

## 76. The Book of Revelation—17:5

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In our study in the Book of Revelation we are currently studying Chapter 17.

Chapter 17 gives us a look at the *religious* aspects of “*Babylon the Great*”; and Chapter 18 zeros in on the *commercial* aspect of this final world empire.

### Revelation 17:1-5 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, <sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." <sup>3</sup> So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. <sup>5</sup> **And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

In our studies in Chapter 17 we have first of all been trying to determine just who or what this woman is. She is called “**Mystery Babylon the Great.**” The word “**mystery**” is the Greek word ‘musterion’ and means, “*something that was hidden or unknown but now is being revealed*”—in other words, the occult goes mainstream!

In verse 5 this woman is called “**the mother of harlots**”—in other words, she has given birth to many like her—a spiritual “*brothel*” if you will.

There are many Protestants and Evangelicals that believe that she is none other than the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). While I believe that the RCC is part of this false religious system called ‘**Mystery Babylon**’ (and probably even the main part)—this verse teaches us that whoever this woman is (this false religious system) she has been around from the beginning—thousands of years before the RCC started.

She is referred to as the *source* or the *fountainhead* of all false worship on the face of the earth—including the Roman Catholic Church but not *exclusive* of the Roman Catholic Church.

The first false religious system on the face of the earth started with a man named Nimrod who built the Tower of Babel. This was a tower that didn't ‘*reach up into heaven where God lived*’ (Genesis 11:4) but one that ‘*reached up into the heavens*’ (*high above the earth*)—a tower from which to worship the sun, moon and stars of heaven—an observatory.

Brick towers like these were eventually built all over the world and were used in pagan religions—these towers were known as ziggurats. Ziggurats were ‘pyramid’ like towers with steps on the outside so pagan priests could ascend to the top which consisted of a platform that contained the sign of the zodiac.

Not only were these ziggurats used as a place where the moon, stars, planets and of course the sun could be worshipped—but also a place used by pagan priests to chart the stars. Through their observations of the stars, the priests supposedly gained spiritual insights and knowledge of the future.

Nimrod (whose name means ‘rebel’) was the first to build one of these ziggurats (the Tower of Babel)—but he was also the first dictator and cult leader in human history. In the Scriptures he is referred to as: “*A mighty hunter before the LORD*” (Genesis 10:9)—but the Jerusalem Targum says that he was: “*A mighty hunter of men’s souls in defiance of the Lord.*”

Again, Nimrod was a rebel against God, who then built a city and a tower to worship the hosts of the heavens (the sun, moon, and stars) in defiance of the true and living God. That is why from the very beginning, Babylon was both a *religion* and a *city*.

Of course, as we’ve already said—Babel later became Babylon the place where all false religions got their start—

**Revelation 17:5 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup> And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

Let me give you a little background that we don’t get from the Bible, but we do get from secular sources.

- Nimrod had a wife named Semiramis—she was a high-priestess of the original Babylonian mystery religion started by her husband. She claimed that she conceived a son miraculously through a ‘*sun beam*’ without a man and gave birth to a son (a virgin birth)—a son she named *Tammuz*.
- Semiramis claimed that this child was the ‘*sun god*’ who was born around the time of the winter solstice when the pagans believed the sun god died (shortest day of sunlight in the year) and then was reborn (as the sunlight started to increase).
- When he became an adult, legend says that Tammuz was out hunting one day and was gored by a wild boar and died.
- His mother fasted and prayed for him for 40 days and he was resurrected—this is where ‘**lent**’ comes from (a period of mourning, fasting, and praying for 40 days)—it comes from ancient Babylonianism. In fact, many of the beliefs and practices in mainline denominational churches—especially the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) have come from ancient Babylonianism. That is because when the Roman Emperor Constantine became a Christian, he wanted to unify the empire by merging paganism with Christianity.
- He decided the best way to do this would be to merge the pagan feasts with important Christian observances or holy days. So, he took the feast of Saturnalia (a pagan feast that took place at the time of the winter solstice in December—a feast that celebrated the birth of the sun god) and turned it into the celebration of the birth of the Son of God or Christmas.

Many of our Christmas traditions (Christmas trees, burning yule logs, mistletoe)—can all be traced back to pagan origins which got incorporated into the Christian celebration of Christmas thanks to Emperor Constantine.

