

# AN OVERVIEW OF RELIGIOUS BABYLON

## A.K.A. The Mother/Son Cult

- I.** Introduction.
- A.** Babylon is mentioned some 289x in the OT and 12x in the NT.
  - B.** Dispensational interpreters recognize that Babylon has both historical and prophetic significance.
  - C.** It is second in importance only to the city of Jerusalem; however, the two cities stand in persistent opposition throughout the Bible.
  - D.** Jerusalem exists due to the call of Abraham and the establishment of the Jewish nation to promulgate God's plan of salvation to the world; Babylon exists as a result of rejection of God's plan and the negative volition of the post-diluvians.
  - E.** In that regard, it stands as the first international movement in the history of mankind.
  - F.** The internationalism is further expressed under two arms of political ideology, religious and commercial/economical.
  - G.** As such, it has not ceased to exist in one form or another since its establishment in the book of Genesis. Gen.11:1-9
  - H.** The book of Revelation deals with Babylon in its two distinct forms, the religious and the commercial. Rev.17,18
  - I.** Since this distinction is made in the Bible and is recognized by capable exegetes, it is appropriate to deal with these two entities on an individual basis.
  - J.** While commentaries are divided as to the interpretation of Revelation 17 and 18, many futurist interpreters have recognized that chapter 17 is dealing with the religious aspect of Babylon, while chapter 18 deals with the destruction of commercial Babylon in its political form.
  - K.** Both aspects of Babylon are seen in the initial attempt to build *a city, and a tower whose top will reach into Heaven.* Gen.11:4
    - 1.** The city points to the political/commercial establishment in Babylon.
    - 2.** The tower reaching into heaven denotes the religious aspect of Babylon.
    - 3.** The religious aspect is further seen in the attempt to manufacture a **name** (exalting themselves above God) in order to unify the people around the new religion.
  - L.** This doctrine will focus specifically on the religious aspect of Babylon that continues to exist as a form of spiritual confusion to this very day.
- II.** Vocabulary.
- A.** Hebrew vocabulary.
    - 1.** **בָּבֶל**, **בָּבֶל** – babel; Babylon. The Akkadian term, as well as the related Sumerian term, seems to be derived from *babelani*, which means “the gate of the gods”.

2. The Hebrew term is likely derived from the verb בָּלַל; ב' – balal; a verb that means to mix or mingle together.
  3. It is widely recognized that this involves a play on words that denigrates the term “gate of the gods” by applying the term “confusion” to it. Gen.11:9
  4. The term is used to refer to the historical kingdom of Babylon (Isa.39:3), the city of Babylon (Dan.4:29) and as a term for prophetic Babylon (Isa.13:19; Jer.50:13)
- B.** Greek vocabulary.
1. Βαβυλων – babulon; 12X, the capital city of the kingdom of Babylon, or the kingdom itself; used as a code term in the book of Revelation.
  2. The term is used as a cryptic reference to the city of Rome by Peter, as is recognized by a great number of interpreters. 1Pet.5:13

### **III.** Origin and nature of religious Babylon.

- A.** Babylon is used throughout the Bible to refer to one of the major cities that was established in the land of Shinar.
- B.** The land of Shinar is a general geographic term for an area that lies in modern Iraq; however, in ancient times it was known as Mesopotamia (the land between the rivers).
- C.** Shinar (a.k.a. Sumer) was a collection of city-states around the Lower Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, four of which were unified under Nimrod to begin his kingdom. Gen.10:10
- D.** The chief city of this kingdom appears to have been Babylon, the founding of which is recorded in the book of Genesis. Gen.11:1-6
- E.** While the city definitely had a political/economic aspect, we will focus specifically on the religious aspect of the city and the doctrines that characterized this system.
- F.** In order to understand this tradition, one must have some understanding of the mother/son cult of Babylon.
  1. This religious counterfeit of the truth was originated soon after the death of Nimrod; the cult included his wife, Semiramis (who had to find a way to maintain her position), and their son, Tammuz. Gen.10:8-10, 11:1-4
  2. Nimrod was an apostate who masterminded the tower of Babel and led men in revolt against the Most High God.
  3. His system had two main divisions: the political/commercial (*let us build a city*) and religious (*and a tower whose top will reach into heaven*). Gen.11:4
  4. This apostasy has existed in various forms throughout history, with the final forms seen in Revelation 17 (religious Babylon) and chapter 18 (political/ commercial Babylon).
  5. As we will demonstrate, the modern-day form of religious Babylon is found in the form of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) that is still quite heavily engaged in the worship of the mother/son cult.
- G.** The events behind the cultic tradition.

