

## LESSON EIGHT

# BABYLON JUDGED

TEXT: Revelation Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen.

### **A. THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON:**

Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen are a parenthesis between chapters sixteen and nineteen.

Idolatrous Babylon is a political-religious system, which had its beginning at Babel when Nimrod built a city and a tower, and called it "the gate of God." God brought judgment and confusion, and the people were scattered. The spirit of idolatrous Babylon has never ceased throughout the centuries. In the latter part of the Tribulation it takes a prominent place in Beast worship under the leadership of the False Prophet.

The significance of this political-religious system is of such importance that God has given two whole chapters to describe the judgment and end of this Antichrist system.

In Revelation three times the Apostle John is bidden to "come hither:" 1) "Come hither" (Revelation 4:1) - The vision in Heaven; 2) "Come hither" (Revelation 17:1) - The judgment of Babylon; and 3) "Come hither" (Revelation 21:9) - The Bride, the Lamb's wife. From this we can see the importance God has placed upon the judgment of Babylon.

### **B. THE HARLOT CHURCH:**

The false church, which dominates the world at this time, is called a whore, a harlot or prostitute, who sells her purity for monetary gain.

There is nothing better in this world than a virtuous woman and nothing worse than an adulterous woman. Likewise, there is nothing better than belonging to the true church, the bride of Christ and nothing worse than being a part of the apostate church.

Upon her forehead is written the word "mystery." This word means "secret." Up to this time her true identity is hidden. Now the mask is stripped away and that which has been shrouded in secrecy is to be explained.

This harlot church is clearly identified by the fact that she is situated upon seven mountains. The city of Rome is built upon seven hills and this would inform us that the Roman Catholic Church is being described here. However, let us keep in mind that she is called the "mother of harlots." In the apostate ecumenical church we find many of her children. These children are returning to their mother. Together they will compose this final form of religious Babylon whose judgment is described here.

This adulterous religious system is universal. This is known by the fact that she sits upon many waters (verse one) which is explained in verse fifteen, "*peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.*" Her power and influence dominate the entire world, all races and nationalities.

This apostate church is wealthy and arrayed in gorgeous attire. However, she has a golden cup, which is full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

Not only is she drunken with the wine of her fornication, but also she is drunk with the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. During the inquisition the Roman Catholic Church tortured and put to death thousands of Christians. One well-known authority estimated that Rome was guilty of the death of 50,000,000 Christians. Before Rome came into existence idolatrous Babylonianism also did the same. Then, during the tribulation thousands are martyred for not bowing down to the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15).

### C. THE BEAST: (Revelation 17:3).

The harlot church is seen sitting on a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. This beast is the first beast of chapter thirteen. Here the apostate religious system is seen riding upon the political powers of that moment.

The beast is described by the following details:

1. Scarlet in color: This is descriptive of the red dragon that is controlling and dominating the beast. It also may refer to red communism, the political ideology of the last days.
2. Full of names of blasphemy: One of the outstanding characteristics of the beast is that of blasphemy (Revelation 13:5-6).
3. Seven heads (Revelation 17:10): These seven heads are seven kings, which are the great Gentile kingdoms of history. **Five** are fallen: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. **One** is (in John's day): Rome. **The other** not yet come: Revived Roman Empire. **The Eighth**: The Beast or Antichrist.
4. Ten Horns (Revelation 17:12): These are the ten nations of the Revived Roman Empire as represented in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image.

### D. THE HARLOT JUDGED:

The religious system of Babylon rides to power on a political beast. The political forces of Antichrist will hate the harlot church but permits her to ride to power because it is the mutual benefit of both.

The False Prophet performs miracles and deceives the nations. He causes men to worship the image of the beast and to receive the mark of the beast. However, just as there is no affinity between the clay and iron in the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, there is no love between the Church of Rome and atheistic communism. Self-interest is the force that causes them to form the Religious-Political system of the last days.

When the time is right God will motivate the beast to fulfill God's will (Revelation 17:16-17) and destroy the harlot church. Sometime, shortly before Armageddon, this Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, will be destroyed by the beast upon which she has ridden to power.

### E. THE JUDGMENT OF POLITICAL BABYLON: (Revelation 18).

In chapter eighteen is recorded the account of the destruction of political Babylon.

The destruction of political and commercial Babylon does not take place until the end of the Tribulation at Armageddon. The judgment of ecclesiastical Babylon will take place prior to this towards the end of the Tribulation. Let us examine the following facts:

1. *"After these things..." (Revelation 18:1)*. This phrase informs us that the events of chapter eighteen will take place after the events of chapter seventeen are completed.
2. *"I saw another angel..." (Revelation 18:1)*. This clause tells us that the angel in chapter eighteen is not the same angel we read about in Revelation 18:1.
3. Both the political and religious systems carry the name "Babylon." However, the religious system is spoken of as being *"Mystery, the mother of the Harlots."*

4. Babylon, the harlot, is destroyed by the political powers (the ten horns) but the Babylon in chapter eighteen is destroyed by the direct act of God.
5. The kings of the earth rejoice when the harlot apostate church is destroyed, but they lament and weep when political and commercial Babylon meets her judgment.

With the judgment of Babylon in chapter eighteen will come the end of almost everything secular in which men hold so valuable in this world. Power, wealth, financial gain, pleasures of the world, will all come to an end.

The judgments of Babylon will come suddenly. *"For in one hour is thy judgment come"* (Revelation 18:10). In one hour the following will happen:

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| 1  | Verse 9-10   | - | Politicians shall weep and mourn;              |
| 2  | Verses 11-15 | - | Businessmen shall weep and mourn;              |
| 3  | Verses 17-19 | - | Commerce and travel will fail;                 |
| 4  | Verse 22     | - | Pleasure and amusement shall cease;            |
| 5. | Verse 22     | - | All craft and manufacturing shall be finished. |

The conclusion that a person may arrive at is that a life invested in the wealth and pleasure of this world is a life wasted.

Let us note the final phrase of verse 13. The merchants made merchandise of the souls of men. They bought and sold not only spices, wine and wheat, but also they made profit out of slaves and the souls of men. Knowing this, one must recognize that the judgments of God are just and true.

#### **F. AN EXHORTATION FROM GOD:**

Scriptural Reference:

*"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"* (Revelation 18:4).

Not only should this exhortation be heeded and obeyed in the hour of judgment, but also all men should heed it today. We must come out of Babylon and be not partakers of her sins. A life of absolute separation is the only one acceptable to our Holy God.

## LESSON EIGHT

### **SELF HELP TEST**

- A. Explain how we know that the judgment in chapter 17 is different from that in chapter 18. Give FIVE reasons.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- B. In your own words describe the "mother of harlots."
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- C. In your own words describe "the beast upon which the harlot rides."
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- D. Give TWO explanations for the seven heads.