

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur

Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church

C. The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:1-19:21

5. A Second View Of The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 11:1-19:21

**i. God's Edifying Insight On The LATTER HISTORY Of Religious And Government Apostasy
(Revelation 17:1-18)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

The day after Thanksgiving, I was listening to interviews Brad Davis had conducted with guests on "The Talk of Connecticut" radio show where several of had expressed concern over the government's growing encroachment on individual rights along with social and economic problems. Believers I know have shared the same concern with me.

Revelation 17:1-18 exposes the latter forms and history of the world religious apostasy and government along with their underlying spiritual dynamics, so we view this passage for its insight and edifying directives for us:

Need: So we ask, "With the alleged encroachment of the government on individual rights and growing religious apostasy and social and economic problems, what are the underlying spiritual dynamics, and how are we to live?!"

I. Revelation 17:1-15, 18 explains the FINAL FORMS of the WORLD RELIGIOUS APOSTASY "Babylon the Great" and of the ANTICHRIST'S EVIL WORLDWIDE GOVERNMENT (as follows):

- A. To **reveal** the final world religious apostasy of "Babylon the Great" with whom the world's kings had committed spiritual immorality, i. e., idolatry, and with whom the world had been made drunk, i. e., spiritually blind to God's truths through this religious apostate entity's errant beliefs (Rev. 17:1-2), God's angel took John in the spirit into a spiritually barren "wilderness" to see a woman who was sitting on a scarlet (sin, Isaiah 1:18) beast that was full of blasphemy and that had 7 heads and 10 horns, Revelation 17:3.
- B. We learned before that this "woman" was introduced back in Zechariah 5:5-11 as Babylon's Semiramis cult in the "ephah" of Satan's then-budding evil commercial system, but in Rev. 17:4-5 she is so fully compromised with materialism that she is the mother of all idolatrous "harlots" and abominations, i. e., godless ideologies on earth, and guilty of the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus, and seeing her astonished John, Rev. 17:6 NIV.
- C. The angel then **clarified** the **final forms** of this **world apostate religion AND government**, Rev. 17:7-15, 18:
 1. The 7 headed, 10 horned "beast" that was, and is not, but will arise from the bottomless pit (Rev. 17:3b, 7-8), is seen back in Rev. 13:1-2 with Dan. 7:1-28 as the Revived Roman Empire in the Tribulation Period that will rise with elements of past Babylonian (lion), Medo-Persian (bear) and Grecian (leopard) empires.
 2. The 7 heads signify **two** realities, (a) the 7 hills east of the Tiber River on which the ancient city of Rome was founded (Compton's Ency., 1973, v. 17, p. 240) (Rev. 17:9a NIV), a city that is also the capital of the final world religious apostasy (Rev. 17:9b NIV), and (b) 7 "kings," of which 5 had fallen, the 6th then was, the 7th was yet to come briefly and the antichrist would be an 8th, but belong to the 7, Rev. 17:10-11.
 3. To understand what these baffling statements on the 8 "kings" mean, we view the history of ancient Rome:
 - a. In John's era, **5 forms** of "kings" had come and gone -- Etruscan kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs and military tribunes. (J. D. Pentecost, Things To Come, 1972, p. 323 in citing W. Scott, Expos. of the Rev. of J. C., [n. d.], p. 351-352; "The Roman Republic," ushistory.org; Ibid., Compton's Ency., p. 240-248)
 - b. The **6th form**, that of **Imperial Emperor**, one-man rule of the Roman Empire, existed in John's era, Ibid.
 - c. Thus, the **7th form** will be an **Imperial Emperor WITH Ten Federated Kings**, the 10 "horns" of Rev. 17:12a, **the Revived Roman Empire of the Great Tribulation**, Rev. 17:10. This **7th form** exists briefly until the 10 kings give their power to the antichrist, the **8th form**, a **variation** of the **7th**, Rev. 17:12, 13.
 4. Satan who is behind the antichrist will try to mimic Christ's one-man rule by antichrist's reign, and this **8th "king" form** of the Revived Roman Empire will try in vain to defeat Jesus Christ at His return, Rev. 17:14.
 5. As for the final apostate religion, "Babylon the Great," its center will be Rome (Rev. 17:9b), but from there it will head all religious apostasy, typified in the "many waters" on which she also sits, Rev. 17:1b, 18.

II. In the Great Tribulation, the antichrist with his Revived Roman Empire worldwide government will hate and horribly destroy the world apostate religion of "Babylon the Great," Revelation 17:16-17.

III. For our edification, Revelation 17:9-14 ALSO offers INSIGHT on what NOW SPIRITUALLY OCCURS in GOVERNMENT and FALSE RELIGION DEVELOPMENT, implying HOW we should thus LIVE:

- A. Rev. 17:9a claims Rev. 17:9b-18 takes "spiritual insight to be understood" (Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 971).

