

REVELATION

Message Four

**Babylon the Great—
Religious Babylon and Material Babylon**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 14:8; 17:1—19:4;
2:18-24; Matt. 13:33

I. Revelation 17 is an unveiling of religious Babylon—the apostate Roman Catholic Church:

- A. In the eyes of God the Roman Catholic Church, which perpetuates much of Judaism and has assimilated much of paganism, is Babylon.
- B. *Mystery* in verse 5 indicates that Babylon the Great in chapter seventeen is the apostate church; she is mysterious in what she is, in what she practices, and in what she teaches.
- C. The woman in Matthew 13:33 is the Jezebel in Revelation 2:20, and Jezebel becomes the great harlot in 17:1:
 - 1. Jezebel, the pagan wife of Ahab, is a type of the apostate church—1 Kings 16:31.
 - 2. The principle of the deeds of the apostate church is to mix the heathen, pagan things with the worship of God by His people—Matt. 13:33; Rev. 17:4.
 - 3. Jezebel, the apostate church, is a self-appointed prophetess, who presumes to be authorized to speak for God and demands that people listen to her rather than to God—2:20.
 - 4. In the apostate church are “the deep things of Satan,” the mysterious teachings of Satan—v. 24:
 - a. Satan dwells in the apostate church in a subtle way through the teaching of the deep things of Satan.
 - b. The deep thought of Satan has saturated the apostate church, causing it to become the embodiment of Satan.
- D. The harlot in 17:1 is the apostate Roman Catholic Church:
 - 1. The fornication of the apostate church consists of her having sinful relationships with the kings of the earth for her profit—v. 2a:
 - a. The Roman Catholic Church is intimately involved with worldly politics, and the

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Four (continuation)

kings of the earth commit fornication directly with her.

- b. In the eyes of God, this is spiritual fornication.
2. The “wine of her fornication” signifies the heretical doctrines of the apostate church in her fornicating relationships with the governments on the earth—v. 2b.
3. The apostate church is in a wilderness, a desert, where there are no springs of water prepared by God—v. 3.
4. The harlot is “gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls”—v. 4a:
 - a. Gold, precious stone, and pearls are the materials with which the New Jerusalem is built—21:18-19, 21.
 - b. The apostate church is gilded (not solidly built) with these treasures as ornaments for outward display and as a deception intended to entice people.
5. The harlot has in her hand “a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication”—17:4b:
 - a. Since gold signifies the divine nature, the golden cup indicates that in her outward appearance the apostate church has something of God.
 - b. Her “golden cup” is full of idolatry, pagan practices, and satanic things.
 - c. The Roman Catholic Church has certain holy things, but she has mixed in many evil and unclean things.
6. The great harlot is the “mother of the harlots”—v. 5:
 - a. The harlots, the daughters of the great harlot, are the sects and groups in Christianity that hold to some extent the teachings, practices, and traditions of the apostate church.
 - b. The denominations and groups that still practice some of the great harlot’s Babylonian traditions belong in the category of Babylon.

REVELATION

Message Four (continuation)

- c. Only the pure, genuine local churches have no evil transmitted from the great harlot, the apostate church—1:11-12.
- E. Because God hates the apostate church, at the beginning of the great tribulation, God will cause Antichrist and his ten kings to destroy the Roman Catholic Church—17:16-17.

II. Revelation 18 is an unveiling of material Babylon—the city of Rome:

- A. In Revelation 17 and 18 two aspects of Babylon—the religious aspect and the material aspect—are mixed together:
 - 1. The harlot in 17:16 denotes religious Babylon, signifying the Roman Catholic Church, whereas the woman in verse 18 denotes material Babylon, signifying the city of Rome.
 - 2. In 18:3 the aspects of religious and material Babylon are both mentioned:
 - a. The Roman religion makes all nations drunk with her religious, devilish wine.
 - b. The city of Rome enriches the merchants of the earth by the power of her luxury.
 - 3. Since Babylon the Great is twofold, to come out of her means to come out of both religious Babylon and material Babylon—v. 4.
- B. Material Babylon, the city of Rome, will become hateful in the eyes of God because it has been the source of both devilish politics and devilish religion—vv. 6-8, 20-24.
- C. Christ as another Angel will shine over the earth to destroy Babylon the Great, the city of Rome, with His great authority—vv. 1-2.

III. Babylon the Great will have two falls—the fall of religious Babylon and the fall of material Babylon—14:8; 18:2:

- A. The fall of religious Babylon will take place at the beginning of the great tribulation—17:16-17.
- B. The fall of material Babylon will take place at the end of the great tribulation—18:2, 21.
- C. The praise in 19:1-4 is related not mainly to the fall of material Babylon but to the fall of religious Babylon, because in the eyes of God religious Babylon is more hateful than material Babylon.