1. Nimrod wielded great authority and power in the post-diluvian civilization.
  2. His wife, Semiramis, also occupied an exalted position due to the power and renown of her husband, who was viewed as a celebrity based on his physical prowess. Gen.10:9
  3. Though Scripture is silent on the death of Nimrod, the traditional legends of the cultures that adhere to this cult are systematically unified; all consistently state that the ringleader met a violent death and was cut in pieces and/or burned with fire.
  4. Thus, the cosmic system went into shock at the death of their most wonderful benefactor.
  5. This originated the practice of weeping for the dead that is a common practice of the mother/son cult in every land.
  6. At the death of Nimrod, Semiramis realized that she would lose her position and authority, so she forged a plan to keep her position of exaltation.
  7. She began the lie that Nimrod had willingly died for mankind, crushed the head of the serpent (a counterfeit of Gen.3:15) and came back from the dead in the form of her son (reincarnation).
  8. The consistent representation of this is a woman holding in her arms a baby, who is recognized to be the equal of his father.
  9. To justify worship of the mother, without whom the work of redemption could not have been accomplished, she was elevated to the status of deity and given the title, The Virgin Mother.
  10. The original cult then worshipped Semiramis as the mother goddess, and Tammuz as the only begotten son.
  11. Ultimately the "Holy Mother", "Alma Mater" (nourishing mother), was given the highest title, *The Queen of heaven*.
  12. She is also known as (a.k.a.) Rhea, Venus, Diana, Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Isis, and others in various pagan religions.
  13. Her husband/son is known as (a.k.a.) Nimrod, Tammuz, Tahmurs, Kronos, Ninus, Baal, Bacchus, Iacchus, Kisson, Phoronesus, Osiris, Dionysius, Marduk, and others.
- H.** Rituals, symbols, and dates associated with the mother/son cult of antiquity (religious Babylon).
1. The word Yule is the Chaldean word for an infant or little child, and came to denote December 25<sup>th</sup> as Yule day.
  2. The Mother/Son cult in Egypt and other places celebrated the birth of the son of the Queen of Heaven at the time of the winter solstice that was December 25<sup>th</sup> on the ancient calendar.
  3. Part of this celebration consisted of bringing in the yule log on December 24<sup>th</sup> with great pomp and using it as the foundation for the fire.
  4. The following morning, a young evergreen/palm/fir tree was set up and decorated; sacrifices were then placed under the tree.
  5. The day was celebrated with a great feast, which originally consisted of a boar's head or goose.

6. The festival was continued with a great deal of merrymaking and the giving of gifts.
7. The yule log symbolized Nimrod, cut down in the height of his power, then cut into pieces and burned.
8. The young tree represents the reincarnated Nimrod, back from the dead, never to die again.
9. This was the reason for the use of the conifer (evergreen) trees that serve as a symbol for the principle of life.
10. The period of weeping for Tammuz symbolized the grief of the cosmos for their dead benefactor (remember, Nimrod and Tammuz are considered to be one-in-the-same).
11. The period of weeping lasted 40 days corresponding to the modern version of lent before Easter.
12. The period of weeping was then followed by merrymaking and the giving of gifts that symbolized the joy at Nimrod's rebirth and return from the dead.
13. The word solstice, from "sun", means "stand still", as it seems to do on the shortest day of the year as it gets nearer the southern horizon.
14. This is how December 25<sup>th</sup> came to be designated as the highest holy day of the cult, with the southernmost descent of the sun portraying the death of Nimrod, while the moving back and into spring portrayed his rebirth.
15. The mistletoe, used in the ritual, represented the pagan messiah in his role as *the man, the branch*. Cp. Isa.4:2; Zec.3:8
16. Let it be recognized that it was the RCC, who is the final form of the mother/son cult that instituted the observance of Christ's Mass, as is evident in the very name. *See the Doctrine of Holidays*
17. Round cakes were also a feature of worship as an offering to the Queen of heaven. Jer.7:18; 44:19
18. In addition, the cult had a confessional where adherents were required to confess their sins to the priest.
19. The religious system of Semiramis had many secret rites with respect to the worship that were called mysteries into which new members had to be initiated.
20. When the initiates were initiated they were given a cup containing a mysterious drink made of wine, honey, water, and flour.
21. This represented the doctrines of the cult, but also made the participant quite intoxicated and was designed to prepare the participant for what he was about to see, hear and do. Cp. Rev.17:2
22. These rites involved consecrated male and female priests (temple prostitutes) that engaged in the most depraved forms of sexual immorality.
23. As one might suspect, the fornication/prostitution was both physical and spiritual.
24. The cult of the Mother/Son originated during the time of Nimrod and at the dispersion it spread into every nation, obviously under different names, but advocating the same evil.

