

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION CHAPTERS 17 & 18

1. Chapters 17-19:1-10 constitute one final parenthetical insert in this book.
2. As with all preceding parenthesis, it is not intended to advance the primary chronological theme of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week as established via the septet judgments.
3. It is to be viewed as aside articulating additional information pertinent to the preceding sub-theme of Babylon in memoriam before God in 16:19.
4. Yet, it incorporates its own built-in chronology inserted between the chapters as noted in the phrase "*After these things/Meta . tau/ta – meta tauta*". Rev.18:1 ; 19:1
5. The chronological theme of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week then reemerges online in Rev.19:11 as a forward advance from the 7<sup>th</sup> bowl judgment of 16:17-21 and the actual return of Christ.
6. A chronological continuity will then be retained throughout the remainder of Revelation until the closing remarks of Rev.22:8-21.
7. Both chapters 17 & 18 deal with "Babylon the Great" (17:5; 18:2).
8. As we have previously established, Babylon is not literal, but a prophetic entity existing in the last days.
9. Any cursory study of modern geopolitical, commercial and spiritual realities pertaining to the last days should immediately disregard ancient Babylon of present day Iraq as a viable candidate:
  - A. There is in no sense that Babylon in Iraq, or even Iraq itself, is currently a political force that can dictate policy to the rulers of other nations. Rev.17:18
  - B. Further, Babylon of Rev.17 is said to be established "*on many waters*" indicating an extension of power and presence on a global basis, again not true of Iraq.
  - C. There is no way that the modern state of Iraq can be viewed as the dominant commercial nation of its time on whom, the fate of the world economies depend. Rev.18:11,15
  - D. Otherwise, while Islam has made an impact of world affairs per the media, there is no indication that Iraq is the spiritual leader in this movement.
10. You can go to <http://aoreport.com/Studies/whyiraqcantbebabylon.htm> and find ~34 biblical reasons why Iraq cannot be our Babylon. *Hard Copy Attached*
11. In spite of the obvious regarding this fallacious notion, many fundy ultra-conservatives such as Pat Robertson, Jack Van Impe, Ken Flemming (professor at Emmaus Bible College), Spiros Zodhiates (editor-in-chief, Pulpit helps) and many others blindly embrace this interpretation.
12. While the normal layman may not see much harm to the Christian life for embracing this thinking, it must be understood that this kind of literal interpretation ties into what is called "Kingdom Now" or "Dominion Theology".
13. This view promotes the present day Church as instrumental in helping Christ establish His millennial kingdom.
14. They believe that Christians are already in God's kingdom and it only has to be taken by faith from the wicked and Christ will not return until this is accomplished.
15. While we will not delve into the depths that dominion theology has gone within our society, it should not go unheeded that its influence is felt in the highest echelons of our government and present administration.

