there is "*consumed by fire,*" and in **vss 9 and 18**, people will watch the "*smoke of her burning.*"
7. In **Revelation 17:6**, the city there is responsible for "*the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.*" In **Revelation 18:24**, she is found to have in her "*the blood of prophets and of the saints.*"
8. In **Revelation Ch. 17**, the harlot or great city is clearly a place of opulence, luxury, and wealth. In **Revelation 18**, this point is underscored even more. Details are given to make the case that this city is a center of worldwide commerce at this future time (**Cf. vss. 11-14**).
9. In **Revelation 17:3**, the harlot city there is lavishly dressed and is sitting on a scarlet beast. In **Revelation 18:7**, she boasts that she is "*sitting as a queen.*"
10. If one cares to probe enough, they will find numerous parallels between the woman / city in **Revelation Ch. 17**, and the woman / city in **Revelation Ch 18**.
11. As I said before, I believe **Ch. 18** gives details of the destruction of the city that is mentioned in **Ch. 17**.

C. Now, let's step back a few paces and take in the picture of what is happening here:

1. Rome, the city on seven hills, called 'Babylon' in **Revelation Chapters 17 and 18**, will quickly emerge in the wake of The Rapture as the headquarters of a global false religious system that advances apostasy.

2. The primary purpose of this false religious system will be to counter the truth of God's Word. A specific agenda according to **2 Thessalonians 2:10-12**, will be to fight the truth of The Rapture.
3. **Revelation 18** and **2 Thessalonians 2** both make a case that a strong occultic element will be part of all this. As we've already learned, the physical presence of fallen angels will play a major role in all of this.
4. This false religious system (an overtly occultic remake of Catholicism) will do again what it historically has always done: it will persecute and kill those who stand for the truth of God's Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
5. It will promote religious heresy and it will advance blasphemy. It will actively lead people astray into corruption of all sorts.
6. Because this false religion has accumulated great wealth down through the centuries, and because it will have future global influence beyond what it has ever had before, these resources will grow exponentially under this new false religion agenda.
7. Rome's influence will be worldwide and prominent, and the agenda and policies of this global false religious system will permit the rapid rise of the antichrist to political power.
8. Many cultural and financial affairs will also be headquartered in Rome at this time. This is clear from the narrative of **Revelation Ch. 18**.
9. Rome will be a place of opulence, luxury, wealth, and worldwide merchandising. Many will be made wealthy for conforming to Rome's policies and deceptions.
10. The antichrist and his ten kings (likely oligarchs and technocrats that enabled his globalist agenda) will secretly hate the influence of Rome, and the wealth of Rome, the control that Rome has over a global false religion, and so on.
11. And so, at the halfway point of The Tribulation, the antichrist and his ten kings, somehow, bring an end to Rome's influence, to the city itself, and to the global false religious system that has dominated from the Rapture up to that point.
12. This end is described as:
 - a. Fiery and burning (**Cf. Revelation 17:16; 18:8, 9, 18**)
 - b. Sudden, tortuous, and violent (**Cf. Revelation 18:7, 21**)
 - c. As happening in "one day" and in "one hour" (**Cf. Revelation 18:8, 10**)
 - d. Terminal. The city will "never be found again" (**Cf. Revelation 18:21**)
 - e. Affecting many people and commercial processes (**Cf. Revelation 18:11-19**)
 - f. Being so bad and so final that no return of any culture or economy is possible (**Cf. Revelation 18:22-23**)

NOTE: These details could possibly describe a nuclear event (NOTE: the kings of the earth "will stand far off and be terrified" [**Cf. Rev. 18:10**]), but that is just a guess.