One historian noted—

*“In the ancient cultures many pagan religions through the centuries have worshipped the sun as a god—the source of light and life. As the winter solstice approached and the days got shorter and shorter—the peoples in these ancient pagan cultures believed that the sun god was dying. The ancient Babylonians worshiped Tammuz, the infant son of Semiramis (he was always pictured as an infant in her arms), as the sun god. Tammuz was thought to be dying during the days leading up to the winter solstice (the day he eventually died)—and so in those days (leading up to the winter solstice) they burned a log in their fireplaces to ‘help’ Tammuz bring light*

*into the world during these shortened days of light when he was thought to be dying. The log remained burning in preparation for Tammuz's rebirth once again (the Babylonian word for infant is "yule")—this is the origin of the 'Yule log'. His rebirth was celebrated starting around December 24th by replacing the log with a trimmed tree the next morning."*

Well, what Constantine did in 'Christianizing' Saturnalia in the winter—He did with the main pagan feast in the Spring. In the Spring of the year the pagans worshipped a fertility goddess named Astarte. This pagan feast was a festival to commemorate new life (again, she was a fertility goddess)—and so Constantine turned it into the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus which of course celebrates new life—resurrection life in Christ.

So, the feast of Astarte became Easter (they even sound alike).

Have you ever wondered what easter bunnies and colored eggs have to do with the resurrection of Jesus? **Of course, the answer is nothing**—but they were used in the celebration of Astarte who was a fertility goddess (rabbits and eggs are symbols of fertility).

So, Constantine combined ancient pagan *Babylonianism* with *Christianity*—and the result was Roman Catholicism.

But going back to Semiramis the priestess of the ancient Babylonian Mystery Religion—when she gave birth to Tammuz, she and her son became the focus of a Babylonian mother/child cult.

Semiramis eventually took the title—*"The Queen of Heaven."*

Her son Tammuz was considered a 'savior' of his people and purported to be the fulfillment of the promise given to Eve in Genesis 3:15—that she would be the mother of the Savior of mankind—the One who would crush the serpent's head.

You see, Satan's plans were destroyed in the Flood (how he would contaminate the human race with demon seed so Messiah couldn't be born and crush Satan's head—Genesis 6).

So after God wiped out all flesh upon the earth that had been corrupted (except for Noah and his family who remained 'uncontaminated') thus thwarting Satan's original plan—the devil changed tactics and adopted the strategy—*"If you can't beat them join them."*

So, taking what God promised in Genesis 3:15 Satan developed a counterfeit religion and exported it to the whole world—which came to be known as **"Mystery Babylon...the Mother of all Harlots..."**

- It was this religious system that gave birth to every false religion and cult on the face of the earth—but how?

#### **Genesis 11:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup>Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

When people were scattered abroad over the face of all the earth—they took this mother/child cult with them—which then became a worldwide religious movement.

Idols picturing the mother as the queen of heaven with the babe in her arms are found throughout the ancient world after the Tower of Babel—

- ❖ *In Phoenicia the mother was called Ashtoreth, and the child was called Baal.*
- ❖ *In Egypt she was called Isis and the child was called Horus.*
- ❖ *In Greece she was known as Aphrodite and the child was known as Arus.*
- ❖ *The Romans called her Venus and the child Cupid (a plump little cherub with the bow and arrow to make people fall in love with each other around Valentine’s Day—don’t fall for that. Cupid is a hunter just like his father Nimrod).*
- ❖ *In India they were known as Izee and Izwora.*
- ❖ *Later when pagan Rome was ‘Christianized’ under Constantine, the mother became Mary, and the child became Jesus.*

They are always pictured with Mary holding the *baby* Jesus in her arms with a ‘halo’ behind each of their heads to represent their ‘holiness’—or so the RCC teaches. But actually, those ‘halos’ are the sun because she represents Semiramis who was impregnated by a ‘sun beam’ and gave birth to Tammuz the ‘sun-god’.

All of this goes back to ancient Babylonianism—to **‘Mystery Babylon—the mother of all harlots’** (the mother of all false religious systems upon the face of the earth).

In the Scriptures many of these facts are not mentioned directly—but there are some glimpses that show up in the conflict between the true faith of God (Judao/Christianity) and this false religious system (a system that ‘peaks’ during the Tribulation Period and becomes the dominate world religion for a time).

For example—Ezekiel protests against the ceremony of weeping for Tammuz—

**Ezekiel 8:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD’S house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz.

Jeremiah mentions the heathen practices of making cakes for the queen of heaven and offering incense to the queen of heaven—

**Jeremiah 7:18 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and *they* pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.

**Jeremiah 44:17-19, 25 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble.

<sup>18</sup> But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." <sup>19</sup> *The women also said, "And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make cakes for her, to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her without our husbands' permission?"...*

<sup>25</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: 'You and your wives have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled with your hands, saying, "We will surely keep our vows that we have made, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her." You will surely keep your vows and perform your vows!'

The worship of Baal, characteristic of the pagan religion in Canaan, was another form of this same mystery religion originating in Babylon—Baal is considered identical to Tammuz.