25. For this reason, Babylon is called the *mother of prostitutes*, since all the pagan religious systems of the world eventually sprang from this fountain. Rev.17:5
  26. In Canaan the cult operated under the names of Ashtaroth (goddess of fertility) and Baal around 1350BC. Jud.2:13; 1Sam.7:3; 12:10
  27. Even as late as Ezekiel, Israel was heavily engaged in the worship of the sun god and weeping for Tammuz. Eze.8:14-18
- I. Easter: Easter is the logical offspring holiday originating from Christmas after the 40 days of mourning, then celebration.
1. The word translated Easter/*pascha* – pascha is used 29x in the NT and all but once in the KJV it is translated correctly as “Passover”.
  2. Only in Acts.12:4 does the KJV translate it Easter.
  3. As there were more than 50 translators commissioned by King James, there were many religious factions involved and Acts.12:4 was a compromise in order to get the job done.
  4. Easter was the name of a pagan vernal festival, and derived its name from the fertility goddess, Ishtar.
  5. The eggs and rabbits associated with the Easter celebration were the fertility symbols of Ishtar in her cult.
  6. As was becoming the policy of the RCC even before the translation of the KJV, they again adopted and Christianized the feast and festival in order to assimilate pagan cultures into the church.
  7. As with the birth of Christ, there is no explicit commandment given to set aside a specific day to celebrate Christ’s resurrection.

IV. Forms in which this false religion has manifested itself.

- A. Semiramis was initially included in the pagan Babylonian trinity as the holy spirit or seed of the divine son in his mother's womb.
- B. Within time, however, the father Nimrod was practically overlooked and worshiped only as the god-incarnate son in his mother's arms.
- C. In other words, the father became invisible and was no longer worshiped, whereas, the mother with the god-incarnate son in her arms became the grand object of worship.
- D. Numerous Babylonian monuments show the goddess-mother Semiramis with her son in arms. *Hislop, The Two Babylons*
- E. This worship of mother and child spread throughout the known world and was given different names in the various languages of the world.
- F. Ancient Germans worshipped the virgin Hertha with child in arms, while Scandinavians called her Disa pictured with child.
- G. The Egyptian mother and child were worshiped as Isis with the infant Osiris or Horus seated on his mother's lap.
- H. In India, the mother and child were called Devaki and Krishna, and also Isi and Iswara as they are worshiped to this day.
- I. In Asia, they were known as Cybele and Deoius; in pagan Rome, as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer, or Jupiter, the boy; in Greece, as Ceres, the great mother

with babe at her breast, or as Irene, the goddess of peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms.

- J.** The image of mother with child in her arms was so firmly entrenched in the pagan mind that by the time Christianity appeared on the scene, these statues and paintings were eventually renamed and worshiped as the virgin Mary with her god-incarnate son Jesus.
  - K.** Thus, the pagan mother and child entered Christianity as the Roman Catholic worship of Mary with the infant Jesus.
  - L.** In fact, in Tibet, China, and Japan, Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the counterpart of the Madonna and child as devoutly worshiped as they were in Rome.
  - M.** Shing Moo, the holy mother in China was portrayed with a child in her arms and a halo/glory around her, exactly as if she had been fashioned by Roman Catholic artisans.
- V.** The transformation from pagan Babylonianism to Christianity.
- A.** Some have wondered how the practices of a mystery, pagan religion could have infiltrated the Christian church and resulted in such blasphemous practices.
  - B.** The answer begins to be found in the life of Constantine (312 AD), the Emperor of Rome who was marching against Maxentius from France into Italy.
  - C.** The legend has it that he saw a vision of a cross, or perhaps the letter c (ch), which was the initial of Christ.
  - D.** With this vision, he supposedly saw an inscription that said “conquer by this” that he took to be an omen for the future.
  - E.** He determined that if he were victorious he would make Christianity the legal and official religion of the Roman world.
  - F.** Since he took this as the sign of God, he had his banner and his soldiers’ shields engraved with the letters cr (chr) that are the first two letters of the name *cristoj* – christos/Christ).
  - G.** He was victorious and immediately issued the Edict of Milan that made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.
  - H.** Persecution of believers had begun under Nero (64 AD) and had continued through the time of Diocletian and Galerius until about 311 AD.
  - I.** Suddenly, all persecution of Christians stopped and being a Christian became all the rage during that time; it was the new fad.
  - J.** What actually happened was that the name Christianity was given to the pagan Babylonian mystery religion along with a few necessary changes.
    - 1.** The temples now became the churches.
    - 2.** The priests and nuns became the leaders of Christianity.
    - 3.** The statues and festivals were given new names that were changed only to deceive the naïve and unlearned.
    - 4.** Astarte or Cybele became Mary, and Tammuz; Baal or Bacchus became Jesus.