16. It is the type of evil that could thrust an otherwise peaceful yet powerful Christian nation into a mentality that it is up to that nation to save the world for Christ.
17. Interpreting that literal Babylon is in view and it is to be conquered would provide a primary target to please God in route to the ultimate goal.
18. Bottom line, dominion theology is a supposed divine mandate for Christians to conquer and rule the world, politically and otherwise.
19. With a literal interpretation voided, it is clear that Babylon is prophetic and code for an end time entity.
20. However, it is clear that the two chapters are not referring to the same entity as there are several obvious differences:
  - A. Babylon in chapter 17 is given the added designation "*the mother of harlots*" omitted in chapter 18. Rev.17:5 cp.18:2
  - B. Babylon of 17 sits on many waters (Rev.17:1) and a beast in a desert (Rev.17:3), not so designated in 18.
  - C. While Babylon of 17 possesses great wealth (Rev.17:4), Babylon of 18 is the source of wealth for the merchants of the earth (Rev.18:3c).
  - D. There is no command to exit Babylon of 17, but that command is specific in 18:4.
  - E. The harlot of 17 is "*drunk with the blood of the saints.*" (Rev.17:6), whereas "*the blood of saints*" is only found in Babylon of 18 (Rev.18:24).
  - F. This is important as the act of drinking emphasizes willing participation in the deaths of God's people, while their blood being found denotes a more passive form of guilt.
  - G. Though both are ultimately destroyed, there is a distinction made as to their demise. Rev.17:16 cp. 18:8,10,17,19
  - H. There is a command to rejoice over the destruction of Babylon of 18 (Rev.18:21), omitted in 17.
  - I. Babylon of 17 is clearly tied to the beast (Rev.17:3,16), a notation further omitted in 18.
  - J. Chapter 17 has no mention of commercial trade, while chapter 18 is replete with this concept. Rev.18:9-19
21. Though there is debate amongst futurist interpreters as to the exact identities of these two Babylon's, most recognize two distinct entities.
22. With the heavy emphasis on economic commercialism of Rev.18, the primary school of thought with dispensationalists is that Babylon of 17 is ecclesiastical or religious and the Babylon of 18 is economic or political. Walvoord, Ryrie, Mounce, Gaebelain
23. However, we will see ties politically and otherwise with both entities. Rev.17:18 cp.18:2b etc.
24. Further, interpreters from all ranks of historicist, preterist and even spiritual schools of interpretation recognize the Babylon of 17 as spiritual and in some way associated with Rome and/or the Vatican. Wadsworth, Clark, Elliott, Vitranga, Bengel, Wesley, Swete, Alford, etc.
25. This interpretation goes all the way back to the early Church fathers in the time of Tertullian ~160-220 AD and later adopted by Jerome ~347-419 AD and Augustine 354-430 AD.
26. This brings to light that we are dealing not only with ideological systems, but real institutions.

27. Therefore, we must decipher between the two primary entities as to being simply systems of ideology (religious geopolitical) and/or actual physical organized entities such as a church or nation.
28. Babylon was first explicitly introduced to us in Rev.14:8 as a subject of discourse by the 2<sup>nd</sup> messenger angel in the trio of evangelizing angels.
29. As noted in Rev.14:8, there are two “falls” associated with Babylon.
30. This same concept is reiterated with the fall of the Babylon in chapter 18. Rev.18:2
31. This emphasizes the actual destruction of each entity as physically organized institutions completing the destruction of one ideological system.
32. It is the similarities between the 2 Babylon’s that are designed to emphasize the universal spiritual truths in the nature and evil that both entities promote.
33. This emphasizes a single system of ideology that the two corporate entities combined represent.
34. It looks to the fact that though they are separate entities, they are united in demonic ideology both religiously and politically.
35. This explains how two different physical entities can be described under the one term “Babylon”.
36. The ideological system behind prophetic Babylon as a whole is found in the biblical origination of Babylon in the book of Genesis.
37. The name Babylon is commonly understood to mean “the gate of god”, and is a derivative from its root name Babel meaning “confusion”.
38. Babel is the name of the original city of Babylon located in the Mesopotamian area of present day Iraq, just east of the Euphrates River ~56 miles south of Baghdad.
39. Its original founding is biblically traced to Nimrod, the son of Cush that is referred to as *a mighty one on the earth*. Gen.10:8
40. This indicates that during his lifetime his fame and power reached legendary proportions.
41. Consequently, he became a powerful ruler renowned in early history made evident as a proverbial expression about Nimrod was still being used ~750 years later in Moses’ day “*Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord*”. Gen.10:9
42. The beginning of building his empire is said to be Babel (Gen.10:10) and Nimrod is seen as the first to build an established, organized city/kingdom, a practice becoming the source of many historical traditions.
43. That Nimrod begins his kingdom with Babel implicates him as the ringleader behind its construction recorded in Gen.11:1-4.
44. The city is characterized by a tower whose top was to reach into heaven. Gen.11:4
45. That the construction is described in terms of both a city and a tower reaching into heaven portrays the political/economic aspect of the settlement as well as religious.
46. This is the first recorded attempt to produce a world unity apart from the will of God.
47. It was God’s directive will for post-diluvial mankind to spread abroad repopulating the planet into nations. Gen.9:1,7 cp.10:5,20,31
48. This points to the 4<sup>th</sup> Divine institution established by God, nationalism, a principle biblically extant today. Act.17:26
49. It becomes clear that Nimrod rebels against God (Nimrod means “rebel”) and seeks to establish a great city designed to unify man under a one world religious political order.

