

Biblical Womanhood

by

Emeritus Prof. Mercy Olumide



Sunday 23rd August '20

THE LAST DAYS OF HISTORY (26)

War in heaven; war on earth Contd

The water stands for either sea commerce or a well-watered (well-provisioned) city. The great harlot represents the seductiveness of the governmental system that uses immoral means to gain its own pleasure, prosperity, and advantage. In contrast to the harlot, Christ's bride, the church, is pure and obedient ((19:6-9). The wicked city of Babylon contrasts with the heavenly city of Jerusalem (21:10-22:5).

The original readers probably rather quickly identified Babylon with Rome, but Babylon also symbolizes any system that is hostile to God (17:5)

17:1 **"saying unto me."** Chs. 17-18 portray the fall of Babylon the Great. (1) Babylon (v.5) is the symbol for the whole world system under the antichrist, as dominated by Satan and manifesting wickedness politically, religiously and commercially (Jer50:1; 51:1-64). (2) Babylon will be completely destroyed during the last three and a half years of this age. Religious Babylon (i.e., the prostitute) will be destroyed by the antichrist (vv.16-17), while political Babylon will be destroyed by Christ at His coming (19:11-21).

17:1 **"the great whore."** The prostitute represents religious Babylon and encompasses all false religions, including apostate Christianity. In the Bible prostitution and adultery, when used figuratively, normally denote religious apostasy and unfaithfulness to God (Is 1:21; Jer 3:9; Ezek16:14-18,32; Jas 4:4), and signify a people who profess to serve God while actually worshiping and serving other gods. Note the sharp contrast between the great prostitute and the bride of the Lamb (19:7-8). The impure prostitute is subject to Satan; the chaste bride is subject to Christ. Satan clothes the one (v.4); God clothes the other (19:8). Eternal death is the portion of the prostitute; eternal glory the destiny of the bride.

Concerning this religious system, (1) it will reject all basic tenets of the Christian faith and all those who are loyal to Jesus Christ and the Word of God. (2) It will enter into partnership with the political, economic and social system of "Babylon." The antichrist will unite religion with the political system in order to take spiritual control over the nations (v.18). (3) Religious leaders will persecute all those who believe that Jesus Christ is the one true way to God (v.6); The religious system will be a melting pot for many religions, faiths and creeds, and will require acceptance and tolerance of each as equally true. The chief issue will be a worldwide unified religious system wedded to a unified international political system. This eclectic religion will become a "habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit" (18:2; Is47:12-13). (4) All true believers are commanded to come out of this religious alliance, or they will be condemned with it (18:4). (5) In the end God will cause the antichrist to destroy religious prostitute (see v.16)

"Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore." (Rev18:21)

"Babylon ... shall be found no more." An angel declares the final fall of political Babylon. The antichrist and his ungodly world system will be totally destroyed at "the battle of that great day of God Almighty," when Christ returns to earth (16:14; 14:8; 16:14,16; 19:11-21; cf. the record of the fall of Babylon in Dan 5). **Read Rev 18:1-8.** In verses 2 and 3 Merchants in the Roman Empire grew rich by exploiting the sinful pleasures of their society. Many business people today do the same thing. Businesses and governments are often based on greed, money, and power.