- K.** During the days of Julius Caesar (63 BC) the emperor became the high priest of the Babylonian cult and wore on his crown the name “Pontifex Maximus”, the first part of which means the “bridge maker” with the second title meaning “the greatest”.
  1. The term is actually supposed to imply that he is the bridge builder between mankind and God.
  2. The title Pontifex Maximus is mentioned numerous times by the early church fathers (particularly by Tertullian), but it was not applied to a Christian bishop.
  3. The early church fathers say that the Pontifex Maximus was the “King of Heathendom”, the evil high priest of the pagan mystery religion of Rome.
  4. This became the title of the high priest of mystery Babylon and today the Pope wears the same title and calls himself the sovereign pontiff of the College of Pontiffs.
  5. Although he claims apostolic succession from Peter, he is actually the successor of the Babylonian high priests.
- L.** He is the direct successor to the Babylonian mystery cult, wearing the miter and ring of the fish god Dagon just as his predecessors did.
- M.** The keys he wears, which he claims came from Peter and represent the keys of the kingdom, came instead from the Babylonian gods Janus and Cybele.

**VI.** The final form of religious Babylon.

- A.** The worship of the mother/son cult has ties to antiquity that can readily be traced through history to the current form of the mother/son cult, the Roman Catholic Church.
- B.** The titles of Semiramis have been applied to Mary, as the cult primarily focuses on the mother in the cult and the son takes a lesser role.
  1. In Egypt, the mother was called Athor, the “habitation of God” to signify that the fullness of the godhead dwelt in her womb.
  2. In Greece, she bore the name Hestia, and among the Romans, Vesta, which is a modification of the same name meaning the “dwelling place of deity”.
  3. Under the name, “mother of the gods”, the goddess queen of Babylon became an object of universal worship.
  4. The mother of the gods was worshiped by the Persians, the Syrians and by all the kings of Europe and Asia.
  5. In Britain, the Druid priests worshiped the Virgo-Patitura as the “mother of god”.
  6. In Egypt, as the “queen of heaven” she was the greatest and most worshiped of all the divinities.
  7. During and after Egyptian bondage, the Israelites repeatedly departed from the one true God and worshiped this pagan mother.
  8. Nimrod was known as Baal or Lord, and Semiramis was the female equivalent Baalti, meaning “my lady” in English, *mea domina* in Latin, and corrupted as “Madonna” in Italian.

9. Among the Phoenicians, the mother goddess was known as the “lady of the sea” that is a title applied to Mary although there is no connection between the sea and Mary, the mother of Jesus.
  10. Roman Catholics teach that Mary is a *mediator*, with prayers to her being an intricate part of Roman Catholic worship.
  11. There is no biblical basis for this idea, yet this concept was not foreign to the ideas linked with the mother goddess of pagan Babylon.
  12. She bore as one of her titles “mylitta” that is, the “mediatrix” that is the feminine form of “mediator”.
  13. Although the RCC did not come to embrace these pagan doctrines all at once, it is clear that the desire to include pagans and their rituals in the church eventually led to a synthesis between Babylonian paganism and Christianity.
- C. The real problem with the compromise is that eventually biblical Christianity has been gradually eliminated from Roman Catholic doctrine and replaced with pagan/occult doctrines, symbols, and rituals.
- D. This is one reason why the woman that is used to represent religious Babylon is referred to as a spiritual prostitute, a designation of her spiritual unfaithfulness before the Lord.
- E. Further, she has plied her trade throughout history by fornicating with the kings of the earth in order to advance herself and secure what she perceives to be her rightful status as the sole religious and temporal power.
- F. The corrupt doctrines and practices of this organization clearly demonstrate an apostasy (a withdrawal or defection) from the historic doctrines and practices of the early church.
- G. False doctrines and practices that have been assimilated over the centuries include:
- The Catholic doctrine of The Immaculate Conception states that Mary was conceived without Sin (that she was born without sin) and that she never sinned. <http://www.fisheaters.com/mary.html>
2. The Assumption and Coronation of Mary doctrine teaches that Mary was "assumed" into heaven and that she was crowned "Queen of all things" (Queen of Heaven).
  3. The Roman Catholic Church has instituted and practices the ritual system of the Mass in an attempt to regulate and dispense the Salvation of Jesus Christ.
  4. The reason it is called Mass and Communion is that the sacrifice of the people is added to the sacrifice of Jesus.
  5. The doctrine of transubstantiation teaches that the bread and wine supposedly change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, suggesting cannibalism at its best.
  6. They advocate a system of prayers to Mary and other dead believers that supposedly present our requests to the Lord in a better way than we and the Holy Spirit can.