One author said,

*"The doctrines of the mystery religions of Babylon seem to have permeated the ancient world, giving rise to countless mystery religions, each with its cult and individual beliefs offering a counterfeit religion and a counterfeit god in opposition to the true God revealed in the Scriptures."*

As I just said, the latest iteration of this mother/child worship cult has come down through the Roman Catholic Church in the form of 'Mary worship'—to whom the RCC has given the title "Queen of Heaven."

The Catholic Church will tell you—"We don't worship Mary..."—but you can check out Catholic literature on Mary—they ascribe attributes to her that only God possesses. They believe she hears the prayers of all Catholics, that she has the power to forgive sins—and even that she is co-redeemer along with Jesus.

One article mentions this—

*"In the Church of the Mother of God of Polish Martyrs in Warsaw, Poland, Mary is depicted hanging on the cross holding the child Jesus.*

*Outside of the main Mary Basilica in Rome...there is a large crucifix with Jesus hanging on one side and a crowned Mary hanging on the other.*

*This statue depicts Rome's dogma that Mary is the co-redemptress with Christ and that she intercedes for men from Heaven and aids in their salvation."*

The RCC may claim they don't worship Mary—but that's not true (maybe not all Catholics but many worship her!).

But getting back to the practice of the ancient Babylonian religion and how it connects with Roman Catholicism—the pagan high priest in the Babylonian cult called himself "Pontifex Maximus"—i.e., "the supreme or high priest."

The chief priests wore "crowns" (ornate headdress) in the form of the head of a fish, in recognition of Dagon the fish god. Even to this day Roman Catholic bishops and cardinals wear mitres on their heads which resemble fish heads (not that they're worshipping Dagon but their 'crowns' go back to the Babylonian mystery religions unbeknownst to them).

When Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians the pagan priests of the ancient mystery/occult religions centered in Babylon (since the days of Nimrod)—migrated north and west to Pergamos where these mystery religions were headquartered for several centuries.

Pergamos was where it was headquartered in the first century—even as Jesus said to the church there in Pergamos, "I know where you live, even where Satan's throne is." (Revelation 2:13)

When Rome rose to power the Babylonian priests moved the whole system to Rome (following the wealth and power) around 378 A.D. At that time, Rome became the headquarters or 'throne' of this false Babylonian religious system—where it still remains headquartered in the Vatican and from where it has branched out into the whole world under the guise of Roman Catholicism.

The word "**Vatican**" is Latin and literally means "*Divine Serpent.*"

Google—"Audience Hall and the serpent" (a large meeting hall located in the Vatican, also known as "*the Hall of the Pontifical Audiences*") and you'll see that the inside is shaped like a serpent's head—with the Pope's throne in the serpent's mouth!\*\*

I believe that, at the heart of all '*Babylonian false worship*' is the serpent's lie he told Eve in the Garden of Eden. (Check out our study "The Battle for Truth" Parts 2 and 3 [HERE](#).)

The same lie that Satan deceived Eve with will be the ultimate lie the Antichrist and False Prophet will deceive the whole world with during the Tribulation Period. (Romans 1:25 and 2 Thessalonians 2:11—"The Lie")

We see this apostate world church eventually taken over and replaced (actually incorporated into) by the Antichrist's new religion (with himself as God)—and then ultimately judged and destroyed by Jesus when He returns to establish His glorious worldwide Kingdom built on the worship of the True and Living God.

As I said earlier, when Constantine became the emperor of Rome, he mixed Christianity with Roman Babylonianism—and the result was Roman Catholicism.

What you may not know is when Constantine became emperor of Rome, he assumed headship of the Church taking the title "*Pontifex Maximus*"—the "*maximum or highest priest.*"

It was the emperor who was first called the "*Vicar of Christ*"—a title inherited by the popes when the Roman Empire disintegrated. Constantine's title of *Pontifex Maximus* was also taken by the popes—thus the head of the Roman Catholic Church is called "*Pontifex Maximus*" or the "*Roman Pontiff*" to this day.

Now I personally think that Mystery Babylon is broader than just the Roman Catholic Church.

*Remember, Mystery Babylon has been around since  
Nimrod and the Tower of Babel—  
thousands of years before the RCC came into existence.*

She ("Mystery Babylon") has spawned all false religions—including the Roman Catholic Church.

I think that the RCC is going to play a major role in organizing the world into a one world church bringing people of all faiths together—in fact, she has been positioning herself for that role for some time.

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If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).  
Reach out to us [here](#).

**\*\*References**

**The Audience Hall and The Serpent, The Vatican** – Click [HERE](#), reference information [HERE](#)

**The Battle For Truth – Audio Series** – Click [HERE](#)

**Jesus and Mary on the throne** [HERE](#), and on the same Cross, [HERE](#)