- B. Well, if we ***recall*** our last lesson on Zech. 5 that foresaw world religious apostasy, the "woman," and Satan's evil commercial system, the "ephah" in which the "woman" sat, what demons would set upon an idol pedestal in a house built for them, we see this prediction ***fulfilled*** in **Rev. 17:9b-18** (and citing the "I, D, 3, a" sources):
 - 1. The Rev. 17:9b 7 hills signify the **top part** of the Zech. 5 "ephah" of Satan's commercial system, the lower parts of Babylon (lion), Medo-Persia (bear) and Greece (leopard) having come before (Rev. 13:1-2; Dan. 7:1-28), for Rome began as a Latin village on a hill east of the Tiber River to trade with rich Etruscans to the north. Other Latin villages were later built on the neighboring 6 hills, and all 7 united to form Rome.
 - 2. The 7 "kings" of Rev. 17:10-14 NIV **also** signify **Satan's development of the TOP of the Zechriah 5:11 idolatrous pedestal, Rome's GOVERNMENT, while He coddled Rome in commercial idolatrous lust on its 7 hills:** first, the Etruscans set kings over Rome, aided by an advisory "Senate" of 100 rich Romans. Rome threw off this rule to govern itself by its own Senate of elected rich men. Yet, emergencies required rule by a few, so the Senate elected magistrates over time as temporary dictators under Senate control, the "king" forms of Rev. 17:10-11. However, moral decay, a growing welfare state and a shrinking working middle class led Rome away from republican rule by the Senate into a one-man rule by imperial emperors!
 - 3. Thus, (a) Satan, who controls the world's governments (Matt. 4:8-9), first established Rome with a focus on materialism to "coddle" men in the top part of the Zech. 5:5-11 "ephah." (b) As for the idol pedestal for this commercial system of idolatry, Satan had always wanted a one-man ruler to mimic Christ's Messianic reign, but sinful citizens don't readily submit to sinful kings, so Satan manipulated the electorate in first letting it have a republican government with checks and balances on major abuses to get the electorate to trust its government and enjoy some material prosperity. Then, Satan gradually pressed the electorate via fomenting corruption in society to accept eventual rule by a one-man emperor!
- C. U. S. history exposes a **SIMILAR development of government forms:** Americans threw off a British king's rule to form a republican government in a desire in part for prosperity (think Stamp Act; Boston Tea Party). Yet, in time, corruption in theology, a growing welfare state, a shrinking productive middle class and the electorate, duped by self-serving elitists who control an ideologically corrupt academia and media, being spurred to vote for an **alleged** "more responsive" democratic government, rule by the electorate itself, the duped electorate lets the government encroach on individual rights, and the nation heads toward one-man rule!
- D. Such **similarities** in **Roman** and **U. S. government histories** indicate a **Satanic PATTERN of development:**
 - 1. Satan initially coddles nations with materialistic indulgence and "workable" forms of representative government with checks and balances against obvious evils, only gradually to lead a materialistically addicted and thus idolatrous electorate via corruption and emergencies to yield to a one-man rule!
 - 2. Religious apostasy that indulges in materialism aids Satan's effort to coddle men until he has an emperor, but then the false religion is expendable, seen in the antichrist's future destruction of Babylon the Great.
- E. Thus, we have lessons on how to live: (a) We must separate from religious apostasy as it is a doomed entity! (b) We must also stay free of the love of money, Satanic materialistic idolatry, 1 Tim. 6:6-19. (c) We must **not** make it our life's mission to restore even past "workable" forms of human government, for sinful electors are easily vulnerable to harmful Satanic manipulation! Rather, we must live and work for Christ's future reign!

Lesson: *The growing religious apostasy of "Babylon the Great" and secular materialistic apostasy is being fueled by Satan, the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4a), who is also moving the world's governments closer to a one-man rule. In the end, a world dictator, the antichrist, will brutally destroy the world religious apostasy and even seek to defeat Jesus Christ at His Second Coming, but the Lord Himself will defeat the antichrist and his kingdom.*

Application: (1) *May we trust in Christ for eternal salvation, John 3:16.* (2) *May we NOT be disillusioned at growing religious and government evils, but realize it is all being allowed to develop in God's permissive will to prepare the world for judgment and Christ's Messianic reign.* (3) *May we thus heed Scripture in our daily walk.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In the Thanksgiving Eve snowstorm, a passing snowplow's deluge of wet snow snapped off our house mailbox post at ground level. When I went outside to fix it, I saw the post had rotted at the ground right where it had broken!

We had trusted that wooden post for 32 years to hold up our mailbox so we could get our mail in spite of the onslaught of numerous snowplow passes! However, in the end, it was just a wooden post that rotted and broke!

Similarly, the world's institutions are rotting due to man's sin and Satan's agenda, and Christ is about to level them with His snowplow of judgment. **May we shift our hope from this world's institutions to live for the Lord!**