7. The Roman Catholic Church exalts tradition to the place of Scripture, declaring that *“Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”*
8. Prayers for the dead, worship of icons and symbols, infant baptism, special dress for the clergy that must remain celibate. Cp.1 Tim.4:1ff
9. The elevation of the pope to Supreme Pontiff, who in virtue of his office possesses infallible teaching authority that results in the personal opinions of the pope becoming official doctrine.
10. The doctrine of purgatorial purification after death was first seen in pagan Babylonianism and it involved the same extortion and theft from the poor to get the dead cleansed and into a higher state.
11. Prayers and supplication were offered by the priest, but only after great fees were collected for the service.
12. The sign of the cross as used by Rome did not originate with Christianity as many assume; the sign represents the mystic letter t (tau) that corresponds to the first initial for the name of Tammuz.
13. Such things as holy water, penance, priestly absolution were part of the Babylonian system and continue to exist today in the RCC.
14. For a more detailed list of dates when these and other doctrines were declared to be part of the Roman Catholic Church see <http://www.bible.ca/cath-new-doctrines.htm> . *Hard Copy Attached.*

## VII. Destruction of religious Babylon.

- A. Revelation 17 makes it plain that the term Babylon refers to much more than a city; it stands for a system of evil that has a global reach and impact. Rev.17:18
- B. In a similar fashion, Americans speak of Madison Avenue and Wall Street, which are actually streets, but also represent the center of financial and advertising enterprises in this nation.
- C. There is no doubt that the Antichrist and the prostitute enjoy a relationship during his rise to power during the first half of Daniel's 70th week, as seen in the positions of the prostitute and the beast. Rev.17:3
- D. It is very likely that the RCC will achieve unprecedented popularity during this time when it is associated with the greatest earthly celebrity that the world has ever seen. Rev.13:3-4
- E. As we know from a number of prophecies and parables, the Church Age will not come to a good end, but will be characterized by a growing apostasy in the last days. 2Tim.3:1-13; 2Pet.2:1-3; Rev.3:14ff
- F. The nature of this growing apostasy is now visible and is characterized by the concept of internationalism and ecumenicalism—the movement of uniting all religions together into a one-world church.
- G. While there can be little doubt that this system will eventually be controlled by Rome, there are a number of methods it will employ to bring about its goals of a universal church.

1. Eclecticism is a philosophy of religion that refuses to accept any one system of doctrine, but seeks to take the so-called best aspects from all systems of belief.
  2. Latitudinarianism is a system of religions that does not care specifically about creeds or doctrines, but focuses more on the sincerity of the individual than what he believes.
  3. Syncretism is a system that seeks to unite all opposing theological and philosophical positions by arriving at a common denominator, a new synthesis.
- H.** Ironically enough, with all this compromise the world religion will not be willing to tolerate biblical Christianity with its emphasis on the fact that only in Jesus Christ is the truth to be found.
- I.** Those that hold to sound doctrine are viewed as extremists that must be marginalized or eliminated if the whole is to prosper.
- J.** In spite of the apparent success from its political alliance with the RRE and the Antichrist, the RCC will be destroyed by that which she has so consistently pursued throughout her history.
- K.** Once Antichrist has reached a sufficient position of power and domination on the world scene, the prostitute will become superfluous and expendable.
- L.** In fact, the Catholic Church will be quite jealous of the switch from their worship to the worship of the dragon and the Antichrist.
- M.** The timing for the vicious attack against the world religion, which will have its headquarters in Rome will precede the destruction of commercial Babylon. Rev.18:1 (before 37<sup>th</sup> month of Daniel's 70th week.)
- N.** This coincides with the fact that Antichrist will declare himself to be God and will move to eliminate every institution and object of worship. 2Thess. 2:4
- O.** At that time the RCC will be completely destroyed, her leaders killed, her wealth confiscated, and her buildings either appropriated or destroyed by the beast and his confederacy. Rev.17:16
- P.** From that point forward, the greatest spiritual prostitute of human history will be no more.