50. This is the single ideological system represented by Babylon.
51. It is a blatant example of man under energy of the STA flesh seeking to organize people through the use of power, force and religion.
52. It is the ideological spirit of Babylon that represents Satan's plan for the earth and the system under which Antichrist operates and promotes.
53. In this sense, Nimrod is a type of Antichrist that seeks to consolidate the world under a one world political/religious regime in open rebellion against God.
54. As we know, God jammed this attempt at international organization with the confusion of languages, from which we obtain the term Babel or "confusion/Babylon". Gen.11:1 cp.7-9
55. However, the two main arms of the Babylonian system, the political and the religious, have continued to exist through history.
56. It is Rev.17 & 18 that addresses the final incarnation of each, both of which will be destroyed during Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
57. That they are so highlighted here is designed to emphasize the evil the negative world has embraced.
58. These chapters will center on the two main extant organizational institutions in the last days responsible for ideologically setting the stage for Antichrist's appearance and the ultimate destruction that will befall the world as the result.
59. These two latter time institutions are held chiefly responsible for influencing the world overall to engage in an ecumenical politically internationalist mentality of devising the vanity of a one world order. Cp.Psa.2:1-3
60. While there is a fair amount of consensus as to the ideology behind Babylon, as noted it is the physical identity of one or both that remains allusive to some.
61. That the two arms of the ecumenical ideology are religious and commercial naturally points to the systems represented by a church and nation commensurately.
62. Clues as to the religious entity are available and they too begin back at the time of Nimrod.
63. Tradition has it that after Nimrod's death, his wife Semiramis gave birth to her son Tammuz declaring a miraculous conception.
64. Proclaiming herself as a goddess and Tammuz a god, this was the beginning to what is known as the mother/son cult.
65. The practice of worshipping this false religion spread to idolatrous nations around the globe.
66. Biblical support of this tradition is seen as the Jews came into contact with this idolatry as recorded in Eze.8:14 (weeping for Tammuz for 40 days a.k.a. lent) and as seen in making the round cakes to celebrate the Queen of heaven (the goddess and mother of the god Tammuz) as recorded in Jer.7:18; 44:17-19,25.
67. We can surmise then that the religious organization will be active in the mother/son cult.
68. The direct clue given to us as to identifying the religious Babylon is found in 17:1, where she is described as "*the great whore who sits on many waters*".
69. This terminology as being a prostitute harks back to Jezebel the self-proclaimed prophetess introduced in the message to Thyatira in the 7 churches of chapters 2-3. Rev.2:10-22

70. As we noted, Thyatire represents in part a period of Church Age history, specifically the medieval era when the Roman Catholic Church dominated the universal religious landscape from ~590-1606 AD.
71. The language of Rev.2:10-22 speaks of gross spiritual adultery the RCC has brought into the world.
72. Further, there is no other one physical church that can be said to exist globally “*sitting on many waters*” and having such diverse power and authority “*over the kings of the earth*”. Rev.17:8
73. The RCC is today’s premier representative of the original mother/son cult as seen in her worship of Madonna and child.
74. Further, she is the epitome of religious ecumenicalism seeking to absorb all religions under the banner of the “true church” in Rome.
75. As to the national or political/commercial identification of Babylon in chapter 18, only as history has unfolded to our times are we able to identify the U.S.A. as the viable candidate.
76. What other economic powerhouse nation today would fulfill the scenarios of the “*weeping merchants*” as so described in Rev.18.
77. For the documentation behind the U.S. as prophetic Babylon political, one can review the notes of Rev.6:12-14 where we analyzed the biblical facts in detail.
78. The composition of the RCC and the USA together represents the single ecumenical and political ideology extant and rampant representing the last days.
79. The Antichrist will simply step into a universal setting where this ideology is already ingrained and take it into the final level of consolidation. Rev.13:15-17
80. This one church and one nation are held before God as the premier spiritual and political whores responsible for the global influence of the now infamous New World Order.
81. Their destruction speaks of the blatant spiritual rebellion against God that the world has postured itself in defiance of his plan for mankind and the embracing of Satan’s.