

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** To identify the woman Babylon and to call people out of the religious confusion of Babylon into the truths of God's word.

**TEXTS:**

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| 1. REV 17:1-3 (12:3)           | 7. DA 4:30                      |
| 2. 2CO 11:2 (JE 6:2; IS 51:16) | 8. MT 9:17 (JE 51:7-8)          |
| 3. REV 17:4-5 (JAS 4:4)        | 9. LEV 10:9-11 (EZE 22:26)      |
| 4. REV 17:6, 9                 | 10. REV 17:5 (EZE 16:31-34, 44) |
| 5. 1PE 5:13                    | 11. EZE 8:4-5, 14, 16           |
| 6. GE 11:1-9                   | 12. REV 18:2-4 (JN 17:17)       |

**THE STUDY:**

- Who does John see riding on a scarlet colored beast? REV 17:1-3 (12:3)**  
*The scene opens with a harlot woman riding on a beast, which represents the devil working through the civil power.*
- What does this woman represent? 2CO 11:2 (JE 6:2; IS 51:16)**  
*A woman in prophecy represents a church. There are two women pictured in Revelation – a pure woman (Rev. 12) and a harlot woman (Rev. 17) – representing the true and false churches at the end of time.*
- What kind of church is this? REV 17:4-5 (JAS 4:4)**  
*We have already seen that she is dressed in expensive apparel and adorned with precious jewels; she is a rich church. This woman is unfaithful; she has been sleeping around on her husband with the “kings of the earth,” therefore she is an influential church. This is a church that has desired the companionship of the world more than the companionship of her husband, Jesus Christ. She is more interested in worldly influence than spiritual integrity. As such, she has compromised her faith with the world; she is a compromising church.*
- What are some other identifying characteristics? REV 17:6, 9**  
*She is drunk with the blood of the saints, which tells us she is a persecuting church, and she is built on “seven mountains”. To this day Rome is called “the City of Seven Hills.” The woman represents Papal Rome, in its church-state union riding upon and controlling the civil power to further her own designs.*
- What did the apostle Peter refer to Rome as in his day? 1PE 5:13**  
*Babylon was in ruins when Peter wrote this letter from Rome. Peter is referring symbolically to Rome.*
- Why Babylon? GE 11:1-9**  
*The Tower of Babel was man's attempt to reach heaven and secure himself against another flood. God confused the language of the people, and the tower was named “Babel”, which means “confusion by mixing”. This is the same Hebrew name used throughout the OT to refer to the kingdom of Babylon, and Babylon was built upon the ruins of the Tower of Babel. Babylon was a symbol of man trying to save himself by his works.*
- What did King Nebuchadnezzar say about His kingdom? DA 4:30**  
*Nebuchadnezzar ascribed all the glory and greatness of the kingdom of Babylon to himself, even after God had repeatedly shown him otherwise. When God showed Nebuchadnezzar an image depicting the rise and fall of kingdoms, he made his own image the way he wanted it, mixing his ideas with God's. So Babylon became a symbol of self-made worship, a confusing concoction of truth and error.*

**8. What is symbolized by the wine in the harlot Babylon's cup? MT 9:17 (JE 51:7-8)**

*Wine in the Bible represents doctrine, or teaching. The wine of Babylon represents her false teaching as a result of her compromise with the world. Because she has sought the favor of the world, Rome accepted false teachings of paganism and worldly philosophies. Her own understanding was confused by mixing with the world, and as a result, her teaching became corrupted because of her "fornication," which in turn corrupted those who worshiped in her.*

*"To conciliate the pagans to nominal Christianity, Rome, pursuing its usual policy, took measures to get the Christian and Pagan festivals amalgamated, and to get Paganism and Christianity – now far sunk in idolatry – in this as in so many other things, to shake hands." – Dr. Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 105.*

**9. What dangerous side effect does Babylon's "wine" have on those who get "drunk" by it? LEV 10:9-11 (EZE 22:26)**

*Drunkenness destroys the ability to discern between the holy and the unholy, between truth and error. Those who are drunk with the false teachings of Babylon have a hard time understanding the truth, because their spiritual judgment has been impaired.*

**10. Who besides Papal Rome is comprised of Babylon? REV 17:5 (EZE 16:31-34, 44)**

*Babylon the mother also has daughters. The daughters are churches who have teachings like the mother (EK 16:44). This represents the Protestant churches that made some attempts to separate from the errors of Rome, but unfortunately have still retained in their core beliefs some of Rome's greatest falsehoods.*

**11. What are some of the false teachings of Rome that have been retained in Protestantism? EZE 8:4-5, 14-16**

*As we read the prophecy of Ezekiel, we can see the corrupting practices of the heathen that have found their way into the church. First we see image worship (Eze. 8:4-5), which is a direct violation of the first and second commandments; next we see spiritualism as God's people are taking part in a feast for Tammuz, the Babylonian god of the underworld (v. 14); Finally, we find God's people worshiping the sun in his temple (v. 16), followed by the judgments of God. So spiritual Babylon, Papal Rome, has taught image worship by bringing idols into the church and removing the second commandment; she has promoted spiritualism by teaching the pagan concept that the soul is immortal, which leads to various other errors such as the idea hell as an eternal torture chamber; finally, her crowning act is to christen the Sunday, the day of sun worship, as the "Christian Sabbath" in place of the fourth commandment. And sadly, Protestantism has followed in many of her steps. Note the following from Father John O'Brien–*

*"Since Saturday, not Sunday, is specified in the Bible, isn't it curious that non-Catholics who profess to take their religion directly from the Bible and not from the church observe Sunday instead of Saturday. Yes, of course it is inconsistent, but this change was made about fifteen centuries before Protestantism was born, and by that time the custom was universally observed. They have continued the custom, even though it rests upon the authority of the Catholic Church and not upon an explicit text in the Bible. That observance remains as a reminder of the mother church, from which the non-Catholic sects broke away, like a boy running away from home, but still carrying in his pocket a picture of his mother or a lock of her hair." – John O'Brien, *The Faith of Millions*, 1974.*

**12. In light of these things, what does God appeal for His people to do? REV 18:2-4 (JN 17:17)**

*When we learn God's truth He expects us, for our own salvation's sake, to separate ourselves from error. The words "prison" and "cage" suggest that many will become imprisoned in the error of Babylon because they refused to allow the truth to sanctify, or separate them, from error when they first heard it. God's truth is found in His word, and His people must decide whether or not they will follow that truth wherever it leads.*

**APPEAL:**

God doesn't hold us responsible for errors that we have been taught, or that we may have been a part of Babylon. Many of His people are still in Babylon, or He wouldn't need to call them to come out. Now that He has revealed His truth, the decision is ours. Today, God is inviting all people to come out of the confusing errors of Babylon and choose to follow His truth wherever it leads. It doesn't matter where we have been in the past. The invitation is given to everyone. Won't you choose to take your stand for Him?